

# LATVIA

Human Development Report  
2002/2003  
Human Security



Riga 2003

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The **Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003** in English and Latvian, as well as the background papers associated with it and the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002** (in SPSS format) are available on the Internet: <http://www.un.lv>

Background Papers (in Latvian)

*The Anatomy of Human Security in Latvia*  
Anita Kalniņa, Vladimirs Meņšikovs

*The Individual and His/Her Closest Relationships*  
Sandra Sebre, Ieva Bite

*Social Networks as a Securitability Factor*  
Linda Zīverte, Ivars Austers, Dzintra Zilinska

*Human Security in the Context of Globalization and Regionalization*  
Žaneta Ozoliņa, Ivars Dukāts, Inna Šteinbuka

# Foreword

The publishing of the **Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003** coincides with a new phase of development in the history of the Latvian nation.

Over the centuries, Latvia has experienced numerous and sudden reversals of fortune. Times of rapid change are never simple for the people of any nation. However, it is precisely the ability to face these kinds of challenges directly that has become a hallmark of our people. "Every man forges his own destiny," says an old Latvian proverb.

While Latvia's full integration into the political and economic life of Europe and into the global community will open up many new opportunities, it is important to understand those who view this period in history with trepidation and caution.

This year's **Human Development Report** is noteworthy in its focus on the human need for a sense of security, and on the factors that need to be addressed in order to enhance people's self-confidence. The **Report** identifies and analyzes those spheres and events that create the most insecurity in the population, and alerts the government and authorities to the deleterious effects of not addressing these issues. It emphasizes the urgent necessity of mutual cooperation in seeking solutions, and it asks for transparency and the free flow of information from governing institutions – recognizing this as a critical factor in reducing insecurity among Latvia's population.

The **Report** also addresses every individual in Latvia. Everyone will be able to recognize, among the myriad causes of insecurity, those that they are experiencing. They will realize that they have been understood and have been offered solutions for a way out. The authors of the **Report** identify five factors – which, if enhanced by the State, by communities, by NGOs, and by each individual – would increase the population's sense of security and its ability to act positively in the face of threats to its security.

Individual action is not always the most effective. This **Report** encourages people to be active in forming networks of cooperation with a common goal of influencing events at the local, national, regional and global level.

The majority of the people in Latvia are capable of actively shaping their lives, and are eager to influence the development of the nation in a spirit of cooperation – thus strengthening both their individual and our common sense of security. However, for various reasons, a number of our compatriots have fallen below the poverty threshold. Their sense of security is very low and they are weakened by anxiety. It is precisely these people who are the urgent responsibility of our State. Their sense of security must be restored. They must be led over the threshold. They must be shown that they have not been written off, and that there is room for them on our common path to a decent life.

Every newly published **UNDP Latvia Human Development Report** initiates public discussions about issues that are critical to our nation. The previous year's edition triggered debate that led to a reformed system of public policy planning, rapidly bringing it into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I am convinced that this **Report** will once again serve as the basis for serious public debate about human security and the sense of security in Latvia, and that it will serve to enhance people's self-confidence.

**Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga,**  
President of the Republic of Latvia

# Foreword

A team of Latvian academics, in intense, year-long consultations, has prepared the **Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003**. The team has consulted with government advisors and policy makers; with experts in international academe, regional institutions and the United Nations system. I should like to sincerely thank and congratulate everyone who was involved in producing this fine report – the editor-in-chief and her colleagues, the authors, our peer reviewers and commentators, my colleagues in the UN system, and our support team – for their manifold contributions.

The **Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003** examines human development through the prism of human security – an issue at the heart of societal development in a country where individuals, social groups, and government institutions have gone through a series of painful and radical transformations over the past decade. The topic of human security is aptly chosen, since Latvia is currently experiencing another period of transformation. UNDP Latvia believes that it is crucial for individuals to feel empowered – both subjectively and objectively – to cope with and address situations of human insecurity. The Government of Latvia must also be aware of the issues and concerns surrounding human security.

I feel that the outcome of this **Report** is path-breaking in several respects.

Conceptually, the **Report** builds on and enriches the international debate on the notion of human security. It focuses on people's perceptions regarding their human security – the degree to which they feel “free of fear and free of want” (Kofi Annan). Drawing on the expanding literature on the topic of human security, the authors have developed an innovative approach to formulating and organising human security issues. They have introduced new concepts into the debate, which will render the notion of human security amenable to policy making.

First, the authors have developed the concept of *securitability* – the individual's ability to avoid, cope with and overcome situations of human insecurity. Second, they present the idea of *securitability factors* –

the sets of traits in individuals and the capabilities of communities and governments to enhance human security. The notion of *security constellations* refers to the coordinated strategies of actors in human security.

Methodologically, too, the **Report** is novel. Taking an empirical survey as its point of departure, it draws on the seemingly disparate disciplines of psychology, sociology, political science and economics. Thus, it synthesizes findings from the literature on sexual abuse with the reflections of political analysts and economists. It illustrates how human insecurity can be amplified if several negative factors converge – for instance when an individual suffers from the combined impact of childhood abuse, unemployment and a lack of social support networks.

Politically – and this is its most crucial feature – the **Report** offers a platform for public policy debate. Given Latvia's experience as a transition society, there are significant perceptions of insecurity in the country. Specifically, the **Report's** findings reveal several major human security concerns. Among them are the predictability and level of incomes, access to quality and affordable health services, and the impact of domestic violence and organised crime.

Some of the fears regarding human security are justified, others are exaggerated, a few are unwarranted, but all merit attention. As one interviewee put it, Latvia is “a nervous society,” one that has undergone dramatic political and socio-economic changes over the past 15 years. These have been marked by new chasms in regional development and personal incomes, and by an upheaval in the provision of social services, such as for health or welfare.

Despite Latvia's many accomplishments – which include guaranteeing human rights, democratic rule and a well-structured system of public administration, as well as facilitating enterprise development and economic growth – there remains a deep-seated wariness of the public domain. The contribution of the **Report**, in this sense, is to provide a preliminary list of ideas around which to identify and arrange priorities for action so as to address human security concerns. Its recommendations address not only the con-

ventional partners of the UNDP – government and civil society – but also place the spotlight on the roles and responsibilities of the individual. This is an unusual and creative approach.

It is hoped that these ideas can assist in policy debates and decisions not only in Latvia, but also in other transition societies and in every society facing challenges to human security.

Like its predecessors, this **Report** on human development in Latvia is uncomfortable, and deliberately so. Its purpose is to disturb, to analyze, to instigate change and to advocate for sustainable human development.



**Gabriele Köhler**  
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# Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003

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## Basic Facts about Latvia (2002)



### Population

Estimated population (millions)	2.3
Annual population growth (%)	- 0.5
Population density (persons per km <sup>2</sup> )	36.1

### Population distribution (%)

Rural	32.2
Urban	67.8

### Gender distribution (%)

Males	46
Females	54

### Age distribution (%)

0-14	16.0
Of working age (males 15-60, females 15-57)	62.4
Over working age	21.6

### Ethnic distribution (%)

Latvians	58.5
Russians	29.0
Belarussians	3.9
Ukrainians	2.6
Poles	2.5
Lithuanians	1.4
Others	2.1

### Human Development Index rank (Global HDR 2003)

Adult literacy rate (%)	99.8
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### Health

Average life expectancy (years)	71
Males	65
Females	77
Infant mortality (per 1000 births)	9.8
Number of physicians (per 10,000 inhabitants)	34

### Economy

Total GDP (millions of lats)	5195
GDP per capita (lats, at average prices of 2000)	2130
Real GDP per capita (PPP)	8460
Real growth of GDP (%)	6.1
Unemployment rate (% of work force)	8.5

### Distribution of employment by sector (%)

Agriculture	15.4
Industry	25.6
Services	59.0

### Government expenditures (% of GDP)

Total	38.6
of which: Defence	1.3
Education	7.1
Health	3.6
Social Security	12.4

Average exchange rate of LVL per USD	0.618
Average exchange rate of LVL per EUR	0.583

Land area (km <sup>2</sup> )	64,589
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# Introduction

The **Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003** is about human security – a theme never comprehensively addressed in any publication in Latvia and crucial for understanding the state of human development.

As a result of Latvia's transition from Soviet occupation to independence, from oppressive rule to democracy, and from a State-run economy to a market economy, the inhabitants of Latvia have experienced substantial changes in their lives over the last fifteen years. While these changes have lead to the country's rapid, but at times erratic economic growth, the accompanying polarization of society is a serious concern that current and future governments will have to address.

The opening of international borders, along with the ease of access to means of communication and sources of information, has generated new opportunities for people to interface with a seemingly wider world. At the same time, individuals have had to become more competitive in a changing job market, and adapt to fundamental changes in the country's health and social care system. The fall of the Soviet regime resulted in new types of relations between the government and society, and between the government and the individual. People who had been expected to rely on the government for essential goods and services are now compelled to rely more on themselves.

Many people in Latvia have viewed these changes as opportunities. They have pro-actively taken measures

to increase their well-being and that of those around them. These people have a high degree of *securitability*, meaning that they can easily return to a sense of security after exposure to insecure situations without experiencing serious anxiety or other severe consequences.

Those who exhibit a low degree of *securitability* generally see changes as threats and are unable to act decisively for their own benefit. Feelings of insecurity interfere with their ability to cope with, prevent or mitigate the risks associated with change.

A combination of certain factors analyzed in this **Report** may result in severe or chronic insecurity. The consequences of such insecurity may be anxiety, depression or other stress-related illnesses. These may be accompanied by a diminished awareness of one's personal liberty, a reduction in one's ability to make choices, a loss of trust in others, and the failure to perceive a sense of meaning in one's life.

When part of a country's population suffers from insecurity, the entire nation also suffers and is restricted in its capacity to develop. Currently it is impossible to establish how many people in Latvia feel extremely insecure, and it is impossible to measure precisely the degree of security or insecurity that people feel, since the perception of security changes from day to day based on individual factors, external events and perceptions of actual and possible events. However, it is necessary to acknowledge and deal with these perceptions and the issues that cause them, as well as to analyze the anatomy of human security.

## Why study human security in Latvia?

- To strengthen the capacity of Latvia's inhabitants to cope with change;
- To increase the *securitability* of the people of Latvia (i.e. their capacity to be and to feel secure);
- To encourage individuals, society and the State to be pro-active in preventing situations in which people might reach critical thresholds of insecurity;
- To explore ways in which individuals, society and the State can cooperate in increasing *securitability* in the country.

Latvia is on the threshold of European Union membership. As global citizens, the people of Latvia are likely to continue to encounter momentous changes. The ability of the country as a whole to anticipate and deal constructively with these changes will depend on each and every individual's ability to maintain high levels of *securitability*.

As Latvia's social structure changed in the 1990s, many people developed skills to ensure their own security and learned to cope with insecure situations. However, certain people continue to suffer from anxiety and other consequences of insecurity because they have lacked access to resources that could help them to develop such skills, because surrounding conditions have not provided them with visible opportunities to increase their well-being, and because some of their *securitability factors* are weak.

The number of people experiencing a high degree of insecurity in Latvia must be reduced. Widespread insecurity affects not only the insecure, but also those around them. It influences successive generations, and is slowing Latvia's rate of *human development*. Individuals must acquire an increased ability to take action. The State must stimulate the enhancement of *securitability factors* as well as prevent insecurity in realms that are within its purview and beyond individual control. It is the responsibility of the government to forestall the development of conditions in which certain groups of people fall below a critical security threshold.

## Aims of the Report

The main objective of this **Report** is to encourage initiatives that would decrease the high levels of insecurity experienced by wide segments of the population in Latvia and to increase the *securitability* of society as a whole. The **Report** urges both the people and the government to develop the ability to act appropriately for dealing with potentially insecure life situations.

**The Report will have achieved its objectives if within two years of its publication:**

- People in Latvia become familiar with the notion of *human security* and have an opinion on how to reduce their levels of insecurity;
- Readers of the **Report** will find the information it conveys relevant to enhancing their own and their families' and other peoples' capacity to reduce, prevent, and overcome insecurity;
- People will improve their social networking environment to increase their security;
- Policymakers, politicians and civil servants will see human security as a crucial consideration in policy planning.

As a result, the population's ability to increase its sense of security and state of security and to cope with insecure circumstances will have increased. At the same time, the government's ability to address issues related to insecurity will have been enhanced.

To achieve these goals, the **Report**:

- Provides an overview of the human security situation in Latvia;
- Identifies the main perceived risks to the security of the people of Latvia in 2002/2003;
- Highlights the determining characteristics of individuals who risk falling below a security threshold and the consequences of extreme insecurity;
- Identifies *securitability factors* and provides recommendations on how to enhance them.

A detailed analysis of the main perceived risks to people's security is not within the scope of this **Report**. Each concern deserves consideration in its own right and one limited **Report** would not do justice to all of the issues. A person with a high degree of *securitability* will read potential threats as early warning signals and develop strategies to prevent, mitigate and/or cope with them.

The development of the concept of *securitability* is the main contribution of this **Report** to a growing global discussion on the nature of human security. The word *securitability* (*drošumspēja*) was developed by this **Report's** Latvian authors and has no direct equivalent in the English language. It is defined as "a set of thoughts, feelings and behaviours that allow a person to feel secure and return to a sense of security following any type of insecure situation." *Securitability* prevents a person from sliding under a critical *security threshold*. This security threshold is the level below which an individual feels helpless in dealing with a given situation. He or she experiences trauma and depression, develops an addiction or addictive behaviour as a maladaptive attempt to cope, and may even attempt to suicide. This Latvian **Report** is unique among studies on human security by postulating the existence of five basic *securitability factors*, which are instrumental in helping people to improve both their actual state and sense of security.

## The importance of a sense of security

The success of Latvia as a constituent member of the European Union will depend on the ability of Latvia's State structures, organizations and individuals to work in a constructive, pro-active manner on issues of concern at the national, European and global levels. The State owes it to its people to deal with issues of human security, but it is just as much the individual's responsibility to take the initiative and enhance the security of his or her surrounding environment.

In 1991, while standing guard on barricades to prevent Soviet troops from entering Riga, their capital city, the people of Latvia were united. They were in real physical danger, but felt secure in their determination to achieve the peaceful restoration of their

country's independence. A common expression during this independence struggle was: "We want our freedom, even if we have to walk in leather sandals to get it" (meaning that people were willing to endure economic hardship to obtain their country's sovereignty).

The chain of events since then has led to the polarization of society and to a rise in the number of people experiencing poverty. Economically deprived individuals are among some of the most insecure people in Latvia, but there are many others as well. This **Report** encourages those who are active and reasonably able to ensure their own security to transfer their *securitability factors* to those with a high sense of insecurity. It also seeks to help those experiencing high levels of insecurity to find a way forward. Both measures are necessary for the nation as a whole, so that everyone in Latvia can continue along the path of human development.

# Definitions and Dimensions of Human Security

Almost everyone feels insecure at times. A single stressful incident, if not overly traumatic, does not usually cause severe insecurity. However, some people are better equipped to deal with stressful situations than others.

Those possessing the skills and knowledge needed to cope with feelings of insecurity are able to deter long-term fear or panic in the case of a threat to their security. They are able to avoid, or protect themselves, from most situations of insecurity; but if they can't, then they are able to mitigate or cope with these threats and eventually regain a feeling of security. This form of resilience is referred to in this **Report** as *securitability*, a word devised by the **Report's** authors. Individuals with a high degree of *securitability* read feelings of insecurity as warning signs that they must take action to protect themselves – alone or with others, rather than fall into apathy and despair.

Individuals with a low degree of *securitability*, however, are more prone to experiencing chronic insecurity, which may lead to extremely negative and irreversible consequences. The lack of *securitability factors* in their personal characteristics, combined with either a series of continued, unpleasant events or a sudden trauma, may push them over what is termed in this **Report** as a *security threshold*.

Due to their role as early warning signals, not all feelings of insecurity are to be considered as undesirable, provided that they are dealt with quickly and that they spur the individual into action. This **Report** does not look at peoples' inclinations to seek excitement from insecure situations (such as bungee jumping or mercenary fighting in wars), because these are risks that people choose to take of their own free will.

## Human security definitions

Numerous definitions of *human security* have been offered as people throughout the world continue to seek one common, unifying understanding of it. The *UNDP Human Development Report 1994* defined human security as "freedom from fear and freedom from want." Fear and want prevent people from

choosing an appropriate way of life for themselves, which is why human security is a pre-requisite for *human development* (see definition below).

Human security is a people-centred concept. It centres upon individuals and population groups, rather than on countries. National security and military security are not the same as human security, with which they sometimes may come into conflict.

The general concepts of security and insecurity are universal and applicable to both rich and poor, women and men, children and the elderly.

## Human development and human security

Human development is an alternative development concept introduced by the United Nations Development Programme in 1990. The concept of human development contests the conventional understanding of development as merely economic growth and material wealth. Human development is thus defined as the expansion of capabilities and opportunities for human beings to lead full lives. In addition to income, it focuses on education, health, freedom of choice, participation and other aspects deemed relevant in specific local contexts. Human development is generally measured by the Human Development Index (HDI), which includes indicators on income, literacy levels, and life expectancy. These indicators are often reviewed to reflect country-relevant situations. (See Appendix for the *Review of Latvia's Main Human Development Indicators*.)

The human development paradigm includes various analytical aspects, such as human poverty and human security. Human poverty is a state of deprivation with regard to the capabilities and opportunities essential for human development. Poverty may manifest itself as the lack of the capability to live beyond a certain age, the lack of the opportunity to participate in government decisions affecting one's life at a local or national level, and, of course, the lack of a sufficient level of income. Human poverty is general-



ly measured by the Human Poverty Index (HPI), which is based on the number of people living below poverty thresholds set in each dimension of human development – the percentage of people not expected to surpass the age of 60, the percentage of functionally illiterate adults, the percentage of people with disposable incomes of less than 50% of the median, the proportion of long-term unemployed (12 months and more). Human poverty indicators and poverty threshold levels may be adjusted to reflect country-relevant situations.

In the early 1990s, the United Nations Development Programme published the first global reports on human development in which human security was a basic theme. The *UNDP Human Development Report 1993* stated that “the concept of security must change – from an exclusive stress on national security to a much greater stress on people’s security, from security through armaments to security through human development, from territorial security to food, employment and environmental security” (UNDP, 1993).

## Box 1.1

## Terms used in this Report

**Community** – a group of people united by geographical location, some aspect of social identity and/or common motives.

**Human development** – the expansion of people’s capabilities and opportunities to lead full lives. Its three essential elements are: long and healthy lives (health); the opportunity to continually acquire knowledge (education); and access to the resources needed for maintaining a decent standard of living (material well-being).

**Human security** – the state of being free of fear and free of want.

**Levels of security** – security at the individual, family, community, national and international level.

**Networks** – contacts and relations among people.

**Networking** – a process whereby people approach each other for mutual help and/or support.

**Risk** – a possible negative occurrence.

**Security (*drošība*)** – the state of being free of threats to one’s well-being.

**Security constellations** – configurations of security providers at different *levels of security* with coordinated strategies to deal with commonly defined human security issues.

**Security providers** – individuals, organizations and institutions that offer people security and a sense of security.

**Security strategies (personal)** – an individual’s consciously developed plans to prevent insecurity and feelings of insecurity, and to minimize the effects of insecurity and cope with it if it cannot be avoided.

**Security threshold** (*a non-technical term*) – the crossing into an undesirable state of being in which one loses one’s ability to take action as a result of a set of negative factors. Without an improvement in the situation or an increase in *securitability* factors, an individual beyond the security threshold is unable to regain a sense of security.

**Seuritability** – the ability to avoid insecure situations and to retain a sense of security when such situations do occur, as well as the ability reestablish one’s security and sense of security when these have been compromised.

**Seuritability factors** – the internal traits of individuals (thoughts and emotions, knowledge and skills) and the action they take, along with external structural conditions (medical services, access to the labour market, etc.) upon which human security depends.

**Sense of security (*drošums or drošības sajūta*)** – a person’s internal state of feeling secure resulting from the cumulative effect of objective and subjective factors.

**Social capital** – advantages (such as material, psychological, health) gained by those individuals, families and groups with the best mutual contacts. This term is still being developed.

**Threat** – an imminent negative occurrence.



The *UNDP Human Development Report 1994 – New Dimensions of Human Security* presented the first comprehensive analysis of the concept of human security (UNDP, 1994). That Report stressed that human security consists of two attributes: 1) freedom from chronic threats to security, e.g. hunger, disease, and oppression; as well as 2) protection from sudden and painful changes in everyday life, at the workplace, at home or in the neighbourhood. The Report identified seven important realms of security: economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security.

The *UNDP Human Development Report 1994* proposed the development of an index for objectively measuring human security in a similar manner to the Human Development Index (HDI) and Human Poverty Index (HPI). To date, as this Report on Human Development is under preparation, no Human Security Index has been developed that could be placed alongside the two other indices. This is because different countries and cultures interpret risks differently and attribute varying degrees of significance to them, and because researchers cannot agree on methods for measuring subjective aspects of human security in a way that can be compared. However, researchers around the world are continuing to work toward the development of a Human Security Index.

## The international context of human security

Individuals, their families, their communities and the political structures that they develop – such as local and national governments – have sought throughout the centuries to safeguard human security. Human security became an issue of concern on the international level when the International Committee of the Red Cross was founded in Geneva in 1863. It is mentioned in the UN Charter, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other agreements.

Since the last decade of the 20th century the international community has been paying increasing attention to humanitarian crises in such countries as Somalia, Rwanda, Bosnia, East Timor and Kosovo and intervening in order to protect human security. Millions of people have become victims of these crises due to the failure or inability of national governments to protect the human security of those within their jurisdiction.

The 1990s also brought increased attention to other dangers that threaten people across national borders, such as HIV/AIDS and other diseases, arms sales, terrorism, the trafficking of human beings, the spread of drugs, environmental degradation, the illegal flow of capital, etc.

At the 2000 Millennium Summit of the United Nations, Secretary-General Kofi Annan invited the world to stand up for fundamental human freedoms, including the right to live free of fear and free of want, thus emphasizing the need not only for human development, but also for one of its most important aspects – human security.

The UN Human Security Commission was then set up to define the scope of human security. It developed the concept in two directions or projects:

**The Conflict Project** investigated situations in which individuals and communities are confronted with extraordinary situations, such as when they are persecuted and forced to leave their homes. It examined the special needs of refugees and victims of conflict, and involved planning strategies for enhancing human development in the most extreme situations of violence.

**The Human Development Project** studied insecurity in connection with poverty, health, education, gender inequality and other issues, including globalization. The role of community organizations, State and international institutions in reducing insecurity was examined along with the acuteness and prevalence of various threats to security.

In its endeavours to arrive at a definition of human security, the Commission agreed that human security entails:

- A clear focus on individual human lives in contrast to the notion of “national security” in the military context;
- An understanding and acknowledgement of the role of civil society, including private corporations and NGOs, and that of social networks in making human lives more secure;
- An emphasis on curtailing the downside risks to human life, rather than on the expansion of human freedom, which is a broader goal of human development;
- An emphasis on the participation and empowerment of individuals and communities in achieving human security;
- An understanding of new manifestations of problems and threats (such as organized crime,

cross-border trafficking in women and children, the proliferation of narcotics) at the global level.

Other international organizations and national governments are also involved in deepening an understanding of and finding solutions to threats to human security (see Box 1.2). Research on human security is taking place in many of the world's leading universities.

However, a number of political scientists see the proposed definitions of human security as being too different and diverse. The absence of criteria for setting priorities is also problematic (Paris, 2001). Harvard researchers, for example, advocate that only violence (of both criminal and military origin) should be made the subject of annual comparative reports of human security at the global level (Mack, 2002).

In June 2003, the Commission on Human Security published the most comprehensive report on human security to date – *Human Security Now*. The report

provides a detailed analysis of human security, as well as policy recommendations for improving human security on a global scale. It also announces the establishment of a permanent advisory council on human security at the UN.

## Human security in Latvia

In 2002 Latvia was classified for the first time as a country with a high level of human development, according to the criteria of the Human Development Index. This might lead one to think that Latvia has no major human security issues. There have not been large numbers of deaths due to violence or natural disasters. The population is not suffering from famine, regular terrorist attacks or widespread disease. Major economic, political and social changes since independence have provided individuals with opportunities to act on their own behalf. Nevertheless, each reader of this **Report** in Latvia can likely

### Box 1.2

#### International actors involved with human security

**Common Security Forum** – founded in 1992 at the University of Cambridge. It involves politicians and scholars from 56 countries for the purpose of discussing and expanding the notion of human security.

**Commission on Human Security** – established in 2001 under the auspices of the United Nations. It promotes public understanding, engagement and support of human security; is developing the concept of human security as an operational tool for policy formulation and implementation; and has proposed a programme of action to address critical and pervasive threats to human security.

**Human Security Network** – an association of 12 nations\* dedicated to supporting national endeavours for improving human security. Topics of discussion at annual meetings include such international human security issues as conventions on corruption, landmines, torture, children's rights, interfaith dialogue, terrorism, NGO co-operation on the environment, human rights, etc. The most urgent threats to human security are considered at each meeting.

A number of countries treat human security as a priority in foreign affairs:

- **Japan** – sees human security as a fundamental pillar of foreign affairs, defining it as “freedom from prevailing threats to survival, daily life, and dignity.” It has established the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security that supports human security improvement projects worldwide.
- **Canada** – supports international projects in line with the following definition of human security: “freedom from threats to human rights, security or life.”
- **Norway** – supports “the right to live in freedom from fear” by concentrating on a narrow scope of projects: preventative operations in peacekeeping and limiting the spread of small arms.

\* Austria, Canada, Chile, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand

Alkire, 2002

name friends or relatives who feel that they cannot sufficiently influence the course of their own lives and the development of society at large.

At the inception of this **Report**, there was no systematic body of information about human security in Latvia: on the main issues of concern to the country's inhabitants, on the principal risk groups, or on the methods used by people to achieve a sense of security. To gain preliminary answers to these questions, the UNDP Latvia commissioned the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002** of 1000 permanent residents of Latvia over the age of 18. The core issues raised and the methodology of this **Survey** are described in detail in the Methodology section at the end of this **Report**. The **Survey's** results are available in SPSS format at <http://www.undp.riga.lv>.

The **Survey** identifies the main issues of concern to respondents in their personal lives and establishes what the respondents perceive as general sources of insecurity. It also offers an insight into the circumstances, relations, institutions, actions and strategies that provide a sense of security. Through confidential written questions, the **Survey** identifies those factors that are most likely to cause the respondents extreme anxiety. Most importantly, it establishes a profile of individuals who risk experiencing the highest degrees of insecurity and anxiety.

The **Survey** was followed up by a series of interviews and case studies, together with an analysis of other studies, from which the **Report's** authors derived a set of five *securitability factors*. These fac-

tors are considered to be most relevant in the Latvian context, as they provide an analytical tool for individuals, public organizations and governments (local and national) to take action to increase peoples' ability to feel and be secure (see section on *securitability* below).

## Levels of security

Although the individual is the focus of human security considerations, human security may also be examined at the level of the individual's family and closest relationships, community, country, and international arena. This **Report** has analyzed individual security relationships at these main levels of security.

The individual is in interaction with each of these levels. Children come into the world with their genetic predispositions. They receive their first signals about security from their family members, then from others. As a result of an accumulation of positive life experiences, children gradually become more secure and come to feel less threatened by new environments or situational changes.

Human life can be conceived of as proceeding outward from the centre of a series of concentric circles (see Box 1.3). Security in any particular sphere will translate into a greater sense of security and ability to act at subsequent levels. However, insecurity at any one level may have negative ramifications on people's sense of security at other levels.

Box 1.3

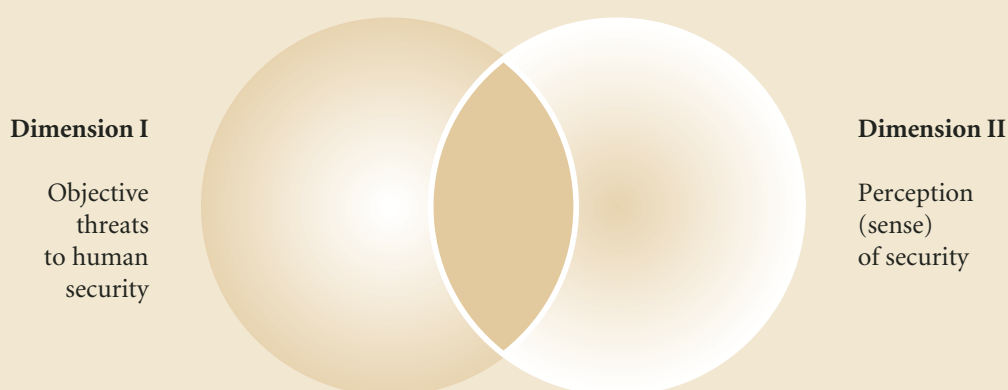
### Levels of human security



UNDP Latvia, 2003

Box 1.4

### Dimensions of human security



UNDP Latvia, 2003

## Security and sense of security

Human security involves two interconnected dimensions – an objective state of security and a subjective sense of security. *Security* is the actual state of being free from threat, while *sense of security* can be defined as the inner state of feeling secure. A *sense of security* is the cumulative effect of a set of subjective and objective factors. While in English human security can describe the two dimensions simultaneously, in Latvian security (*drošība*) and sense of security (*drošums* or *drošības sajūta*) are two distinct concepts.

This **Report** analyzes the sense of security that people feel in tandem with their objective security situation. The authors of this **Report** have focussed their attention on the interface between the two dimensions of human security (see darkest field, Box 1.4 below). This **Report** is not broad enough to consider all realms in which human security is at risk. It is committed to helping individuals raise their capacity to increase their own level of security, while focusing on those perceptions of insecurity that can actually be changed because they are founded on real, objective threats.

The **Survey** respondents' sense of security was evaluated, analyzed and determined through questionnaires, interviews and tests, while objective aspects of human security were measured through available statistics. Some of the **Report's** findings for both dimensions are listed in Chapter 2. It is important to note that an individual's sense of security is not always altered when real situational changes

occur, since human perceptions are influenced by many factors (see Chapter 3).

## Issues of concern within the seven realms of human security

The core of human security can be defined as each and every person's fundamental right to life, physical security, and freedom from premature and preventable death. Everything else related to human security is heavily influenced by perception. For example, some people who are poor accept their economic situation as a given and actively find ways of coping without feeling overly insecure or anxious. For others, low income may induce pronounced feelings of anxiety, helplessness and insecurity.

In recognition of the fact that all facets of life are subject to insecurity, the authors of this **Report** have concentrated on the seven realms identified in the *UNDP Human Development Report 1994*. These realms are organized according to the issues perceived as most significant by the respondents of the **Survey**. They have been adapted to reflect issues of current concern in Latvia (see Box 2.1, Chapter 2). The **Report's** evaluation of the situation in Latvia according to the seven realms of human security may eventually be useful for international comparison.

The emphasis on particular human security issues depends on where one is located. In Africa, for example, economic security has been a prime human secu-

rity topic (Symposium in Africa, May 2001). Studies in Turkmenistan, which is experiencing a transition period from central planning to a market economy, also cite poverty, disparities in income, unemployment and corruption as factors that negatively affect human security (Round Table Discussion in Central Asia, 2001). Many recent international studies of human security have focused on areas of global concern, such as small arms traffic, prostitution, war, poverty, etc.

Securitability

People stand to improve their circumstances greatly by improving their *securitability*. *Securitability* implies that there are both objective and subjective issues at play in achieving a sense of security. Each person is influenced by a series of situations (events and conditions) in their lives. Depending on whether an individual has a high or low degree of *securitability*, he or she can perceive a given situation as either an opportunity, a warning signal to avoid or prevent a risk, or a risk itself (see Box 1.5).

The degree of *securitability* that one has affects how one will react to situations. Individuals possessing a high degree of *securitability* are able to act on their own or together with like-minded people at the family, community and national levels to increase their security. Their sense of security may occasionally suffer, but only temporarily. Even if they are not aware of it, they use risk-management skills to deal with the situation at hand. They make use of the lessons they have learned and develop their own personal security strategies to regain both their subjective sense of security and objective state of security.

This **Report** pays particular attention to those groups of people with a low degree of *securitability*, who find it more difficult to cope with difficult situations. Traumatic events such as the loss of a close person or incidents of violence can dramatically decrease a person's sense of security, as can such conditions as chronic poverty, ill health, alcohol abuse, etc. Under such conditions, even an event or condition that is seemingly insignificant to others can push a person beyond his or her *security threshold*.

Box 1.5

The effect of *securitability* on perception of situations and the resulting consequences



UNDP Latvia, 2003

## Box 1.6

**Securitability factors (SF)**

## SF1 – Individual characteristics

- Life satisfaction
- Confidence in one's ability to effect change/Initiative
- Self-esteem
- Health
- Religious faith
- Sense of belonging to a group or community

## SF2 – Positive, close relations

## SF3 – Economic security (predictable, sufficient income)

## SF4 – Ability to network (informal and formal)

## SF5 – Ability to trust in and cooperate with government and international organizations

UNDP, 2003

Just as human security cannot be evaluated according to an objective index, so the security threshold cannot be easily defined, yet it exists for each and every person. Living beneath this threshold results in feelings of paralysis and places limitations on one's ability to act in one's own interests. Chapter 3 focuses on those groups of people in Latvia who are most at risk of falling below the security threshold, as well as the consequences that may result from doing so. These consequences include anxiety, depression and other afflictions, which may even lead in extreme cases to suicide.

**Securitability factors**

*Securitability factors* are elements that determine how secure or insecure a person feels. These factors are different for each and every person. Data obtained from the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002**, as well as findings from other studies, interviews and case studies have led the authors to define five core *securitability factors*. These *securitability factors* have the largest potential for improving the ability of Latvia's inhabitants to feel secure, or to return to a sense of security following exposure to a threatening situation. Not all of them are key for every individual in Latvia, but they are nearly universal and extremely significant for the population as a whole (see Box 1.6). The strengthening of these *securitability factors* to the widest possible extent would greatly increase many people's security and the sense of security.

The authors of this **Report** believe that action toward improving human security in Latvia can best be taken through the prism of the five *securitability factors* listed below.

**Individual characteristics – SF1**

Studies show that people depend most on themselves and on their family members to achieve a sense of security (see Box 1.7). Chapter 4 analyzes the individual characteristics and positive close relationships that allow a person to be and feel secure, as the two are inextricable. This is true regardless of gender, geographic area, ethnicity and other parameters. The Chapter also examines the slow transition through life from reliance on others to a greater reliance on one's self.

**Positive, close relationships – SF2**

Family life is changing in Latvia, as described in Chapter 2 in the section on Community Security, with potential ramifications for human security. However, the single most important cause of extreme insecurity for people in Latvia is emotional, physical and sexual abuse, especially in the family. People who have experienced abuse tend to exhibit a higher sense of insecurity in many different realms. Threatening family situations leave people vulnerable and with weakened individual characteristics such as self-esteem, the ability to effect change, the ability to interact with others, etc. The issue of abuse is addressed in Chapters 3 and 4.

**Economic security – SF3**

Economic security, which is expressed in income predictability and sufficiency, is the second most significant *securitability factor*. It is frequently mentioned by many people in open-ended questions and



interviews. Those with lower incomes and who perceive themselves as poor are often intensely concerned with other interrelated issues such as health care, which may entail considerable expenses. Economic security for the vulnerable is becoming ever more relevant as economic polarization continues to increase in the country. Economic security is addressed in all of the chapters of this **Report**. Both informal and formal networking can help disadvantaged people to become more economically secure (Chapter 5). The government's role in promoting economic security is crucial (Chapter 6) for the economically disadvantaged.

### Ability to network (informal and formal) – SF4

Informal social networks such as the family, friends and colleagues are an important source of security for many people in Latvia. There is great potential for formal networks such as NGOs to help many of the country's inhabitants increase their level of security. The ability to network is crucial to the success of NGOs and other formal organizations and must be fostered. These issues are discussed in detail in Chapter 5. Several case studies of successful NGO activity in Latvia are highlighted to demonstrate how an increase in community activity can benefit a great many people and increase their level of *securitability*.

### Ability to trust in and cooperate with government and international organizations – SF5

People must believe that their government truly intends to fulfill its role in protecting human security and that it has the capacity to do so. This capacity is reflected in its ability to achieve well-formulated goals and to fulfill its mandate both domestically and internationally. Government institutions must be perceived to be free of corruption and their officials as governing for the benefit of the people.

According to the **Survey**, municipal institutions are seen as a greater source of security than central government institutions. Many people have direct contact with municipal organizations in their everyday life and rely on them for support services. The government is at the bottom of the list of institutions trusted by the public.

As can be seen in Box 1.8, people feel that they can rely more on specific government institutions such as the police, or on the country's justice and social welfare systems, than on the government as a whole or the Saeima (parliament). The reasons for this are noted in the section on political security in Chapter 2. Potential methods for improving the role of the government as a *securitability factor* are described in Chapter 6.

International organizations are not usually perceived as supporting individuals in their quest for security. This is due in part to a steady stream of negative media information about various, persistent global problems, the failure of many in Latvia to connect local issues with global processes, and the relatively recent reintegration of Latvia into the world family of nations. Few people are aware of the ramifications of government activities when it acts on their behalf in international institutions.

Having experienced only 13 years of independence and having yet to feel the full benefits of regionalization (i.e. Latvia's integration into the EU and NATO), many are simply not aware of the international resources available to address their perceived risks at a global level. The ability to turn to international organizations for increasing one's *securitability* is included as a facet of SF5 (see Chapter 6) in anticipation of the conditions and events that Latvia's future is expected to bring – including an increase in the number of personal, cross-border contacts, a pronounced need to be globally competitive in order to feel economically secure, etc.

The five *securitability factors* mentioned above are not all equally important to all people in Latvia. **Survey** respondents were asked in different ways to cite what contributes to their sense of security (see Boxes 1.7 and 1.8 for two examples). The compilation of information from the survey, interviews and other studies shows that currently people in Latvia rely most on their closest relationships, on having sufficient financial resources and on themselves for feeling secure.

The sources of security at people's disposal vary in importance according to the individual. Religious faith was one of the most often mentioned *securitability factors* by Russian-speaking women in the **Survey**. For Russian-speaking men commercial security services were significant. Latvian-speaking respondents indicated their sense of belonging to the Latvian ethnic group as a meaningful aspect of their lives.



The most significant sources of security for the Survey's respondents are covered within the five *securitability factors* mentioned in this Chapter. For certain respondents both the USA and Russia were associated with a sense of insecurity. Significant attitudinal differences were noted on the part of citizens and non-citizens with respect to Russia. Citizens were more likely to perceive Russia as a threat, while non-citizens were more likely to see Russia as a source of security.

## Security strategies

People with a high degree of *securitability* possess a wide repertoire of security-enhancing strategies that are grounded in their knowledge and skills. Among these skills is the ability to assess one's internal and external resources, and to evaluate the significance of perceived risks. Internal resources are those *securitability factors* that can be activated without outside assistance. External resources are those that must be accessed through cooperation with others.

Security strategies allow individuals to better deal with sources of insecurity and overcome feelings of insecurity. People require skills such as the following to develop security strategies:

- the ability to perceive warning signals;
- the ability to access information about a problematic issue;
- the ability to systematize this information;
- the ability to develop scenarios for action;
- the ability to take action;
- the ability to interact constructively with other people.

Security strategies are not fully discussed in this **Report**, since the **Survey's** questions and other data sources were able to provide only an initial assessment of the human security situation in Latvia at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Understanding how individuals develop their security strategies could help policy makers to establish how the country's most vulnerable people can best be helped.

### Box 1.7

#### Comparison of selected security providers. Average value\*

"Who could you turn to for support in a difficult situation?"

	All	Men	Women	Urban	Rural	Riga	Vidzeme	Kurzeme	Zemgale	Latgale
<b>Myself</b>	1.88	1.82	1.94	1.89	1.87	1.76	1.88	2.44	1.85	1.66
<b>Relatives</b>	2.24	2.35	2.13	2.17	2.39	2.26	2.11	2.79	1.76	2.37
<b>Friends</b>	2.90	2.85	2.95	2.81	3.12	2.78	2.74	3.30	2.82	3.13
<b>Colleagues</b>	4.52	4.35	4.66	4.49	4.59	4.54	4.42	4.66	4.53	4.47
<b>State and municipal institutions</b>	4.73	4.86	4.61	4.81	4.54	5.03	4.67	3.97	5.02	4.54
<b>NGOs</b>	5.26	5.32	5.20	5.28	5.19	5.12	5.44	4.74	5.51	5.48
<b>International organizations</b>	6.38	6.36	6.39	6.46	6.19	6.50	6.53	5.88	6.43	6.27

\* Values: 1 – most support 7 – least support

UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

Box 1.8

### Selected factors contributing to people's sense of security, by average value

Average value		Average value	
Family	3.24	Social welfare system	2.39
Friends	3.04	Faith in destiny	2.38
Own actions	3.02	Municipality	2.37
Faith in God	2.70	Newspapers, radio, television	2.30
Commercial security services	2.61	Social organizations (NGOs etc.)	2.29
Ethnic identity and belonging	2.60	State (government) employment support system	2.28
Informal networks (classmates, colleagues, etc.)	2.58	Justice system	2.26
Church	2.53	UN	2.23
Police and law-enforcement system	2.53	NATO	2.17
Scientific discoveries / new technologies	2.50	Latvian government	2.14
Neighbours	2.50	EU	2.12
Latvian armed forces	2.47	USA	1.90
Health care institutions	2.46	Russia	1.83

1 – decreases my sense of security    2 – does not affect my sense of security  
 3 – increases my sense of security    4 – strongly increases my sense of security

UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

## Security constellations

*Securability* does not only depend on individual security strategies. The overall *securability* of the country as a whole will depend on the ability of individuals, social networks and the government to develop security strategies together and act upon them in security constellations. *Security constellations* are defined as configurations of security providers at different levels with coordinated strategies to deal with specific human security issues. The stars in these constellations are the

various actors. Their interface reflects the contours of these constellations. The optimal result is enhanced security, which cannot be attained to the most favourable degree if the security providers work alone or without coordination. For example, any serious attempt to combat drug use in schools is unlikely to be successful without the combined efforts of parents, teachers, the community, and State institutions.

The **Survey's** respondents were presented with a list of existing and potential threats, and asked to

Box 1.9

**Respondents' self-assessment of their ability to influence selected security risks, and percentage of respondents expressing a fear of each risk (as *slightly afraid* or *afraid*)**

**“Can you yourself or together with others reduce this risk?”**

	Yes, I can (%)	I fear this risk (%)		Yes, I can (%)	I fear this risk (%)
Environmental pollution in Latvia	51	87	Foreigners buying up land in Latvia	9	67
Threats to the survival of my language and culture	42	59	Foreign producers forcing local producers out of the Latvian market	8	70
Food poisoning	40	78	The spread of HIV/AIDS world-wide	7	82
Hazardous waste dumps in Latvia	29	87	The partial loss of Latvia's sovereignty	7	48
Clear-cutting of forests in Latvia	23	86	The occupation of Latvia	7	41
Population decline	22	59	Latvian producers losing their market share in other countries	6	64
Ethnic conflict in Latvia	21	44	Organized crime in Latvia	6	88
The spread of HIV/AIDS in Latvia	18	88	The influx of refugees in Latvia	6	58
High amount of preservatives in food	17	81	Armed conflict in Latvia	5	47
Limitations on democracy and free speech in Latvia	17	50	Global warming	5	66
The abandonment of farmland in Latvia	17	76	Terrorism in Latvia	5	51
Environmental pollution worldwide	16	79	Rapid price increases	4	84
An environmental disaster in Latvia	16	73	International terrorism in Latvia	4	50
Exodus from Latvia's rural areas	14	67	Nuclear threats	2	58
The spread of narcotics	14	91	The devaluation of the lat	2	65
Internal unrest	11	47			

UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

indicate which ones could be best addressed through individual or collective action, and which ones could not. This measurement of perceptions does not nec-

essarily imply an actual willingness to work toward decreasing the threats cited. Box 1.9 shows the results in combination with the perceived risk of each threat.

It illustrates the correlation between people's sense of security and their assessment of their ability to reduce risks to their security.

About half of the **Survey's** respondents (51%) felt that alone or together with others they could reduce environmental pollution. Somewhat less (42%) felt that they could deal with threats to the survival of their language and culture, as well as the threat of food poisoning (40%). The next most often cited threats that seemed amenable to action were also connected to the environment – hazardous waste dumps (29%) and the clear-cutting of forests in Latvia (23%). In general, Latvians felt that they had a greater ability to reduce and deal with threats to their security than did non-Latvians.

Not surprisingly, respondents felt least able to avert threats related to currency devaluation (2%), nuclear disasters (2%), international terrorism in Latvia (4%), rapid price increases (4%), terrorism in Latvia (5%), global warming (5%), and military conflict (5%).

However, in what the **Survey's** authors perceive as a disturbing finding, respondents placed low ratings on their ability to deal with those issues that they had rated as most threatening, such as the spread of drug abuse, HIV/AIDS, etc.

Sociologist Z. Bauman has stated that collective powerlessness will grow as long as there are no simple and clear mechanisms to transform private problems into public issues and *vice versa*. Before such mechanisms are developed and become widespread, people's private fears cannot become issues of public discourse (Bauman, 1999).

## Summary

Human security is developing rapidly across the world as a concept. It is a precondition for human development, since living free from fear and want allows a person to expand his or her choices on how to live. In Latvia human security has been analyzed through the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002**, along with other studies and interviews. The first part of this Report identifies human security concerns, while the second looks at possible solutions for increasing people's security and *securitability* through concentric circles, beginning from the individual and going through the community, national and international/global levels. Both security as an objective state of being and a sense of security are essential dimensions of human security.

The *securitability factors* mentioned in this **Report** must be enhanced for those with high levels of insecurity. Since the recovery of Latvia's independence, individuals have been compelled to rely more on themselves, to develop their own security strategies and to plan their own lives. In the constantly changing environment of post-Soviet Latvia, some people have become unable to deal with the new political, social and economic changes.

Well-developed *securitability factors* strengthen other *securitability factors*. However, those most vulnerable to certain risks (unemployment, poverty, crime, drug addiction) are least able to strengthen their *securitability* on their own. The economically disadvantaged, for example, perceive many risks to their human security, while the internal and external resources of the more prosperous allow them to insulate themselves against most threats to their security.

Human security is a basic need, and it is disturbing that many people in Latvia lack the skills and knowledge to develop an appropriate strategy for improving their lives. Individuals from the risk groups mentioned in Chapter 3 feel vulnerable and threatened by various external forces. Some see their social environment as a source of risks and threats to their security, rather than as one that invites the exchange of ideas and the formulation of joint goals. Many have limited social networks, and the security-enhancing potential of the NGO sector is largely untapped. Highly insecure individuals often live alone or isolated within their family units and try to avert potential threats to their security on their own.

The more insecure people feel, the more obstacles they encounter that adversely affect their actions and limit their ability to function. Insecurity not only promotes a passive approach to life but also reduces people's self-esteem. In short, strong *securitability factors* help to create the circumstances and environment required for leading a fulfilled and dignified life.

Issues about which people feel insecure may change from year to year. Although the 2002/2003 **Report** is focusing on five current issues of concern for people in Latvia, readers are invited to look at other human security problems that they can improve in light of the recommendations presented here.

# The Issues

The main purpose of this Chapter is to present an overview of issues that affect human security in Latvia. This Chapter examines people's evaluations of their own security situation and links these perceptions to objective indicators that are relevant to security. These indicators have been drawn up according to seven realms of human security laid out in the global *UNDP Human Development Report 1994*: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security (see Box 2.1).

The **Report's** analysis of these seven realms of security is based on empirical data drawn from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia and from recent studies carried out by various research and government institutions in Latvia. (For additional data, see the *Review of Latvia's Main Human Development Indicators* and the *Statistical Appendix* at the end of this **Report**.) Objective indicators of human security are derived through statistical data and measures of living standards, such as income levels, crime rates, political participation, etc. Subjective indicators of human security are derived primarily from the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002**, which was commissioned for this **Report**. (For more details on the **Survey**, see the Methodology section of this **Report**.) These indicators have been referenced to determine how people evaluate security and perceived risks in their own particular circumstances. Throughout the course of this Chapter, the authors present an interpretation of how the subjective and objective dimensions of human security are interconnected.

Concerns expressed by individuals in Latvia about human security may vary according to current events. The **Survey** for this **Report** was carried out in September 2002, at the height of a parliamentary election campaign. Campaign issues were based on some of the topics people worry about most, such as economic security and the spread of narcotics. On the whole, individuals did not express concern about terrorism, war and other events that had not occurred in Latvia's immediate vicinity.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were polled prior to the October, 2002 terrorist attack in Moscow, when Chechen militants held 700 hostages in the Maria Theatre Hall. Terrorism was not cited as one of the three issues of greatest concern. However, a poll of a group of students one month later in November, 2002 listed terrorism/war/strained political relations as the second most highly rated insecurity factor. Studies in America show that even eight months after the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, two-thirds of Americans were still thinking about this event several times per week ("The Science of Anxiety," *Time*, June 10, 2002).

## Overview of risk perceptions

### Perceived personal risks

The most intensely perceived personal risks felt by **Survey** respondents fall into three categories:

- Health security (fear of falling ill, inadequate health care);
- Economic security (inability to pay for medical care, insufficient and irregular income);
- Personal security (traffic and other accidents).

A more detailed breakdown of these risks is shown in Box 2.2.

While the threats of physical and emotional abuse ranked last, they can be considered high since one-fifth of the respondents reported fearing emotional abuse and one-seventh to having experienced physical abuse. It must be noted that such issues are not usually admitted to in open questionnaires of this nature. The part of the **Survey** that was answered in private provided more telling indications about the intense trauma that abuse can cause.

### Perceived general risks

The top ranking general risks cited by the **Survey's** respondents in September 2002 were:

- the spread of narcotics (91% of respondents);
- organized crime in Latvia (88%);
- the spread of HIV/AIDS (88%);
- various economic issues;
- various ecological issues.

A great deal of anxiety was expressed about the prospect of price increases, the existence of hazardous waste dumps and the clear-cutting of forests in Latvia. A more detailed breakdown of these risks is shown in Box 2.3.

Box 2.1

## Realms of human security

### Health security

% of GDP provided to the national health care system

Subjective assessment of one's health status

Accessibility of health care

Subjective assessment of the quality of medical care

### Economic security

Sufficient, predictable income

Predictable employment

Social insurance coverage

Satisfaction with one's level of income

Income disparity

Competitiveness

### Personal security

Fear of violence

Level of crime, including abuse

Self-destructive activities

Motor vehicle accidents

Efficiency of institutions

### Environmental security

Pollution level in Latvia

General level of concern about environmental problems

Government capacity to solve environmental problems

Readiness to invest time and/or resources in maintaining the environment

## Seven realms of human security

### Food security

Physical accessibility of basic foodstuffs

Quality of nutrition

Share of household budget spent on food

### Community security

Family stability

Level of involvement in communities, social networks

### Political security

Basic human rights and freedoms

Trust in the government

Government capacity

Involvement in politics

Perception of corruption

UNDP 2003, based on the Human Security Indices Methodology developed by Vitosha Research, Sofia, 2002



Human security is usually undermined by a combination of several factors. None of the above threats in and of itself would likely cause a person to suffer severe psychological consequences. However, people who feel insecure about one particular issue may then feel a heightened concern about others. The following section of this Chapter provides an analysis of various issues of concern in the context of the seven realms of human security listed in Box 2.1 above.

## Health security

It is not surprising that different health-related issues topped the list of human security concerns in Latvia. Both men and women fear:

- 1) being unable to pay for their medical care in the case of illness (83%);
- 2) not receiving an adequate standard of medical care (83%);
- 3) falling seriously ill (83%).

Along with the general unease of an existential nature concerning health – everyone's health is destined to wane eventually, and we shall all die sooner or later – the fears expressed underscore that Latvia's health care system is perceived not to provide affordable, high quality medical care. The "rules of the game" for the State financing of health services are unclear. The country's health statistics reveal an eleven-year gap in life expectancy between men (65 years) and women (76 years). Men in Latvia rank 112th worldwide in terms of male life expectancy. (*Statistikas aktualitātes*, 2002. For more health-related statistics, see the *Review of Latvia's Main Human Development Indicators* in the Appendix.) Health security issues are often also economic issues, and those with lower incomes generally have lower levels of health security (see Box 2.4).

In 1948 the World Health Organization defined health as: a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (<http://www.who.int/en/>). Health is a major determinant of quality of life and human security. Individual health is affected by heredity, environmental factors, behaviour and lifestyle. Economic and social problems affecting society as a whole are also a serious threat to health security.

In general, those countries that invest proportionately more into health care and education have better health indicators and higher average life expectancies than those countries that invest less. Health care is still

inadequately funded in Latvia. In 2001 only 4.8% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was spent on health care, which is one of the lowest rates in Europe.

The health-related expenses that patients are having to pay for out of pocket continues to increase, limiting health security options for the poor. The **Survey** revealed that less than one-third of respondents have insured their health, only 45% have had themselves vaccinated and less than 40% participate in sports. All of these activities entail expenses.

About 39% of health-related expenses were reported to be paid out of pocket, according to the World Health Organization. This is a high proportion in comparison to Latvia's neighbouring countries (24% in Lithuania and 21.2% in Estonia), and quite high in comparison to other European nations (15.7% in Denmark and 11.3% in Germany). This is the out-of-pocket amount officially reported, and does not reflect the common practice of paying medical personnel under-the-table bonuses for health services. Thus, in a country like Latvia, with its large income disparities, considerable out-of-pocket and hidden payments for health services, and low government spending on health care, affordable health care is least accessible to those with limited income.

Respondents' assessments of their own physical, emotional, and social health reflect a great deal of concern by individuals about falling ill. The UNDP Human Security Interview analysis of 56 respondents shows that many were worried about those health problems that cannot be cured or are difficult to treat – cancer, coronary heart disease and alcoholism. These subjective evaluations are only partly linked to people's actual state of health. **Survey** respondents on average rated their health as 6.6 on a scale from 1 to 10 (with one indicating the worst level of health). The most significant factor to affect people's self-assessment of their health was socio-economic status.

Self-assessments of economic well-being are closely tied to self-assessments of health. Those who rate their economic situation as favourable also tend to rate their health as good or very good. In contrast, those who indicate that they have no money or have barely enough money for food feel far less healthy. In general, the unemployed questioned for the **Survey** rated their health as poorer than the employed, with only 3% of those working assigning a value of 1 or 2, while 14% of the unemployed did so. Subjective self-assessments of health are markedly influenced by age – the older the respondent, the poorer the assess-



## Box 2.2

## Perception of threats to security at the personal level

Potential Threats	Percentage expressing concern*			Degree of concern**			Rank
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	
Inability to pay for medical care in the case of illness	78	87	83	3.14	3.39	3.28	1
Not receiving an adequate standard of medical care in the case of illness	80	86	83	3.15	3.37	3.27	2
Becoming seriously ill	78	88	83	3.10	3.39	3.26	3
Not receiving a large enough retirement pension to live on	72	78	75	2.98	3.15	3.08	4
Being unable to support oneself	67	78	73	2.93	3.20	3.08	4
Being involved in an accident	72	82	77	2.95	3.19	3.08	4
Inability to pay one's rent or other household bills	65	79	72	2.87	3.17	3.03	5
Becoming the victim of aggressive and unsafe driving practices	71	83	77	2.84	3.15	3.01	6
Being attacked on the street	62	80	72	2.73	3.13	2.94	7
Being subject to theft	64	74	70	2.72	3.00	2.87	8
Contracting deer tick encephalitis	60	72	67	2.67	2.98	2.84	9
Losing one's job / being unable to find work	60	62	61	2.66	2.70	2.68	10
Inability to pay for one's children's or one's own education	55	61	58	2.64	2.71	2.68	10
Falling victim to organized crime	54	60	58	2.48	2.71	2.61	11
Being sexually assaulted	12	43	28	2.48	2.71	2.61	11
Not having a place to live	48	60	54	2.39	2.72	2.57	12
Contracting HIV/AIDS	51	56	54	2.46	2.64	2.55	13
Not having enough to eat / starving	45	58	52	2.37	2.68	2.53	14
Becoming a victim of a terrorist attack	42	57	50	2.36	2.65	2.52	15
Being left on one's own	48	54	51	2.40	2.57	2.49	16



Inability to compete in the job market	46	52	50	2.35	2.45	2.40	17
Being emotionally abused by civil servants	42	47	45	2.26	2.35	2.31	18
Needing to bribe someone in order to obtain a service	38	47	42	2.16	2.38	2.27	19
Losing the understanding and support of one's family and friends	36	46	42	2.16	2.33	2.25	20
Being left on one's own with dependent children	31	45	38	2.03	2.32	2.19	21
Being emotionally abused by police officers	38	37	37	2.19	2.16	2.17	22
Losing the understanding and support of one's colleagues	28	37	33	2.00	2.12	2.06	23
Being emotionally abused at work	16	30	24	1.73	1.94	1.84	24
Being in conflict with relatives or others over property issues	22	25	23	1.80	1.82	1.81	25
Losing one's savings in the bank	25	24	24	1.81	1.80	1.80	26
Being emotionally abused in the family	14	23	19	1.58	1.77	1.68	27
Being physically abused at home	11	18	14	1.42	1.62	1.53	28
Average degree of concern about all perceived threats				2.49	2.40	2.62	

\* Percentage of respondents noting that they are either slightly afraid or very afraid of the threat.

\*\* Respondents were asked to rate their level of concern about each threat as follows:

1 – not at all afraid 2 – mostly not afraid 3 – slightly afraid 4 – very afraid.

The number represents the average value for all respondents.

*UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002*

ment. A third factor influencing self-assessments of health is education – the lower the level of education, the lower the health rating. Family circumstances also affect self-assessments of health, although not as significantly as age. The widowed and the divorced showed lower self-assessments than people living alone or in common-law relationships.

According to the Latvian Public Health Strategy adopted in 2001, increases in disease are associated with high-risk living conditions such as poverty, along with such accompanying risk factors as poor quality food, a sedentary lifestyle and the use of alcohol and

tobacco (Latvian Ministry of Welfare, 2001). The incidence of illnesses brought on by the neglect of one's own health is also on the rise. This points to careless attitudes toward health, as well as to economic and other barriers that prevent people from seeking out health care services (Latvian Health Statistics Department, 2002). Over half of the people surveyed in Latvia believe it unfair that those with higher incomes are able to pay for better healthcare (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia, 1999). It is hoped that by bringing Latvia's Public Health Strategy into effect, better community health will be promoted and the country's overall health sit-

## Box 2.3

## Perception of general threats

Existing and potential threats capable of contributing to feelings of insecurity	Percentage expressing concern*			Degree of concern*			Rank
	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	
The spread of narcotics	88	93	91	3.46	3.63	3.55	1
Organized crime in Latvia	84	91	88	3.34	3.52	3.44	2
The spread of HIV/AIDS in Latvia	85	90	88	3.30	3.49	3.40	3
Rapid price increases	80	88	84	3.20	3.43	3.32	4
Hazardous waste dumps in Latvia	84	90	87	3.22	3.40	3.31	5
Clear-cutting of forests in Latvia	83	88	86	3.21	3.32	3.27	6
Environmental pollution in Latvia	82	91	87	3.13	3.37	3.26	7
The spread of HIV/AIDS worldwide	78	85	82	3.12	3.35	3.24	8
High amount of preservatives in food	73	87	81	3.02	3.30	3.17	9
Food poisoning	72	83	78	3.00	3.25	3.14	10
Environmental pollution worldwide	74	83	79	2.94	3.14	3.05	11
The abandonment of farmland in Latvia	73	79	76	2.97	3.08	3.03	12
An environmental disaster in Latvia	64	81	73	2.79	3.17	2.99	13
Foreign producers forcing local producers out of the Latvian market	64	76	70	2.79	3.04	2.92	14
Foreigners buying up land in Latvia	62	72	67	2.76	2.97	2.87	15
The devaluation of the lat	61	69	65	2.75	2.96	2.86	16
Exodus from rural areas	62	71	67	2.72	2.91	2.82	17
Global warming	56	75	66	2.59	2.93	2.77	18
Latvian producers losing their market share in other countries	61	67	64	2.70	2.81	2.76	19
Nuclear threats	50	65	58	2.48	2.91	2.71	20



Threats to the survival of one's own language and culture	54	63	59	2.55	2.67	2.66	21
Population decline	53	65	59	2.53	2.75	2.65	22
Influx of refugees in Latvia	54	61	58	2.53	2.69	2.61	23
Terrorism in Latvia	41	60	51	2.24	2.72	2.50	24
Limitations on democracy and freedom of speech in Latvia	43	56	50	2.35	2.59	2.48	25
Manifestations of international terrorism in Latvia	40	58	50	2.23	2.67	2.47	26
Partial loss of Latvia's sovereignty	42	54	48	2.27	2.52	2.40	27
Internal unrest	38	55	47	2.17	2.58	2.39	28
Armed conflict in Latvia	37	56	47	2.14	2.59	2.38	29
Ethnic conflict in Latvia	37	50	44	2.18	2.46	2.33	30
The occupation of Latvia	34	47	41	2.10	2.45	2.29	31
Average degree of concern about all perceived threats				2.74	2.99	2.88	

\* See notes for Box 2.2

UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

uation will improve. Latvia's Public Health Strategy is based on the World Health Organization's European regional strategy *Health for All in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. (See Chapter 6 for more details.)

To a large extent, respondents' fears about being unable to afford medical services depend on their economic status and on the availability of information about relief programs for lower income groups.

The overall lack of information about available health services and the widespread perception of being unable to pay for them often leads to fatal results. Tuberculosis is much more prevalent among poor people in Latvia. The 1990s marked a dramatic increase in incidences of tuberculosis, which peaked in 1998. Unfortunately, the trend of belatedly seeking medical attention for tuberculosis continues. The

result is a high mortality rate for tuberculosis patients – 30% die within a year of being diagnosed. The incidence of tuberculosis in Latvia is eight times higher than in Finland, 1.2 times higher than in Lithuania and 1.5 times higher than in Estonia. The number of people with this disease could be reduced if people sought medical attention in the early phase of their illness (see Box 2.5).

HIV/AIDS infections are a case in which a sense of insecurity, coupled with an effective public information campaign, may reduce the risks people face through an increase in preventative measures taken by individuals themselves. In spite of a levelling off in the number of new HIV cases in 2002, more than half of the **Survey's** respondents were concerned about becoming HIV positive. HIV/AIDS is a relatively new phenomenon in Latvia. The first HIV-positive indi-

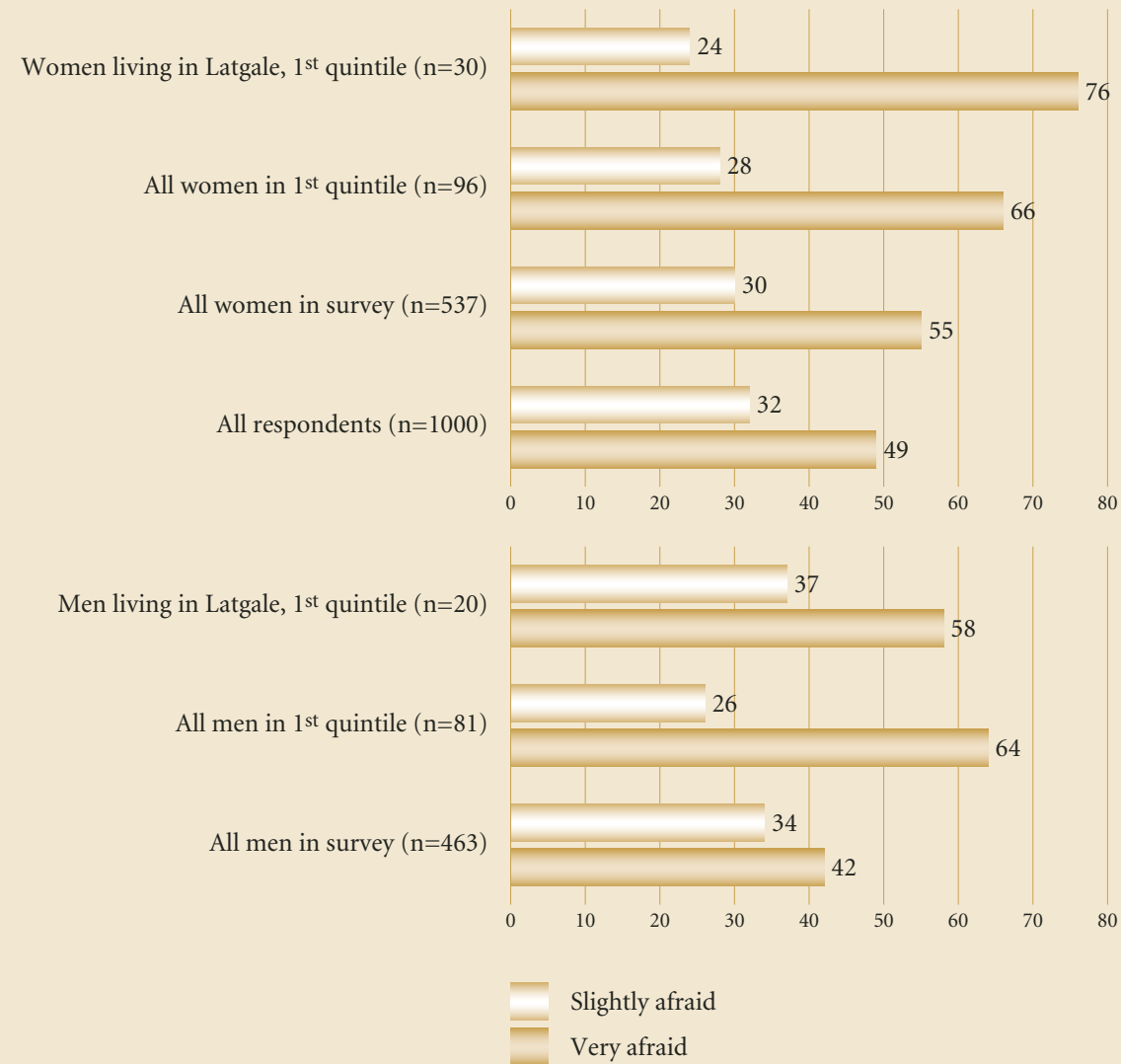
vidual was registered in 1987, and the first death due to AIDS occurred in 1990. According to the Latvian Health Department, 806 new cases of HIV and 42 new cases of AIDS were registered in 2001 (Health Statistics Department, 2002). The majority (1624) of Latvia's 2163 HIV-positive individuals were infected while using intravenous drugs with shared needles.

In Latvia the problem of alcohol abuse continues to be a major health hazard, and the use of other addictive narcotic substances is rapidly increasing.

Frequently people use intoxicating substances as a means of coping with insecurity. However, alcohol or drug use often intensifies the problem. The biochemical effects of these substances on the human central nervous system and the additional social problems caused by addiction directly increase people's rates of anxiety and depression, thereby creating both direct and indirect health hazards. The most frequent cause of traffic accidents in Latvia is drunken driving. Perpetrators of violence within the family are also often under the influence of alcohol.

Box 2.4

Fear of not being able to pay for medical care (%)

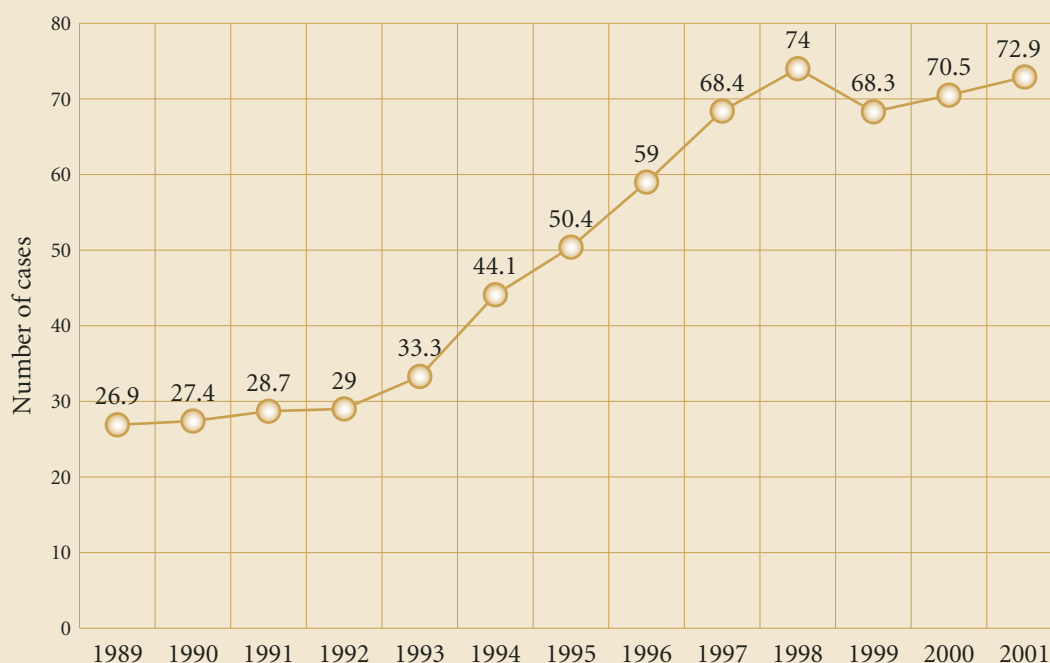


1<sup>st</sup> quintile = those whose income amounts to 2 to 40 lats per family member per month  
n = number of respondents

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## Box 2.5

### Incidence of tuberculosis in Latvia per 100,000 inhabitants from 1989 to 2001



*National Centre for Tuberculosis and Lung Disease, 2002*

It is difficult to establish the number of people suffering from alcohol or drug dependence. Centres for the treatment of addiction usually treat only the most severe cases, and many addicts do not admit to their problem. Over one-fourth (28%) of **Survey** respondents indicated that they sometimes (24%) or quite frequently (4%) consume too much alcohol. In this study, the excessive use of alcohol was noted least frequently by inhabitants of Riga, but most frequently by villagers in the region of Vidzeme and people living in the countryside.

The above illustrates that individual health care is not the sole responsibility of the public health system and is not founded only on the availability of financial resources. Individuals in Latvia could do more on their own to prevent the onset of illnesses. Unhealthy eating habits, a sedentary life style, excessive alcohol use, smoking, and a disregard for traffic regulations all threaten human health and adversely affect an individual's sense of security. These factors can be influenced by the individual himself or herself, and do not require a large financial outlay.

## Economic security

If a passer-by were approached on the street and asked what creates a sense of insecurity for him or her, there is a strong probability that the answer would be related to personal financial considerations. For example, a 43-year old teacher, when asked what makes her feel insecure, replied: "The last days before the payment of my monthly salary, when I have no money left." (*UNDP Interview Analysis, 2002*)

In Latvia, where politicians often point to the rapid growth of Latvia's GDP as evidence of the country's development, economic security is the most pervasive human security concern. The individual's economic status directly determines his or her ability to obtain adequate food, shelter, health care and education. The reduction of unemployment, the creation of new employment opportunities, and the need to increase income levels are matters of ongoing concern for 42% of **Survey** respondents.

When asked to reveal the three issues that they worry about most, **Survey** respondents overwhelmingly cited personal economic considerations, especially the fear of losing their jobs, insufficient income,

and the lack of a secure economic base during their old age. Economic issues were followed by health issues, while risks related to social ills (drug abuse, alcoholism, and prostitution) grouped third.

Human security usually increases along with one's standard of living. Individuals with higher standards of living generally feel more in control of their lives and place more trust in the future. Latvia has experienced steady GDP growth during the last few years. Latvia's GDP grew by 6.6% in 2002 and by 5.7% in 2001. GDP growth, however, reflects more the potential for economic security than the actual security of each individual. A better measure of economic security is a combination of GDP per capita and income distribution. Unfortunately, Latvia's performance according to this indicator is not as strong as that of other Central and Eastern European countries. Among the next ten EU member countries (including Malta and Cyprus), Latvia ranks ninth according to GDP per capita.

## Income sufficiency

Sufficient income, complemented by predictable employment for those of working age, forms the foundation of economic security. Moreover, the

perception of sufficiency is important and varies among social environments.












Although the trend has been for reported salaries to increase in Latvia compared with previous years, it is still premature to speak of a real increase in prosperity for the population as a whole. In 2001 the net income for the employed increased by 6.1%, but the annual rate of inflation was 3.5%. Many people still feel unable to adequately support themselves on their income.

According to Central Statistical Bureau calculations, the minimum required subsistence income in 2002 was 88.70 lats per person per month. According to this criterion, 83% of the Latvian population lived below the subsistence level. In 2002 the average disposable income per family member was 74.60 lats. The minimum wage in 2002 was 70 lats, while the average old age pension was 62 lats (see Box 2.6).

One continuing and pervasive problem is that of the shadow economy in Latvia, which is estimated at 18-20% of the country's GDP. According to the *Working Life Barometer of the Baltic Countries 2002* (Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Finland, 2003), a large number of employers do not sign formal employment contracts with their employees in

Box 2.6

### Selected income indicators (Ls/month)

Year	Minimum required subsistence income per person	Average disposable income per family member	Minimum wage	Average old-age pension
2002	88.70 	74.60 	70 	62 
2001	86.93 	—	50 	58 
2000	84.47 	69.19 	50 	58 

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## Box 2.7

## Economic development and sense of insecurity

	GDP per capita (EU 15=100) in 2001	Unemployment rate (% of economically active population) in 2001	Sense of insecurity Average value	
			General risks	Personal risks
Riga	37.3	6.8	1.11	1.46
Kurzeme	27.7	9.7	1.18	1.52
Zemgale	16.4	10.8	1.16	1.49
Vidzeme	16.2	9.2	1.15	1.50
<b>Latgale</b>	<b>14.6</b>	<b>19.4</b>	<b>1.04</b>	<b>1.46</b>

The average value scale ranges from 0 (insecurity) to 3 (security)

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order to avoid paying taxes. About 10% of the *Barometer's* respondents said that they had not signed any documents establishing the terms of their employment, and only one-third had signed employment contracts listing a defined period of employment. Over one-fifth of employed respondents indicated that they receive some form of payment under the table.

In the short term, the reception of untaxed income increases people's ability to cover their immediate expenses and to satisfy their basic needs – a prerequisite for a sense of security in other realms. However, in the long term those who have not paid taxes receive less and fewer social guarantees from the State, as well as smaller old-age pensions. Moreover, tax evasion undermines the government's ability to finance social expenditures.

The fear of living in poverty on meagre retirement pensions is the fourth most cited personal concern in the **Survey**. To increase long-term economic human security, Latvia must move quickly and reduce the proportion of hidden income. According to the *Working Life Barometer*, the proportion of hidden income in Latvia is double that of hidden income in Estonia and Lithuania (Ministry of Labour of the Republic of Finland, 2003).

If perceptions of threats are compared by regions in Latvia and regional economic indicators (income per capita, unemployment) are also considered, then there is a correlation (albeit not particularly strong) between economic development and people's sense of insecurity. Box 2.7 shows that the perception of insecurity is strongest in Latgale, the region in Latvia with the lowest income per capita and highest rate of unemployment. However, economic polarization is growing not only between Latgale and other regions in Latvia, but all across the nation. Most of Latvia's economic growth is occurring within its main urban centres, and the income gap between the cities and the countryside is increasing. (See the *Review of Latvia's Main Human Development Indicators* in this **Report's** Appendix.)

Since people's sense of economic security is based more on their personal experience than on macro-economics, an assessment of the level of economic security in Latvia must include an overview of individual income levels, as well as the rate of regular and predictable employment, the rate of reduction (or lack thereof) in income disparities, and people's sense of satisfaction with their income.

People's sense of insecurity grows when they fear receiving insufficient income, i.e. living below the subsistence level, being unable to pay their house-

## Box 2.8

## Household income per person after taxes (Ls)

	1 <sup>st</sup> quintile*		2 <sup>nd</sup> quintile		3 <sup>rd</sup> quintile		4 <sup>th</sup> quintile		5 <sup>th</sup> quintile	
	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002	2000	2002
Quintiles defined	1-29	2-40	29-45	40-54	45-60	54-68	60-83	68-100	83-250	100-800
Average income	18.7	28.1	36.0	47.8	52.0	59.8	68.4	79.6	158.5	157.7
Median	18.7	30.0	35.0	50.0	50.0	60.0	66.7	80.0	106.7	120.0

\* Quintile = one-fifth of all households participating in the study, grouped in ascending order according to income per person per month.

Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2003

hold bills, and not receiving an adequate old-age pension. These are some of the most significant worries cited by **Survey** respondents.

Income disparities are steadily rising in Latvia. In 2002, the top 20% of the country's inhabitants reported earning an average of 157.70 lats per month after taxes. The average reported earnings of the lowest 20% amounted to only 28.10 lats, which is about one-third of the minimum required subsistence income (see Box 2.8).

Household income levels vary among different socio-economic groups. Entrepreneurs and the self-employed are generally better off. Those engaged in salaried work receive close to average incomes, but incomes in farming households, for senior citizens and those without a regular source of income are for the most part below average. Demographic factors also affect household income levels. Married couples without children have the highest income levels, while single-parent households with children under 16 have the lowest (see Box 2.9).

Most Latvian residents are aware of the income disparities in their country and believe them to be too large. In the social inequality study carried out by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia in 1999, 96% of respondents concurred with this view. Three-quarters of respondents saw it as the government's responsibility to reduce income disparities in the country.

## Employment stability

Fear related to employment stability was reflected in UNDP interviews. As one person stated: "Insecurity is caused by such worries as: will I manage to keep my job, and the same old problem of money." Many people feel insecure because they have encountered difficulties in seeking out new employment and in maintaining existing positions. This is due in part to continuing changes in Latvia's labour market. The reduction in Latvia's unemployment rate can be attributed more to a decline in the number of Latvia's inhabitants, a general aging of the population, and an increase in full-time (day section) university attendance than to a rise in productivity.

According to official data available on October 1, 2002, of the 90,988 people who were registered as unemployed, over one-quarter (23,801) had been unable to find work for over a year. Ongoing unemployment is particularly debilitating. In some circumstances it can lead to self-destructive behaviour, with sometimes fatal consequences (see Box 2.10).

The importance of salaried work as a source of economic security is characteristic of "work societies," in which the quality of life is perceived to be determined by the income received from one's work. If work is not sufficiently available, then many households face the prospect of living in poverty. Employment in "work societies" is a highly rated commodity and a legitimate way of providing for one's family. People identify themselves with their work and their

profession. If they are not able to integrate into the working world, then their self-esteem and sense of security may be seriously reduced.

Latvia has a preponderance of low-paying jobs. Generally, employment conditions are better in the cities than in the countryside, and men have higher quality positions than women. Higher levels of education generally guarantee higher quality employment (higher wages, better work conditions, flexible working hours, etc.), while lower quality employment is more readily available to people with incomplete or lower levels of education.

At the same time, the actively employed are showing an increasing tendency to work more hours and to combine several jobs. The ambitious and entrepreneurial generally have stable careers and new opportunities at work, but also experience a concomitant increase in stress. Employment in many cases is neither long-term nor guaranteed, as it was under the Soviet regime, and often becomes fragmented. Since the recovery of Latvia's independence, risk has become part and parcel of the labour market.

Global economic processes are also a source of insecurity. The Survey reveals that most people in Latvia recognize the socio-economic risks emanating from global conditions and feel threatened, yet do not believe that they themselves or united with others, can prevent or mitigate these threats (see Box 2.11).

Latvia's long-term ability to compete in the world market and its population's long-term security is affected by many variable factors, which make it impossible to provide an accurate assessment of such perceptions. The *Global Competitiveness Report 2002-2003* issued by a World Economic Forum working group ranked countries according to their growth competitiveness and microeconomic competitiveness. Latvia was ranked 44<sup>th</sup> on the Growth Competitiveness Index, which is based on indicators of technological development, government policy and the macroeconomic environment. Latvia's neighbour Estonia was ranked 26<sup>th</sup>, Lithuania 36<sup>th</sup>, Finland 2<sup>nd</sup>, Sweden 5<sup>th</sup>, and Russia 64<sup>th</sup>. This study of Latvia's long-term capacity for growth competitiveness revealed several weaknesses, including in government policy (52<sup>nd</sup>) (World Economic Forum, 2002).

## Box 2.9

## Disposable income per month (Ls)

	Average per household member		Average per consumer unit*	
	1999	2000	1999	2000
All	64.73	69.19	81.67	87.08
Households consisting of:				
One person	81.65	86.24	81.65	86.24
One adult and children under 16	53.36	53.42	72.14	71.73
Married couple without children	80.37	78.03	94.55	91.79
Married couple with children under 16	60.49	64.26	85.50	90.10

\* To convert into consumer units, the equivalency scale of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development rates the first adult member of a household as 1.0 consumer units, each additional adult as 0.7 units, and children under 14 as 0.5 consumer units.

Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2003

The economic security level of businesses and many of Latvia's inhabitants is largely dependent on economic events outside of Latvia. As in many other small countries, exports comprise a large proportion of Latvia's GDP.

Because Latvia has few natural resources and precious little mineral and fossil fuel resources, the Latvian economy is dominated by the service sector, which by the end of 2001 had come to constitute 70.4% of the total added value of the Latvian economy. The growing importance of the service sector shows that the foundation of Latvia's long-term human security lies in human resource develop-

ment, which is increasingly dependent upon individual initiative.

Latvia's employed must consider that in the future, as globalization and regionalization increase competition, work is likely to become more fragmented. Steady employment might become more threatened. In a country with "work society" values – where most people live their entire lives in one town, or at most, migrate to Riga – an understanding of changes in employment patterns could help to reduce people's sense of insecurity and promote competitiveness. Instead of placing an inordinate value on maintaining their existing positions, people should

#### Box 2.10

#### Basic indicators of registered unemployment

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Economically active population (in thousands)	1196	1167	1149	1130	1100	1107	1124
Registered unemployed	90,819	84,934	111,383	109,497	93,283	91,642	89,735
Unemployment rate, %	7.2	7.0	9.2	9.1	7.8	7.7	8.5
Total unemployed, % <sup>1</sup> :							
Long-term unemployed <sup>1</sup>	31.2	38.1	26.3	31.1	29.0	26.6	26.4
Unemployed women <sup>2</sup>	54.7	59.4	58.5	57.4	57.6	57.4	58.7
Unemployed youth (15-24)	20.0	18.2	16.4	14.8	14.7	14.6	13.9
Older workers unemployed <sup>2</sup>	11.3	12.5	13.1	13.7	14.7	15.3	16.5
Unemployed with post-secondary education	6.0	6.1	6.8	7.1	6.9	7.0	7.2
Unemployed with secondary education	54.7	51.9	52.7	52.3	50.5	69.6	68.3
Unemployed with trade school education	14.6	16.3	16.6	17.7	19.6	1.0	2.5
Unemployed with elementary education or less	60	72	67	2.67	2.98	2.84	9

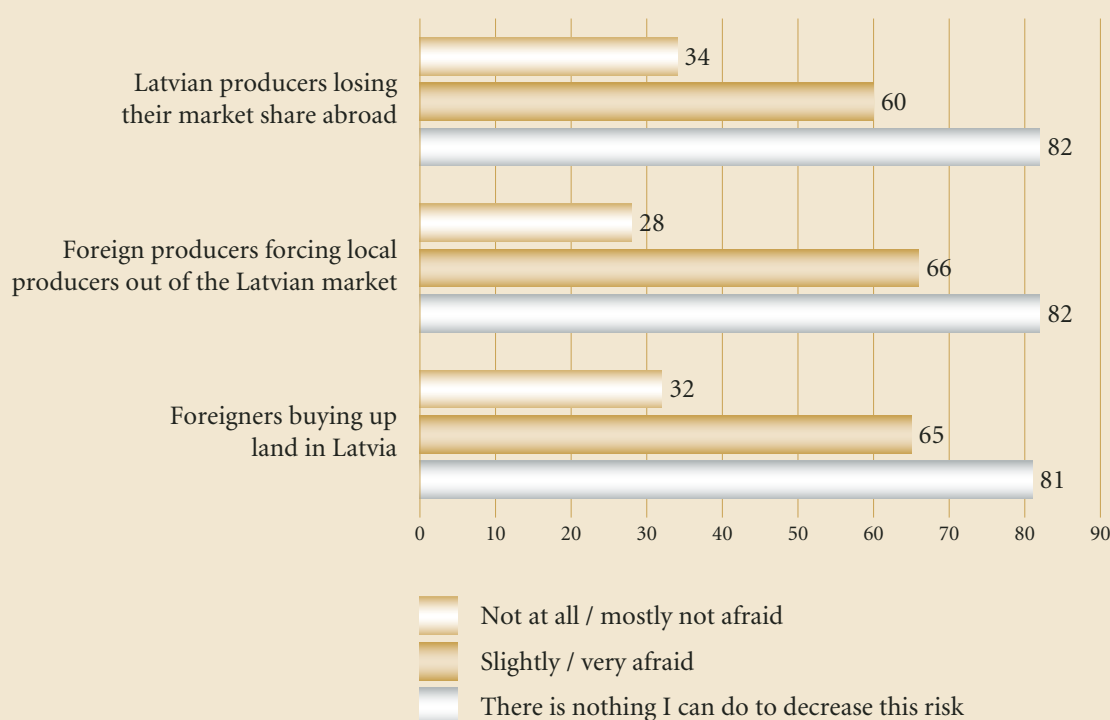
<sup>1</sup> Labour Force Survey. Persons aged 15 and older 1996-2001, or aged 15-74 from 2002 onward.

<sup>2</sup> Women over 50 and men over 55, as defined by the Law on Government Pensions.

Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, National Employment Agency, 2003

Box 2.11

## Fears relating to globalization (%)



UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

continue to increase their qualifications, position themselves for new jobs, and consider changing their place of employment, which might mean moving to another location.

In the interview below, Raita Karnīte, Director of the Institute of Economics of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, argues that Latvians must change their perception about globalization and capitalize on the new opportunities available (See Box 2.12).

## Personal security

People need personal (physical) security, or freedom from violence. The global *UNDP Human Development Report 1994* recognized that in both wealthy and poor countries human lives are being increasingly threatened by sudden, unforeseen violence.

Most people in Latvia do not see a significant possibility of encountering life-threatening situations or starvation, which are a daily factor of life for one-third of the world's inhabitants. However, the ten most often cited threats at the personal level by respondents

of the **Survey** include being injured or killed in both non-motor vehicle and motor vehicle accidents, and being attacked on the street. Latvia has the highest motor vehicle accident rate in Europe, placing this issue at the forefront of concern for many.

At the more general level, organized crime is the second most often mentioned threat by **Survey** respondents, due to its close links with drug trafficking, prostitution and other illicit activities. Emotional and physical abuse is a top personal security issue that was not openly admitted to, but shown in the **Survey** and related studies to deeply affect its victims.

This section will assess personal security in the following areas:

- threats from other individuals or groups, i.e. street crime;
- organized crime;
- emotional and physical abuse at home;
- self-destructive behaviour, for example, suicide and the use of addictive substances;
- motor vehicle accidents.

## Crime

Latvia's crime statistics provide an indication of why many people feel a low level of personal security. Since 1998 the country's crime rate has been on the increase. Over 50,000 crimes were registered in Latvia in the year 2000, of which more than 40% were classified as serious (Central Statistical Bureau, 2001).

While statistics in all three Baltic countries indicate a rise in crime, this rise has been lowest in Latvia.

Latvia's rising crime rate did not remain unnoticed by the **Survey's** respondents, of whom more than two-thirds (71%) expressed a fear of being robbed on the street. About 29% said that they felt this concern at a very high level. One-third (34%) of

### Box 2.12

*Director of the Institute of Economics of the Latvian Academy of Sciences*

**Raita Karnite**

### Globalization and Economic Security

#### **What do you see as the most characteristic features of globalization in the area of economics?**

Globalization by its very definition means that something assumes a worldwide scale. This has become the case with economic relationships. As a result of the revolution in information processing and communications, the exchange of information between various regions in the world is becoming more widespread, faster, and cheaper. The comparative benefits of manufacturing certain products in particular regions and countries become more obvious. Investors use this information to invest in places that will give the largest returns on their investment in the shortest possible time. The international flow of capital is followed by greater freedom in the flow of goods across national borders. This results in a division of labour, regional specializations and a significant increase in competition worldwide.

#### **How do you judge globalization – as more positive or negative? Why?**

As an economist I view globalization as a positive development because it promotes competition and furthers the more effective utilization of manufacturing resources. Globalization does, however, have its negative side-effects. It leads to a decrease in State sovereignty, and this evokes negative emotions. Social disparity is growing both on a national and international scale. Care should be taken with respect to the concentration of capital and manufacturing in the hands of only a few multinational corporations. In terms of economic stability, it would be better if a larger number of small economic units were to survive. Large companies frequently take advantage of their enormous economic influence to lobby governments and international organizations for their own benefit. This can serve to limit competition through import quotas or discriminatory technical standards, for example.

#### **What effect is globalization having on the economic security of Latvia and its inhabitants?**

The economic risks of globalization are unevenly distributed among countries and regions. Latvia is a small country and is more likely to be a recipient of the changes and consequences associated with globalization, rather than their initiator. However, small nations are more open to various external risks. Recent world economic history shows that in crisis situations, small countries are capable of adapting faster to new market conditions and recovering sooner than large countries. Latvia is at greater economic risk but at the same time it is more open to development possibilities than larger nations. Which one of these two conditions takes the upper hand will be determined by national development strategies, as well as by the analytic abilities of political and business leaders to foresee world and European regional developments several years ahead of time, and to duly prepare for changes in conditions of competition.

At the individual level, globalization means that no one can feel entirely protected, because there will be a need to face ever-increasing competition. The world market situation is such that Latvian businesses cannot accurately predict where in the world competition will emerge to threaten them most. However, it would be misleading to say that this situation represents an unavoidable decrease in economic security.



**Is globalization having a varied impact on the socio-economic security of the people of Latvia and is it possible to speak of winners and losers?**

Yes, there are differences. As I mentioned above, globalization increases socio-economic disparities. Like elsewhere in the world, those in Latvia who benefit most from an open market and strong competition are those living in areas with the most intense economic activity and the largest number of economically active, middle-aged individuals. The losers are those who are unable to technologically adapt to the pressures of increasing competition. These are the elderly and residents of economically disadvantaged areas. Young people are also losers, i.e. both graduates who have recently completed their education and those who fail to acquire a quality education. The market is not entirely willing to accept them due to competitive pressures, because hiring such people entails additional training costs, which the employer only recoups after some time has elapsed.

**What practical recommendations would you have for the inhabitants of Latvia that would allow them to take advantage of the developmental opportunities offered by globalization, and that would reduce the potential negative effects of globalization on human security?**

1. Do your best to get a broad-based, quality education. The Latvian economy will be able to compete in the world market primarily through its knowledge-based high technology sector, which means that in Latvia the highest levels of security will be experienced by professionals capable of working in this area.
2. Develop personal initiative and the ability to be pro-active. Do not be a bystander.
3. Acquire the skills necessary for competition, including those gained through sports, culture, and community activity. Knowledge, initiative and the ability to defend oneself helps one to avoid crises and promotes one's ability to land safely on one's feet.

UNDP Latvia, 2003

respondents mentioned crime as one of the top three potential threats to their personal security, through such forms as physical assault, sexual assault, organized crime, apartment theft and street crime (gangs).

Studies carried out by the Centre for the Study of Crime at the Latvian Ministry of Justice in 2000 show that the proportion of people who felt very safe walking in their neighbourhoods after dark had declined, while the proportion of those who felt unsafe had risen. In comparison with 1998, more people thought that their apartments could be burglarized during the following 12 months. Thirty-nine percent of automobile owners indicated that they had been the victims of car theft during the past five years. This had been the case for only 25% of respondents in 1998.

Human insecurity is exacerbated by the low level of trust that many Latvians feel toward their country's internal security structures. Only 44% say that they trust the police. The *Survey of Living Conditions in Latvia in 1999* showed that police are notified of only 27% to 60% of crimes committed in the country, depending on the seriousness of the offence (Latvian

Central Statistical Bureau and FAFO Practical Social Studies Institute, 2000). This points to a significant amount of latent or unreported crime.

Many of those surveyed said that they rely on their own, individual security strategies to ensure their personal safety – from avoiding dark streets at night to carrying nail files when entering potentially unsafe areas. The lack of trust in the police is to some degree being compensated for by increased community activities. If the overall level of personal security in Latvia is to be significantly increased, then crime prevention institutions, community members and victims will need to make a concentrated effort to increase the level of mutual trust.

## Organized crime

Fear of organized crime in Latvia ranked second of all general risks perceived by **Survey** respondents. This high level of concern may partly be due to the emotion-laden phrasing used to describe this issue in the **Survey**. No follow-up was made to clarify the actual

interpretation of “organized crime at the State level” by **Survey** respondents, who may have included State-level corruption (including “State capture” or the domination of state institutions by individuals or groups in pursuit of private interest), smuggling, trafficking, and prostitution in their understanding of this issue. The theme of corruption was widely debated during the parliamentary election campaign in the fall of 2002, which corresponded to the time the **Survey** was conducted. This may have served to heighten participants’ concern for this potential risk.

Official statistics provide no direct information about organized crime in Latvia. However, a State Police official informed the authors of this **Report** about the general trends in the country. The official affirmed that in Latvia, as in the rest of the world, organized crime is becoming an increasing threat. Most criminal groups in Latvia have connections to groups in other countries, mainly Russia, Lithuania, Estonia, and Germany. These groups are primarily involved in smuggling, trafficking (including human trafficking) and prostitution. According to this police official, organized crime stands to have an increasingly negative effect Latvia’s economy, and to threaten Latvia’s democratic political system and rule of law if it were to succeed in infiltrating Latvia’s government and parliament.

## Abuse

Over one-fifth of all women in the confidential section of the **Survey** stated that they fear emotional abuse at home. Fourteen percent indicated that they worry about domestic violence. Abuse in the home has a particularly negative effect on one’s sense of personal security. This sense of insecurity can then spread over to other situations and events that the individual must confront. Due to the particular significance of abuse on the individual’s overall perception of security, this issue will be analysed in detail in Chapter 3.

## Self-destructive behaviour

Insecurity and despair can have self-destructive consequences. Suicide accounted for 19% of deaths due to external causes in 2001, although on the whole the number of suicides has decreased since 1995. Men continue to commit suicide four times more often than women. Rural men committed suicide more often in 2001 than their urban counterparts.

The single most important factor contributing to all types of violence, self-injury, and accidents is the use of alcohol, narcotics, and psychotropic substances. In 2000 every third reported crime was associated with the use of alcohol or drugs. Of 3703 deaths by unnatural causes in 2002, 291 or 8% were linked with the use of alcohol, according to the Health Statistics and Medical Technology Agency. The use of alcohol continues to increase (8.5 litres of pure alcohol per adult in 2002), as does the use of drugs and psychotropic substances.

The **Survey** indicates that the spread of narcotics has become one of the main security concerns of Latvia’s inhabitants (see Box 2.13).

Drug addiction is spreading among young people. Youth are the main targets of drug dealers, and narcotics are becoming available in an increasing number of schools. According to the State Centre for Drug Control and Drug Abuse Prevention, 76% of newly diagnosed addicts and drug users between January and August 2002 were under the age of 24. The spread of narcotics is also indirectly facilitated by deficiencies in Latvia’s justice system. The penalties imposed for drug trafficking are often not commensurate with the damage inflicted on individual and community health.

In 2000, the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the University of Latvia carried out a study entitled *Reasons Given by Youth for Beginning to Use Drugs at Riga City Entertainment Venues*, in co-operation with the Riga Centre for the Prevention of Drug Addiction. Young people see drug use as a form of self-expression. They try narcotics and psychotropic substances to satisfy their curiosity; to forget their troubles; to overcome feelings of emptiness, insecurity, and loneliness; and to maintain good standing among their peers. These factors point to a lack of emotional fulfilment, low self-esteem, and conflict or alienation in family and other interpersonal relationships, according to the Study.

## Motor vehicle accidents

Motor vehicle accidents deserve special attention, since a large number of drivers and pedestrians in Latvia endanger themselves and others by disregarding traffic regulations. The **Survey** revealed that almost three-fourths of respondents felt in danger of being victimized by aggressive car drivers. The number of cars in Latvia is increasing every year, along with the number of persons injured in traffic accidents (see Box 2.14).

Although the number of traffic fatalities has been on the decline, Latvia still has among the highest motor vehicle accident death rates in Europe.

According to Latvia's Road Traffic Safety Directorate, the number of motor vehicle accidents caused by intoxicated drivers decreased in 2000 (<http://www.csdd.lv>). Nevertheless, almost one traffic accident in five is associated with the use of alcohol. During the first six months of 2002, 6914 people were detained for driving under the influence of alcohol. Of these, 591 were repeated offenders.

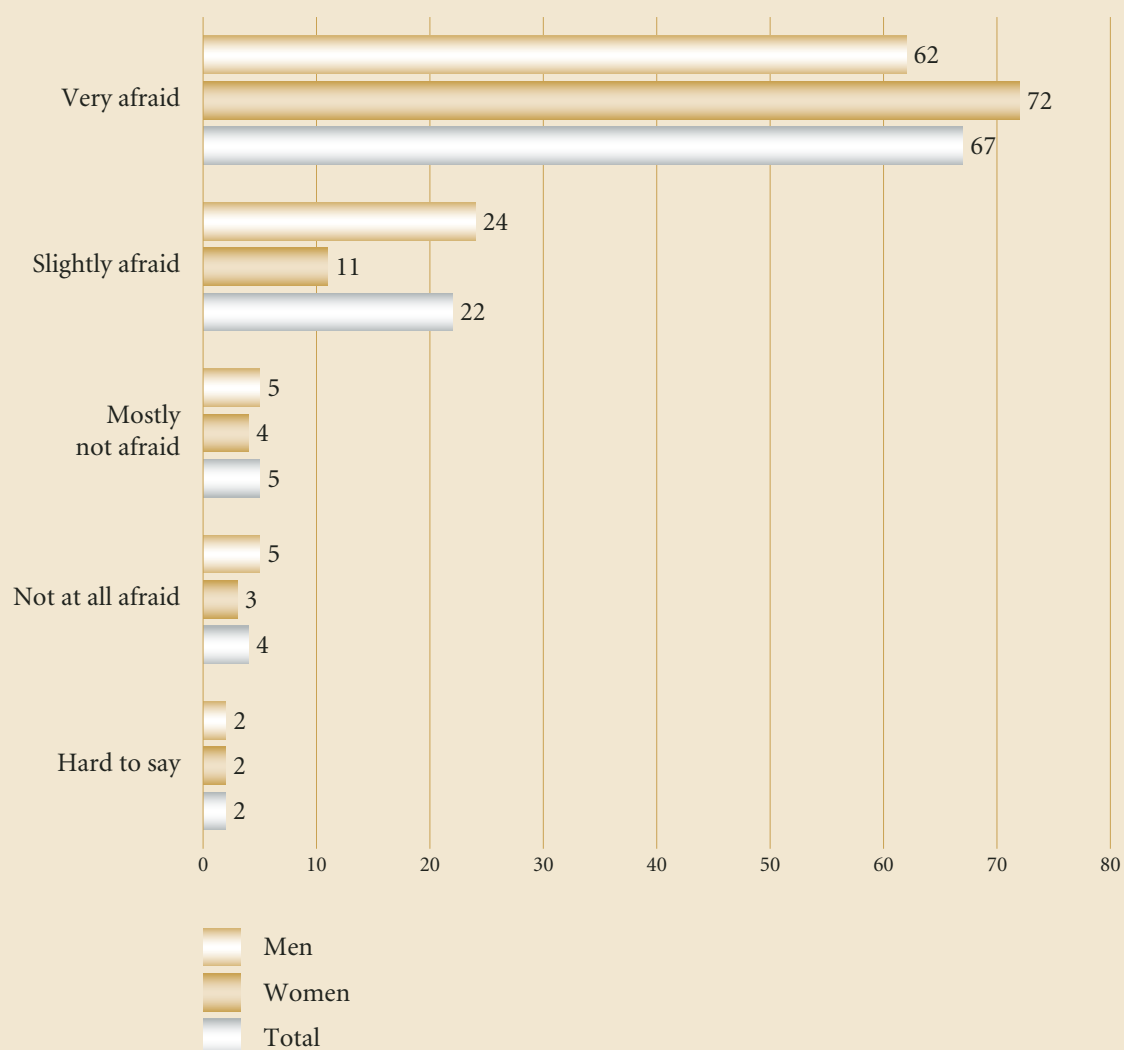
Another dangerous trend is the increase in the number people driving under the influence of narcot-

ic and psychotropic substances. During the first eight months of 2002, 172 drivers were detained for this reason, compared to 126 the previous year.

The Health Promotion Centre's year 2000 survey of habits influencing health showed that almost half of all men and one-third of women had friends or acquaintances who had driven while under the influence of alcohol during the last year (<http://www.esi-vesels.lv>). Motor vehicle users subject themselves to other types of risk as well. While nearly two-thirds (65%) of front-seat passengers claimed to regularly use their safety belts, only 6% of back-seat passengers did so.

Box 2.13

### Concern about the spread of narcotics in Latvia (%)



UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

Many pedestrians do not take sufficient measures to reduce the risks of being struck by a motor vehicle. An insignificant number make use of reflectors while walking along roadsides. According to the Health Promotion Centre’s year 2000 survey, only 3% of pedestrians use them almost all the time. Trauma suffered by pedestrians is one of the most serious problems associated with road safety. In 2001, pedestrians accounted for 28% of all injuries and 36% of fatalities that occurred on the road. The lack of reflector use is one of the major contributing factors to the high rate of injuries among children. In 2001, 36% of pedestrian injuries occurred at night. Eleven percent of those injured at night were children under the age of 14 (<http://www.pd.gov.lv>).

### Environmental security

In recent years the environment in Latvia has become cleaner, and has received more care and attention. The discharge of contaminated wastewater and harmful atmospheric emissions has decreased. This can be attributed mainly to a decline in industrial output and a waning agriculture sector in the early 1990s, and a decrease in income available for the purchase and use of agrochemicals.

According to the **Survey**, four of the top ten issues about which people feel insecure are environment-related (see Box 2.15). At the same time, most of Latvia’s inhabitants do not believe that environmental protection should become a government policy priority. Only 3% polled in an August 2002 survey identified it as a pressing issue (Latvian Facts, 2002).

The cultivation of environmental awareness is key to increasing environmental security. Environmental awareness is determined by three components:

- 1) concern about the degradation of the environment;
- 2) knowledge about those factors that adversely affect the environment; and
- 3) a readiness to invest time and/or resources in maintaining the environment.

Concern that is not supported by basic information about environmental issues can lead to increased feelings of insecurity (see Box 2.16). Although Latvia placed 10<sup>th</sup> out of 142 nations in the 2002 Environmental Sustainability Index (ESI), its inhabitants’ knowledge about basic environmental conditions could be improved. The ESI figures for 2002 indicate that Latvia performed most poorly in its social and institutional capacity to respond to environmental threats. Latvia’s weak points included a lack of available information on environmental issues, difficulties in overcoming the contradictory needs of various interest groups, and deficiencies in the cultivation of environmental awareness.

One of the most recent studies on environmental awareness in Latvia took place in Daugavpils in the late 1990s by the Daugavpils University and the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences Institute of Philosophy and Sociology (Meņšikovs, 1999). It showed that many of the people living in the Daugavpils area lacked the information required to help them formulate individual or collective security strategies regarding nuclear threats from the nearby Ignalina power plant in Lithuania.

Box 2.14

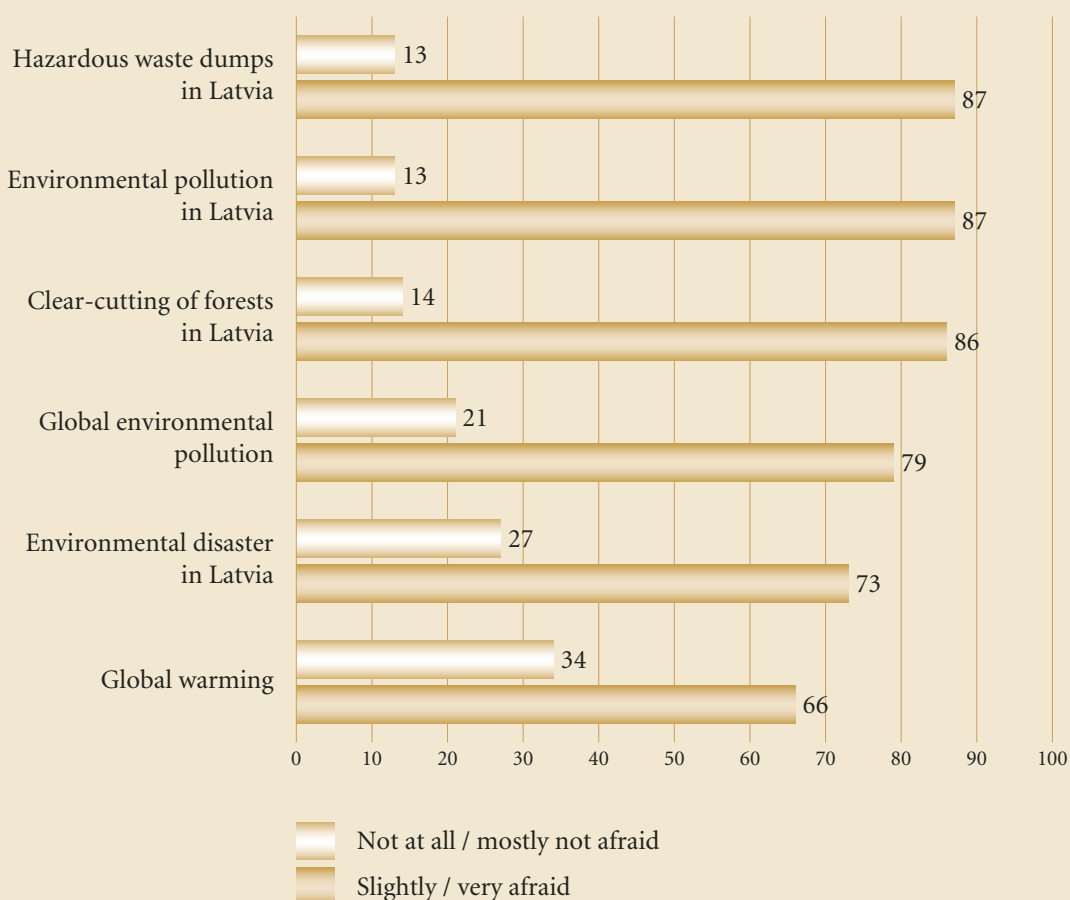
Number of motor vehicle accidents (MVAs), injuries and fatalities in Latvia

	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002
Number of MVAs resulting in injury	4325	4056	4482	4766	5083
Number of fatalities	877	611	588	517	518
Number injured	4716	4903	5449	5852	6300

*Statistical Yearbook of Latvia, 2002*

Box 2.15

## Fear of environment-related risks (%)



UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

Concern and knowledge are the first two elements required for promoting environmental security. The readiness to invest one's own time and resources and to support government efforts to protect the environment is the third. The European Union has formulated a series of strict environmental standards that Latvia will gradually implement over the next ten years. This will require large financial investments. Some of the more expensive long-term projects include the achievement of EU standards in the quality of drinking water and the upgrading of sewage treatment plants, as well as the development of waste management systems.

The investment of time and resources at all levels (government, communities and individuals) will also be crucial for solving Latvia's waste problems. Each year, Latvians generate 600,000 to 700,000 metric tons of domestic waste, of which two-thirds is household garbage. One-third is institutional and commercial in origin.

Every inhabitant of Latvia creates an average of 200 kilograms of garbage per year. Hazardous waste is another problem. According to the *Latvian Central Statistical Bureau's Report on Hazardous Waste –3BA*, 93,000 tons of hazardous waste were created in Latvia in 2000. Sixty percent of this waste came from metal processing plants.

The Latvian government appears to be making serious efforts to deal with the country's waste problem. In 2002 it adopted a National Waste Disposal Plan to regulate the disposal of domestic and hazardous waste over the next ten years, until 2012. Individuals, however, are not doing enough to solve the country's garbage disposal problems. According to Environment Ministry data, only 60% of people in Latvia have garbage removal services (<http://www.varam.gov.lv>). Refuse is sometimes disposed of in forests, at roadsides, near open water reservoirs and in other illegal locations. Only one-

quarter of the **Survey’s** respondents sort their garbage, and recycling is not practiced on a wide scale in Latvia.

The Latvian government is also investing time and resources to address environmental issues at the global level on behalf of its people. The **Survey** indicates that nearly four-fifths (78.6%) of Latvia’s inhabitants do not believe that they alone or together with others can affect global environmental pollution in any way. An even larger majority (87.2%) are just as critical of their ability to affect global warming trends. However, the government has had a very impressive track record in fulfilling the country’s obligations in terms of global environmental risks (see Box 2.17).

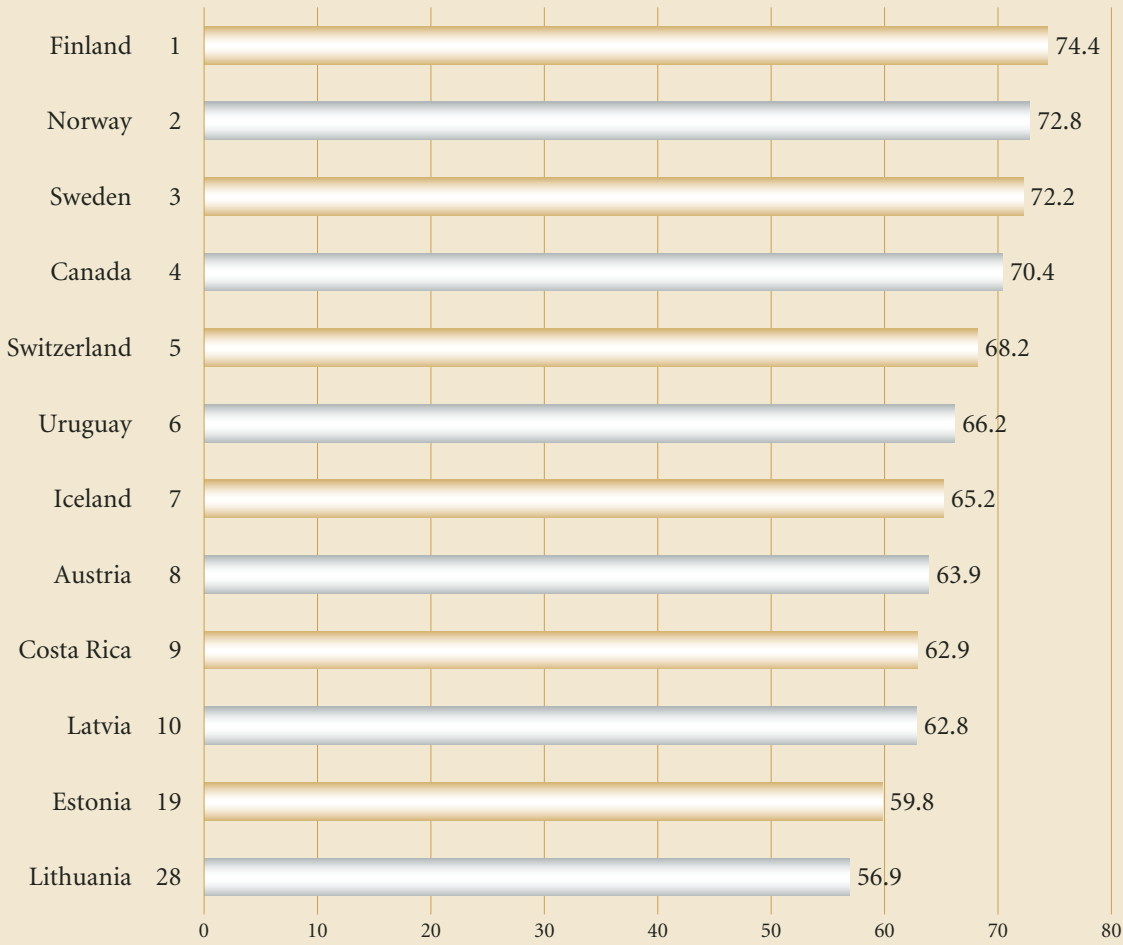
As a small nation, Latvia cannot significantly contribute to the reduction of environmental threats if it acts alone. However, every nation’s contribution is important in the context of international co-operation, as are community attitudes to national projects geared to reducing global environmental problems.

The role of the individual in ensuring environmental security must increase. Although slightly more than half (51%) of **Survey** respondents believe that they alone or together with others can reduce the threat of pollution in Latvia, the level of personal involvement in environmental groups is low.

According to the *Environment* survey carried out by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the

Box 2.16

Environmental Sustainability Index (0-100)  
and Latvia's rank among 142 nations



2002 Environmental Sustainability Index: an Initiative of the Global Leaders of Tomorrow Environmental Task Force, World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, 2002



## Box 2.17

### Latvia's contribution to global environmental risk prevention

In 1995 Latvia ratified the 1985 Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer, its Protocol on Substances Which Deplete the Ozone Layer, and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In 2002 Latvia also ratified the Kyoto Protocol of December 11, 1997. Upon becoming a signatory to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, Latvia committed itself to working alone and together with other nations to stabilize the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Along with other signatories of the Convention, Latvia has undertaken to reduce anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub>, CH<sub>4</sub>, N<sub>2</sub>O, HFC, PFC and SF<sub>6</sub> emissions to 8% below 1990 levels between the years 2008 and 2012 (VARAM, 2001). Latvia has already reduced its emissions of greenhouse gases to a great degree, mainly due to the economic restructuring of the country, which has involved factory closings.

The Latvian Ministry of the Environment's (VARAM) most recent predictions suggest that if no specific measures are taken, then Latvia's level of greenhouse gas emissions in 2010 will be 45% below 1990 levels. If purposeful measures are adopted, then these emissions could fall to 51% below 1990 levels.

Data gathered by the European Commission on the energy sector indicates that Latvia is using relatively more renewable sources for electrical power generation than the other EU candidate countries and producing the lowest levels of greenhouse gas emissions (Eurostat). Considering the great difficulties that other countries are experiencing in fulfilling their commitments under the Convention, Latvia is fulfilling its international obligations and making a significant contribution – taken in proportion to the size of its economy – to reducing the risks posed by global climate change.

*UNDP Latvia, 2003*

University of Latvia, 20% of respondents would be willing to pay a premium on a product's price if they knew that this markup was spent on environmental preservation, but far fewer would accept a lower standard of living in support of this goal.

Because of the long-term risks to human security that can be caused by environmental problems, it is incumbent upon individuals and governments to make small economic sacrifices today for a more secure environmental future. Environmental risk management lies in the choices made by each consumer, be it in the purchase of an automobile or laundry detergent.

## Food security

Food security means that food is physically and economically available to all. Furthermore, the food consumed must be safe and nutritious. The issue of food security in the 21<sup>st</sup> century is and will continue to be a matter of grave concern in many parts of the world.

Physical access to food is not a pressing problem in Latvia. There is an ample choice between locally produced and foreign-made food products all across the country. The variety of available food products is increasing each year. However, access to high quality food is best assured by regular and sufficient income, which is an acute problem for those living under the poverty level.

In Latvia food purchases still take up the highest percentage of disposable income for many households. The amount of household income spent on food continues to decrease – from 52.20 Ls in 1996 to 37.50 Ls in 2000, while the average number of kcal consumed per inhabitant continues to remain above 2400 kcal since 1996 (Central Statistical Bureau, 2003).

Four percent of the **Survey's** respondents acknowledged that they live in a state of semi-starvation because their income is insufficient to secure an adequate supply of food. Twenty percent stated that they only had enough money for food, and not much else (see Box 2.18). Incomes are generally lower in the

eastern region of Latgale, where people are less likely to be able to make other major purchases. Most of their limited income is spent on food.

Another concern is about people's eating habits, and about the quality of the food they consume. Although eating habits have improved in recent years as people in Latvia reduce their intake of high-fat foods and limit their use of sugar and salt, figures from the *Study of Household Budgets in Latvia in 2000* (Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, 2001) and the Health Promotion Centre show that the tradition of healthy eating and maintaining a balanced diet has not yet become entrenched. Unhealthy eating habits in conjunction with a sedentary lifestyle contribute to the prevalence of cardiovascular disease, which is the major cause of death in Latvia and elsewhere in Europe.

In Latvia, the consumption of vegetable and grain products is too low, while the consumption of meat and high-fat dairy products is too high. Only 18% of rural inhabitants eat fresh vegetables on a daily basis, compared to 28% of Riga residents. In many cases, the foods that people eat on a daily basis (mainly potatoes, cream and meat) lack quality and/or variety. Ministry

of Welfare guidelines for healthy eating are available for reading at the Latvian Food Centre (LFC) or on the Internet at the LFC's website – [http://www.lpc.gov.lv/download/uztura\\_vadlinijas.htm](http://www.lpc.gov.lv/download/uztura_vadlinijas.htm).

The **Survey** showed that 81% of respondents are concerned about foods with a high additive content, while 78% are worried about the potential negative health effects of low-quality foodstuffs.

## Community security

A community is a group of people united by some aspect of social identity or common motivation. (For more on the role of the community in enhancing security, see Chapter 5.) Human security is enhanced by a sense of belonging and by close relationships with others, starting with the immediate family and extending to interest groups, social or religious organizations, etc. It is often tied to one's linguistic, national and/or ethnic identity. The role of the community is pivotal in the creation and maintenance of a sense of security. Through contact with other people, individuals develop their own

Box 2.18

### Self-assessments of household income in Latvia's regions (%)

	Riga	Kurzeme	Vidzeme	Zemgale	Latgale
Sufficient income, no special efforts to economize	3	3	3	5	6
We live sparingly, but there is generally enough to meet our needs	25	22	24	25	19
We live very frugally and it is very difficult to save up for larger purchases	29	26	23	35	16
We barely have enough money for food and clothing	16	25	28	20	17
We only have enough money for food	19	20	18	11	29
We don't even have enough money for food and are half-starved	6	4	1	2	10
No answer	2	-	3	2	3
Total	100	100	100	100	100

UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

identities and establish a place for themselves in the world. The community is characterized by such concepts as trust, attachment and mutual responsibility (Sennett, 1998).

Most people in Latvia are not actively involved in formal community affairs. They usually maintain contact with others through informal networks that include mainly their family members, friends and work colleagues. The overall level of involvement in social organizations or interest groups is very low. A 2001 study by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the University of Latvia showed athletic organizations (18%) and religious organizations (6%) as those that drew the most involvement.

Family relationships are the most important support systems in Latvia and the main source of individual security. In most cases, the bulk of the emotional support and sense of community that individuals acquire is provided directly by the family. In difficult times people expect to receive help and emotional support first and foremost from their close family members. According to the 2000 Census, 83% of all people in Latvia live in families.

The family is rated higher than any other sphere of human existence in the European Values Survey (Baltic Data House, 1999). About 95% of respondents said that their families were important or very important to them. Work, friends, leisure time, religion and politics then followed in significance.

Social tendencies in Latvia are similar to those in neighbouring, developed Western countries. The number of people in marriages is regularly declining. According to present trends, at least one half of all women and men will never marry. However, this does not mean that people have stopped seeking life partners. More and more people in Latvia choose not to register their common-law marriages. Accordingly, the proportion of children born out of wedlock is increasing. The number of single-parent households is also on the rise.

Single-parent households usually have significantly lower incomes than the norm, which can be seen as a primary source of insecurity. The divorce rate in Latvia remains relatively high, even though it is on the decline. In 1979 and 1992 Latvia had one of the highest rates of divorce in the world, at 5.5 divorces per 1000 people. In 2001 it had dropped by almost half to 2.4 divorces per 1000 people. Two-thirds of divorcees have children. Personal loss is one of the main sources

of intense anxiety, and attachment at the family level is essential for a sense of security from childhood through adulthood. The children of divorced parents are a vulnerable group that is particularly prone to suffering from a lack of security.

## Political security

Political security addresses issues concerning human rights and freedoms, as well as the role of a civil society and individual participation in democratic processes. It is rooted in trust in one's government and in the conviction that one's government is capable of carrying out its assigned priorities.

The most significant human rights issues in Latvia in 2002 dealt with socio-economic questions – personal rights to housing and social security, as well as the right to due process in the court system and the right to be treated with respect. Altogether the National Human Rights Office received 1151 written complaints about alleged human rights violations and provided advice on 4150 cases. Complaints point to economic and social security issues, as well as problems in the justice system and different government institutions. Further information about human rights in Latvia can be obtained from the Internet home page of the National Human Rights Office (<http://www.vcb.lv>).

Few people in Latvia express complete trust in their political institutions, which include the Saeima (or parliament), the Cabinet, and political parties. Fully one-half of Latvia's inhabitants view the Saeima as untrustworthy, while nearly as many (45%) think the same of the Cabinet of Ministers (Latvian Facts, August, 2002). The high rate of MPs who were voted out of office in the 2002 elections bears witness to public dissatisfaction with the activities of Latvian politicians.

The divide between society and its power structures remains strong. People continue to feel alienated from political decision-makers and there is a noticeable lack of civic participation. According to sociologist Ulrich Beck, participation is a pre-requisite for the demystification of politics (Beck, 1998). Communication between the Latvian political elite and its electorate must be improved.

A survey carried out in 2001 by the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the University of Latvia indicates that only about 1% of respondents are involved in political parties. Three-quarters believe

that they have no ability to influence government activities. A disturbingly large number of people (73%) also rate their ability to affect politics at the municipal level as low, confirming a sense of political powerlessness (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, *Social Relations and Support Systems*, 2001).

Political participation in Latvia has decreased since the early 1990s. In 1993, 89% of citizens took part in the election of the 5<sup>th</sup> Saeima, compared to 72.5% in the 2002 elections of the 8<sup>th</sup> Saeima. This level of participation is still high compared to other Western democracies, and indicates that the people of Latvia have not entirely lost faith in their ability to affect political processes.

Participation translates as the ability of civil society to take part in decision-making processes at both the local and national levels. The government is currently elaborating procedures for increasing public input in government policy making – such as in agenda setting, programme-planning, and the formulation of draft legislation – as well as policy implementation and assessment (Miezaine, 2002).

NGOs are slowly becoming cooperation partners in policy planning, but most people are still passive about participating in them. People in Latvia also hesitate to use such existing participative options as open forums, discussions of draft legislation and other avenues for expressing their opinions, affecting decision-making and reducing their sense of alienation.

One reason for the low level of trust in Latvia's political elite is the pervasive perception of it as corruption-ridden. The *Face of Corruption Study* carried out by Delna in 1999, the Latvian branch of Transparency International, indicated that more than half of those surveyed believe that the government has no interest in fighting corruption. Three-quarters thought that Latvia has too many bureaucrats, of whom most use their positions for personal gain. The UNDP **Survey** also revealed that 42% of respondents are concerned about the necessity to give bribes in order to have their problems dealt with properly.

In 2002 Transparency International gave Latvia a rating of 3.7 out of 10, where 0 designates a general perception of unbridled and widespread corruption, while 10 indicates a complete lack thereof. Latvia placed 52<sup>nd</sup> among 102 countries studied. Both of Latvia's Baltic neighbours had better ratings. Estonia ranked 29<sup>th</sup> with a rating of 5.6, while Lithuania ranked 46<sup>th</sup> with a rating of 4.8. It remains to be seen

whether the establishment of Latvia's Bureau for the Prevention and Fight Against Corruption in 2002 will reduce both the public perception and actual occurrence of corruption in the country.

## Different people, different issues

Although the people of Latvia generally recognize the same issues as being problematic – the spread of drugs, household income, crime, health, etc., certain risks are felt more intensely by specific groups of people.

According to the **Survey**, there are no significant differences in the perception of general risks and personal threats among citizens and non-citizens. However, there are structural differences in the way some risks are perceived. For example, citizens are more likely to fear organized crime (59%) than non-citizens (51%). Non-citizens tend to be more concerned about inadequate social safeguards, including not being able to afford medical care if taken ill, and not being able to pay their rent and other household bills.

There are differences in the perception of national threats. For example, 46% of Latvia's citizens still fear the potential reoccupation of the country by a foreign power (namely Russia). Eighteen percent said they hold this fear strongly. Only about half as many non-citizens (24%) fear such an eventuality, and only 10% of them hold this fear strongly (see Box 2.19).

Both citizens (60%) and non-citizens (50%) are afraid of nuclear threats (the study did not differentiate between the use of nuclear weapons and nuclear reactor accidents). As reflected in the University of Daugavpils study mentioned earlier in this Chapter, the nuclear reactor in Ignalina, Lithuania is a source of anxiety to many living in the surrounding area.

Women in Latgale are more likely to be concerned about becoming seriously ill and about losing their income than those living elsewhere. However, the fear of not receiving an adequate standard of medical care was ranked only fourth in Latgale, whereas it was concern #2 countrywide. As was already noted in this Chapter's section on Health Security, economic status and health are closely linked. Those who experience the highest rates of anxiety about their health are usually those who lack regular or sufficient income, i.e. the unemployed, homemakers, and low-paid salaried workers. The economically disadvantaged segments of

the population are likely to continue to avoid using the country's health care system, even if the costs to them are kept to a minimum.

A different view presents itself when perceptions of risk are analysed across age groups. Those under the age of 29 are more likely to fear becoming infected with HIV/AIDS and losing their savings. They also fear such physical threats as street crime, sexual assault, and terrorist attacks. Those in their thirties are most afraid of receiving inadequate medical care in the case of illness, and being unable to afford a proper education for themselves and their children. The middle-aged and the elderly tended to be more worried about paying their bills, avoiding financial difficulties, securing sufficient old-age pensions and maintaining their health.

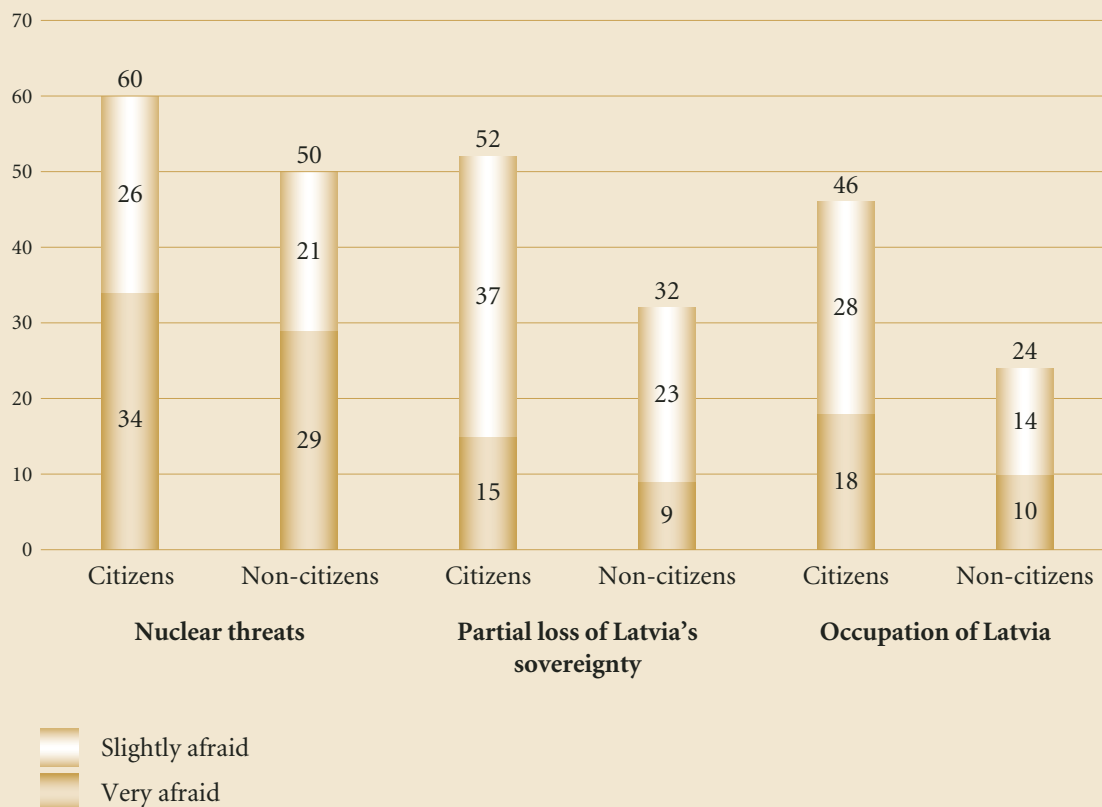
Marital status also affects perceptions of security. According to the **Survey**, those who are divorced, married but not living with their partners or widowed are

more worried about financial problems, most likely due to an absence of family support. The unmarried worry more frequently about contracting HIV/AIDS. Married individuals worry less about becoming infected with HIV/AIDS than those in common-law relationships. Married women living separately from their husbands are the most likely to fear assault. Married women living together with their husbands are less likely to fear physical violence at home, or at least admit to it.

The results obtained from the **Survey** show that people's sense of security is mostly undermined by general risk factors that are associated with current social, economic and environmental problems, including problems of access to quality food. People in Latvia are least worried about issues of national security. The prospects of Latvia being occupied by a foreign country, of ethnic or military conflict, or of civil unrest were rated as among the least likely in the category of general risks.

Box 2.19

### Concern about specific risks among citizens and non-citizens (%)



UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002



## Summary

This Chapter analyses the seven realms of human security as defined by the UNDP. *Health* and *economic security* are the two major realms of human security that need to be improved in Latvia. Both of these realms are interrelated. Economically secure persons are usually better able to prevent and treat health-related problems, while healthy persons are generally well-positioned to secure their economic well-being and that of their relatives.

Currently Latvia's health care system places an undue burden on the country's inhabitants. People lack clear information on medical options available through the official health system, and are not convinced that high quality health care is available through official channels. Those who lack information or who place little trust in the information available to them often avoid health establishments until an illness has set in with acute symptoms, as is the case with many tuberculosis patients. In those cases where information has been well targeted, such as with HIV/AIDS prevention, increased awareness has led to preventative measures that are slowing down the spread of this disease in Latvia. Alcohol abuse continues to be a human security hazard and the use of narcotics is on the increase.

Sufficient and predictable income and predictable employment are the cornerstones of economic security. People in Latvia are concerned about living below the subsistence level, of being unable to pay their bills and of receiving inadequate old age pensions. Those working in the shadow economy are sacrificing their future economic security in order to satisfy their immediate needs.

Unpredictable employment in a "work society" like Latvia's, where employment was practically guaranteed during the Soviet period, is a particularly sensitive issue. Many of those who are already employed are taking up two or even three different jobs to make ends meet. Conversely, the long-term unemployed are finding it increasingly difficult to re-enter the labour market. Therefore, Latvia's long-term strategy for global competitiveness must encourage the work force to increase its productivity, and seek to provide ample employment opportunities for those of working age. Individuals must understand that a broad-based, high-quality education, appropriate skills and personal initiative are tantamount to economic security – both locally and in the global context.

At the same time, government at the central and municipal levels needs to ensure an appropriate environment for stimulating economic activity, and to step in when the private sector does not assure adequate employment or incomes.

Many people have developed their own strategies to safeguard their *personal security*. Security strategies developed by groups of people are also on the rise. This would be laudable if the primary motives for such activities were not based on distrust of the country's law-enforcement and justice institutions. Activities to enhance mutual cooperation between law-enforcement officials and society could significantly improve security in the country.

Many individuals are also concerned about organized crime, due to the negative images it conjures up (few people have actually had to face this phenomenon directly), as well as the facility with which it crosses national borders and its association with State capture.

Both emotional and physical abuse are significant personal security issues with ramifications on people's sense of security in other realms. Self-inflicted injuries are strongly linked with high anxiety and insecurity levels. Although suicide rates have been decreasing lately, the increase in drug use is an issue of intense concern for many inhabitants of Latvia today. Motor vehicle accidents continue to pose a particularly high risk that could be limited through concerted action by Latvia's inhabitants in cooperation with local and national authorities.

People require sufficient information on *environmental security* and need to invest more of their time and resources for maintaining the environment. For the economically insecure (i.e. the poor), this implies a large sacrifice.

Overall, *food security* in Latvia depends upon economic security and proper eating habits.

There are two significant issues concerning *community security*. First, continuing changes in the structure of the family are having a negative impact on the way people feel about their security. With high divorce rates and an increasing number of single-parent households in a society where family values rate highly, close positive relationships are essential for maintaining a sense of security.

Second, people rely on close friends and family to help them feel secure, but networking with farther circles in formal networks is not widely practiced to pro-



mote security. Identification with a community is often related to one's closest family relationships and extends to one's further links with friends, neighbours, work colleagues, and other groups of people. It may also be related with one's linguistic and ethnic identity, as is the case for most Latvians. However, people do not organise themselves in wider circles to achieve security goals, such as neighbourhood self-help groups, advocacy groups, etc.

People in Latvia still lack a sense of belonging to European and other transnational communities, and have heightened perceptions of risks emanating from outside of Latvia. With increasing global and regional interactions, the extent to which the global community is perceived as a source of security will depend on the ability of Latvia's inhabitants to identify with and have direct experiences with ever-widening community circles.

*Political security* is negatively affected in Latvia by a low degree of trust in the country's political institutions and by a lack of civic participation in political processes at both the local and national levels. The perception of widespread corruption in State and local government institutions contributes to the belief that the government often lacks the volition to act in the interests of the people (Delna, 1999).

However, a relatively high voter turnout at local and national elections indicates that citizens have not yet lost hope in their democratically elected institutions. A change in perception for the better is still possible, given the improvement in communication between the government and the people, and given a newly apparent desire by the government and parliament to clamp down on corruption. At present, the fear of another foreign occupation is not a foremost political security issue.

# Individuals at Risk and the Manifestations of Insecurity

Although each individual has his or her own perception of security risks among the seven realms of human security, most people are usually able to deal with the insecurities they face. They develop personal security strategies or work with others to address those issues that concern them most. Since the mission of this **Report** is to foster human development, and human development is not possible in an environment of insecurity, this Chapter pinpoints those groups of people most likely to fall into intense states of insecurity. In addition, this Chapter describes the manifestations and consequences of insecurity that arise when a person lives under conditions in which he or she cannot feel secure for prolonged periods of time.

The authors of this **Report** used two criteria to determine those factors that undermine a person's sense of security: 1) People's own declared threats to their sense of security, compared among different groups (for example, whether women cite the fear of being unemployed more often than men); 2) Anxiety symptoms among people living under different conditions (for example, whether those outside the workforce feel more nervous and easily upset than those within it). High anxiety symptoms are the most direct manifestations of a sense of insecurity.

## Individuals at risk

Risk groups were identified by analyzing the self-evaluations of **Survey** respondents, who answered questions in conjunction with an anxiety scale devised by the **Survey's** authors. Other studies on anxiety were also consulted. Groups with high insecurity levels are examined first in this Chapter, followed by groups with high anxiety levels. Often different insecurity factors overlap or combine to heighten the intensity of the insecurity, leading to extreme consequences.

## High insecurity levels

By measuring the values assigned by respondents to a range of potentially threatening situations, the **Survey** was able to identify the following groups of people who tend to experience a high sense of insecurity. Individuals

from these groups also tend to experience feelings of insecurity more intensely, regardless of the issue:

- Lowest income groups (from 2 to 40 lats/month/family member);
- Women;
- People who feel distrustful of others;
- People who are generally dissatisfied with their lives;
- People in poor health;
- Residents of the Latgale region.

## Low-income groups

Insufficient and/or irregular income is a major source of insecurity, due to the extreme limitations that it imposes upon people's ability to affect the course of their lives and determine their destiny. The lowest income group is more likely to fear steep price increases (the third most often cited threat by people in this income group.) For those in the highest income bracket, the risk of such price increases rated only ninth. Financial instability contributes to fear and anxiety about future hardships and problems.

## Women

Women consistently demonstrate higher values for the perception of risk to their security than men (1.60 vs. 1.38). Women's replies indicate that they are far more worried than men about physical threats such as traffic accidents, abuse and street crime. They are more likely to be disturbed by drug abuse than men, by the prospect of losing their jobs, by the risk of food poisoning and by potential threats to Latvia's independence.

Women also display higher indices of anxiety and depression than men. The results of this **Study** correspond to other research findings that indicate similar differences in rates of anxiety and depression among men and women (Bite, 2002). Women may have a more pronounced sense of insecurity because they actually are more at risk in certain realms, and because they feel more responsible for themselves, their families and the people close to them than do men. They are more likely to be involved in social

networks and more often concerned about other family members. Help is expected more often from them than from men (*Social Relationship and Social Support Network Study*, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, 2001).

However, it would be difficult to conclude from this that men in Latvia feel better than women. There are other negative indices related to male physical and psychological health – including a shorter life span, higher rates of alcoholism, etc. Men are less prepared to admit to their fears and talk about their problems. The male socialization process in Latvia and many other countries encourages men to convey the impression that they are strong and in control of their feelings.

Socially constructed gender differences may also account in part for the higher self-assessments of health displayed by male respondents, and for their reluctance to admit to harbouring feelings of insecurity.

### *People who feel distrustful of others*

An individual who is unable to form well-grounded relationships with other members of society will often feel insecure. Such a person may be suspicious, resentful and preoccupied with finding scapegoats for his or her own problems. According to the *Survey on Social Relationships and Support Networks* (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology, 2001),

#### Box 3.1

**Anita Mertena**  
*Vice-President, Business and Professional Women's Federation of Latvia*

### **Women and human security**

What prompts women's inferiority complexes and feelings of insecurity? Lower wages than men in similar positions. Skepticism concerning women's professional skills and their ability to manage both work and family responsibilities. Insecurity because people doubt the success of projects authored by women. Rejection of a request for credit to the single mother. Fear of walking the streets in the evenings because someone might rape you or grab your purse. [...]

A close person can be a great threat to the life of a woman. Over 30 women are killed each year in Latvia by their husbands. Each week Riga police come to the assistance of almost 100 women who are the victims of family violence. Unfortunately, women in most cases do not turn to the police or social services for additional help.

These figures do not reflect the hundreds, possibly thousands of cases when women do not submit complaints against their employers' sexual advances in the workplace, against violence in the family and against threats by drunken neighbours in the stairwells.

Why lodge a complaint if the call to the police may elicit scarcely more than a smirk from the policeman on the line? Why complain if standing up for your human rights can get you fired? Many women don't want to publicize their problems or convey the image of a victim, so they bear the offences and keep the dark facts to themselves.

Women must be informed about the opportunities available to help them protect themselves and escape the vicious circle of insecurity. We cannot wait for others to do everything in our place.

Women must regain the belief in their own abilities and develop their self-esteem in order to speak out publicly about their role in the workplace, the family and the world as a whole. Then we shall be heard not only by local, but also by global decision makers.

Not everyone is endowed with a vibrant personality like that of Jeanne d'Arc, Madeleine Albright or Margaret Thatcher. However, it is within the power of every woman to protect herself.

*Diena, May 16, 2003*

three-fourths of people in Latvia claim to trust only a few people and three-fifths believe that “if you are not careful, then others will take advantage of you.”

### *People in poor health*

The actual physical health of an individual, his or her physical abilities or restrictions, as well as the perceived threats to his or her personal health are factors that have a significant influence on an individual's sense of security and level of anxiety. The results of the **Survey** show that health-related issues are significant fear-raising factors. The primary fears expressed include the fear of being unable to cover one's medical costs in the case of accident or illness, or of

receiving inadequate medical care. When asked which diseases people worry about most, the typical answer was – “we worry about those that cannot be cured or are difficult to treat – cancer, coronary heart diseases, alcoholism.”

### *Residents of the Latgale region*

Residents of Latvia's easternmost region of Latgale exhibit a greater fear of potential risks and in more areas than do residents of other regions. This is due primarily to the fact that the average income level in Latgale is markedly lower than in other parts of Latvia. In the **Survey's** self-assessment of family income, 4% of the respondents from Latgale said that

#### Box 3.2

#### Experiences of individuals reporting the highest anxiety levels

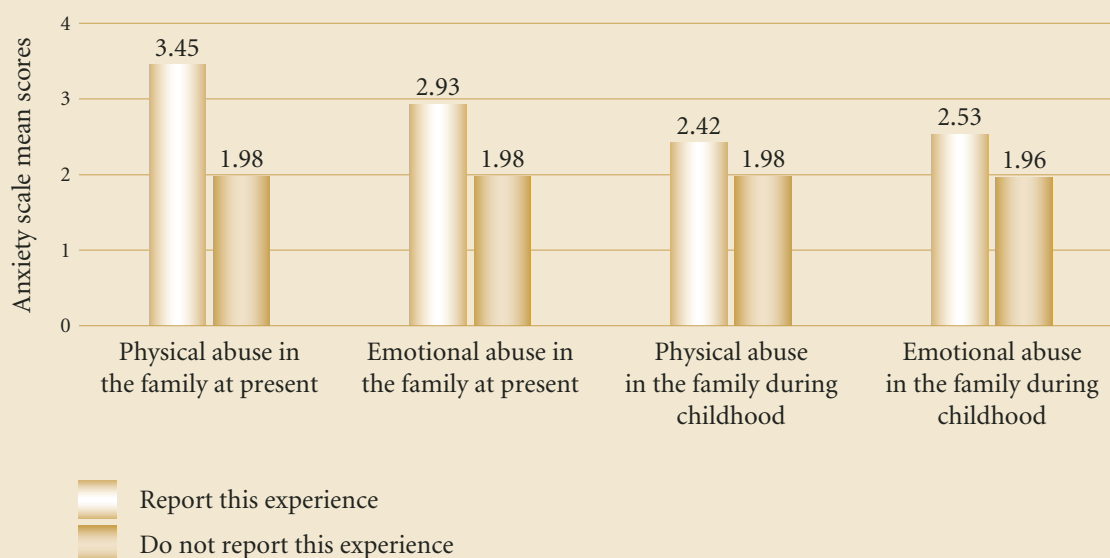
	Anxiety scale mean score
Current physical abuse within the family (compared to 1.98 points for those who reported no such abuse)	3.45
Current emotional abuse within the family	2.93
Permanent loss of work capacity / Disabled	2.92
Emotional abuse within the family during childhood	2.53
Physical abuse within the family during childhood	2.42
Close relatives have attempted suicide	2.27
Close relationship has recently ended	2.22
Close relatives have had alcohol or drug problems	2.18
Unemployed	2.18
Pensioners	2.15
Lost their jobs	2.15

1 – never 4 – often

UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

## Box 3.3

### Mean scores of anxiety in relation to experience of abuse in childhood and adulthood



UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

they live in semi-starvation, while 20% indicated they have just enough money to cover their food expenses. For more on the residents of Latgale, see the section on *Compounding insecurity factors* below.

## High anxiety levels

Anxiety and depression are proof of high levels of insecurity, even when individuals deny feeling insecure. To determine which factors engender the most intense feelings of individual insecurity, respondents completed one part of the **Survey** confidentially. They responded from 1 (never) to 4 (often) to such statements as: “I feel tense,” “I am easily upset,” and “I feel nervous.” These scores were averaged and correlated with different factors, of which the most significant were the respondents’ experiences with abuse, employment-related issues, and loss, as listed in Box 3.2.

## Abuse

### Abuse in the family

Abuse within the family greatly increases individuals’ level of anxiety and poses a direct threat to their physical and psychological security. According to the

**Survey**, those who are currently experiencing or have experienced physical or emotional abuse – in adulthood or in childhood – report the highest levels of anxiety.

Respondents were considered to be experiencing (or have experienced) emotional abuse if they reported being criticized, ridiculed or made to feel guilty often. They were considered to be experiencing (or have experienced) physical abuse if they reported being slapped, struck or beaten often. Questions regarding sexual abuse were not asked, but it is known from other recent studies in Latvia that sexual abuse significantly increases the level of anxiety and insecurity felt by its victims. The mean anxiety scores were significantly higher for those reporting current experiences of physical abuse within their families (3.45), current experiences of emotional abuse within their families (2.93), physical abuse within their families during childhood (2.42), or emotional abuse within their families during childhood (2.53).

Other stress-producing factors were also related to heightened levels of anxiety, but these effects, with the exception of permanent loss of job capacity, were not as great as those related to abuse. Significantly, all of the reported forms of abuse are interrelated. Many of those who reported physical abuse in their

Box 3.4

Reported experiences of childhood abuse (%)

	Total (n=197)	Women (n=103)	Men (n=94)
Physical abuse	28	25	30
Sexual abuse	11	17	5
Parents threatening to abandon, hurt or kill the child	21	23	18

n = number of respondents

Bite, 2002

families also reported emotional abuse, and many of those who reported abuse in the present also experienced parental abuse during their childhood.

Parental abuse during childhood

Data from several studies have indicated significant levels of childhood abuse in Latvia. In one study, 44% of adult Latvians reported childhood experiences of emotional abuse by their parents, while 31% reported physical abuse (Sebre, 2000). In-depth interviews with adults frequently reveal childhood experiences of abuse, as well as emotional distance and coldness, including the mother's inability to express her love for her child.

A recent study (Bite, 2002) found that 28% of adult Latvian respondents reported experiences of physical abuse before the age of 17 (see Box 3.4). Eleven percent reported sexual abuse, while 21% reported strong emotional abuse inflicted by their parents (humiliation, threats to abandon or kill them). Women suffer from childhood sexual abuse more often than men, while men suffer from childhood physical abuse more often than women.

Those respondents who reported childhood experiences of physical, sexual or emotional abuse also indicated significantly higher rates of anxiety. Respondents whose parents humiliated, threatened or shouted at them during their childhood tend to be tense, anxious, and fearful about the future also as adults. The emotional abuse inflicted by their parents has had a negative effect on their self-esteem, leading them to

question their ability to cope with adversity. Threats experienced during childhood (for example, of being abandoned or left in an orphanage by one's parents, or even worse, of being beaten or killed), enhance feelings that the world is not safe, and that something dangerous or evil might happen.

The experience of physical or sexual childhood abuse is also correlated to higher anxiety in those cases when the abuse was experienced outside of the family – on the street, at school, etc. Episodes of physical or sexual abuse – when an individual's security is under actual threat and when there may be a real danger to his or her life – are traumatic and often leave a serious, negative, long-lasting effect. Such victims feel continuously anxious and fear a reoccurrence of future abuse, as well as other possible calamities. It is more difficult for people with such experiences to believe that they will be able to provide for themselves and their families. They also worry more about their personal health and other issues.

Partner abuse during adulthood

The **Survey** reveals a direct correlation between anxiety symptoms and abuse in partner relationships. Physical abuse in partner relationships had the single largest influence on anxiety symptoms.

Episodes of abuse between partners in intimate relationships are fairly frequent and their victims are usually women. The Riga Municipal Police receive an average of 400 calls per week, of which one-fourth are related to abuse in partner relationships within the



family. Approximately one-half of all the crimes committed against women in Latvia take place not on the street, but within the family. According to data from the Information Centre of the Ministry of the Interior, an average of 35 women are killed each year within their families by their partners.

In the Bite (2002) study on abuse, 29% of women respondents reported physical abuse committed by their partners. Twenty-two percent of men respondents admitted being abusive towards their partners. Women experiencing abuse reported markedly increased anxiety symptoms.

This study reveals a significant correlation between present abusive behaviour and childhood experiences of physical and/or emotional parental abuse. In other words, those who suffered from abuse as children are more likely to inflict it upon others as adults.

### Employment status

Those **Survey** respondents who identified themselves as having a “permanent loss of work capacity/disabled” (mean score 2.92) had one of the highest degrees of anxiety, as did those who listed themselves as unemployed (2.18) and pensioners

(2.15). Average anxiety scores were reported by employed specialists, employed workers and housewives. Those who identified themselves as “entrepreneur, have my own business” (1.80) cited the least amount of anxiety. These differences in anxiety scores in relation to employment status are statistically significant.

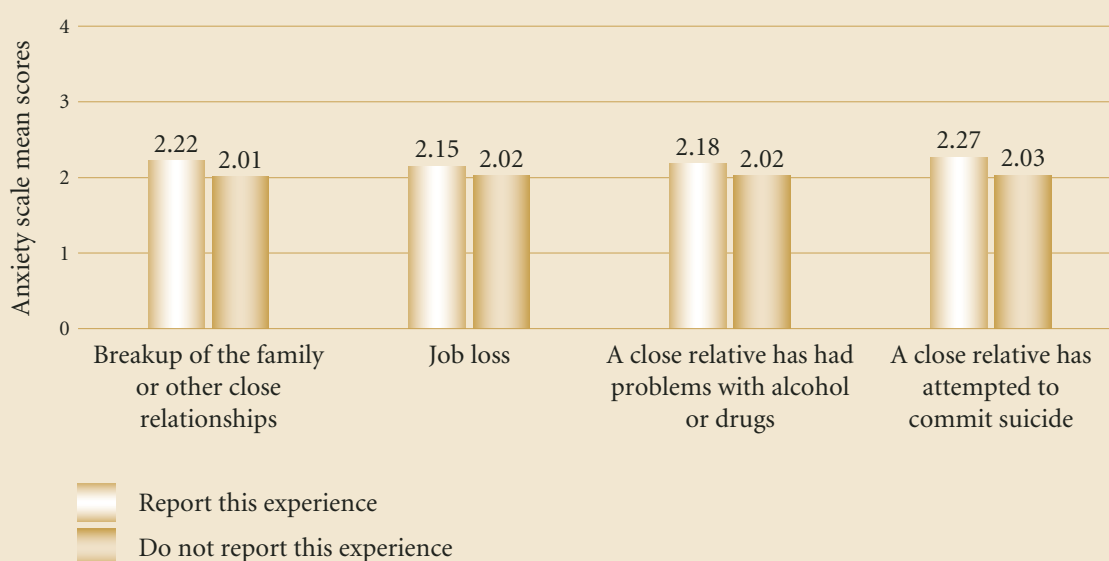
### Significant personal loss

Stress-provoking experiences may increase the anxiety level and sense of insecurity that people feel. Grievous losses often cause both anxiety and depression (prolonged grief, decreased energy levels, sleep and eating disturbances, etc.) Problems in close relationships may also lead to intense anxiety, depression and/or anger.

**Survey** respondents were asked to note if they had recently experienced any serious feelings of loss – for example, through the death of a close person, the breaking up of a relationship, or the attempted suicide of a close relative. They were also asked about alcohol or drug problems within their families and requested to note how severely each of the above-mentioned stress-inducing situations had influenced their feelings of security. The **Survey**’s findings reveal

Box 3.5

#### Mean scores of anxiety in relation to difficulties experienced in recent years



UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

that each of these stress-eliciting situations is associated with high anxiety levels.

As seen in Box 3.5, significantly higher anxiety levels are shown by those who have lost their jobs, those who are recovering from the end of a close relationship, those who have close relatives with alcohol or drug problems, or those with close relatives who have attempted suicide.

### Compounding insecurity factors

As mentioned in Chapter 1, no single incident, unless it is overly traumatizing, pushes a person beyond his or her security threshold. A combination

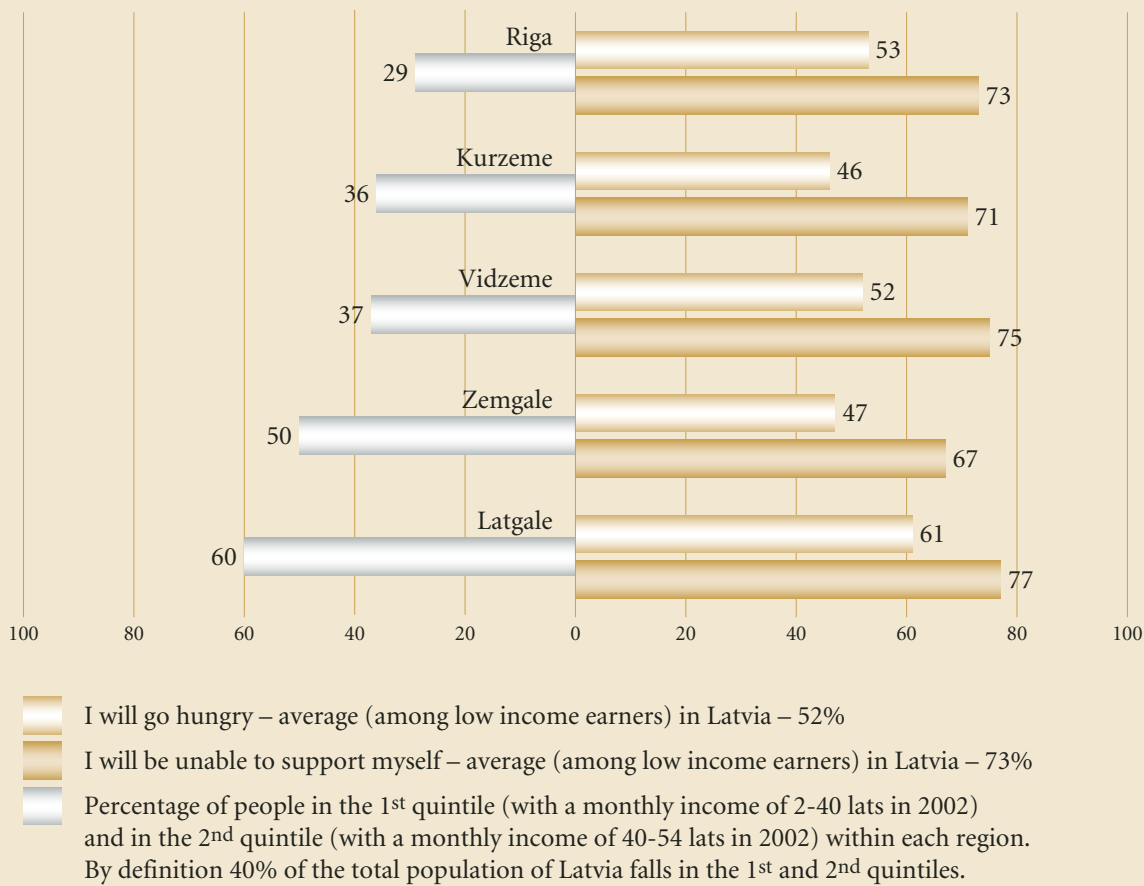
of factors, however, can significantly undermine a person’s sense of security. This is illustrated by the example of women in Latgale with low incomes.

Taken together, residents of Latgale expressed a greater fear of potential risks from abroad, in Latvia, and in their personal lives than did residents of other regions. Low-income women in Latgale make up one of the most insecure groups of people in Latvia. Women over the age of 40, living in Latgale and with a family income of less than 40 lats per month indicated the highest levels of insecurity.

Currently people’s sense of insecurity is overwhelmingly related to health care issues. Over four-fifths (83%) of the **Survey’s** respondents said that they were extremely concerned about being unable to pay for medical care in the case of accident or illness.

Box 3.6

Level of concern about hunger and poverty among low-income earners (2-54 lats per month per family member) according to Latvia’s regions (%)



UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

These health-related fears are highest in the risk groups cited above, particularly women. **All** (100%) of the women respondents in Latgale over age 40 and with a family income of 2 to 40 lats per month expressed this fear. Three-quarters of them stated they were “very afraid” of such an eventuality.

Conversely, perceptions of security threats among men increase significantly along with declining income levels, but are unaffected by regional factors. There are no regional differences among men with an income of less than 40 lats per month.

Children in impoverished or psychologically dysfunctional families are another group likely to experience multiple threats to their personal security. Although children were not covered by the **Survey**, other studies have shown that children experiencing poverty, disabilities, and/or abuse deserve particular care and need to be at the centre of any concerted efforts to enhance *securitability* in the country.

In a 1998 UNICEF study on childhood abuse in Latvia, 29% of children aged 10 to 14 reported that their parents had been emotionally abusive, while 17% reported physical parental abuse. The children who reported emotional or physical parental abuse also reported higher levels of psychological trauma symptoms – anger, depression, anxiety, and a sense of insecurity. The children in the study were asked to indicate the employment status of their parents and whether anyone in the family was “drinking too much alcohol.” Within the framework of that study, 9% of the children reported that their father had no employment outside of the home, while 12% reported excessive alcohol use within the family. This subset of respondents also reported a greater incidence of emotional or physical abuse. These results confirm a view voiced by professionals that abuse is often linked with alcoholism and unemployment, which, in turn, is linked with the economic situation of the country. The above indicates the compounding of factors that may be at work in creating a sense of insecurity.

Children may also experience abuse at their schools. In a recent study in Ventspils (Sebre, 2001), 36% of boys and 18% of girls aged 11 to 16 indicated that they had been emotionally abused by their teachers. About half as many boys (18%) and 7% girls reported physical abuse by their teachers.

Of relevance in this regard is the national Children’s Rights Protection Law, which was adopted in 1998. This law stipulates the right of the child to be

protected against abuse and prohibits violence against children, as stipulated in Article 9: “The child shall not be subject to cruel treatment, torture or corporal punishment, humiliation and disrespect.” It has been found on several occasions that teachers violate this law. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by the Government of Latvia, encompasses these same principles.

## Causes, manifestations and consequences of insecurity

Insecurity can manifest itself in all aspects of people’s lives: including their way of thinking, emotional state and behaviour. The consequences may include such attachment disorders as difficulties in developing positive close relations (see Box 4.2 in Chapter 4), anger, intolerance, and in extreme cases – suicidal behaviour.

### Trauma

Trauma is one of the principle causes of insecurity. A person who has experienced traumatic episodes (violence, natural disaster, becoming permanently disabled, etc.) may also experience either short-term or long-term insecurity. The psychological symptoms of such insecurity can manifest themselves in the form of anxiety, depression, anger or aggression. These symptoms, in turn, may aggravate and increase one’s initial sense of insecurity. For example, a person who has suffered a significant loss may become depressed. These depressive thoughts and feelings may generate a gloomy outlook on life, which may then further reinforce existing feelings of insecurity. However, neither insecurity, nor anxiety, nor depression are the primary cause of the problem. The cause of trauma is the specific life situation and the resulting emotional fallout.

The long-term consequences of trauma can be categorized as follows: (1) **emotional consequences** (depression, low self-esteem, feelings of guilt, feelings of shame, anxiety, anger); (2) **interpersonal consequences** (isolation, alienation, difficulties in relationships, fear of intimacy); (3) **behavioural consequences** (self-destructive behaviour, eating disturbances, use of addictive substances); (4) **cognitive/perceptual consequences** (denial, distorted thinking, memory disturbances, nightmares, hallucinations); (5) **physical consequences** (psychosomatic pain, sleep disturbances, sexual dysfunctions).

Each individual reacts differently to a traumatic experience and each may demonstrate one or several of the aforementioned consequences. The way in which an individual reacts to trauma is determined by numerous factors, including inborn temperament, relationships and support from within the family, support from others outside of the family, and general socio-cultural conditions. In some cases the aforementioned consequences get worse with time, or build up to such an extent that the individual is unable to function adaptively in everyday life, thus becoming mentally ill and requiring professional help.

## Anxiety

Anxiety has a negative impact on one's sense of security. It is defined as an unclear and unpleasant emotional state characterized by uncertainty, fear, stress, nervousness, and agitation. Anxiety may be related to a specific fear, when a person clearly knows what he or she is afraid of. However, it can also be unspecified, unclear, and without a concrete focus. For people who have a high level of anxiety, even if they do not admit to it and deny the problems causing it, anxiety often manifests itself somatically through such symptoms as stomach and intestinal dysfunctions, headaches, sleep disturbances, etc.

Feelings of anxiety influence the way an individual perceives his or her environment, and the way he or she assesses favourable or adverse conditions. The greater the general feeling of anxiety and insecurity, the greater the likelihood of distorted perceptions that heighten additional specific fears, which increase the general psychological and physical symptoms of anxiety and diminish the *securitability* of the individual.

All people encounter certain levels of anxiety in their daily lives. Anxiety can have a positive, defensive function when one's personal or family's human security comes under threat. Since unemployment, disease, death, natural disasters and violence are among the many eventualities that people must face during their lifetimes, a certain level of anxiety is also unavoidable.

A distinction must be made between the anxiety that is related to unavoidable factors of daily life, and the anxiety that reinforces feelings of insecurity and diminishes the capacity of individuals to address threats to their human security. Recent global studies

indicate that manifestations of anxiety are in part genetically determined. The genetic structure of certain individuals predisposes them to react to certain situations with increased anxiety levels.

Individuals must perceive themselves as having the adequate personal resources – physical, material, psychological, and spiritual – for coping with problematic situations. The lack of such a perception can lead to increased feelings of anxiety. People must also feel that help is accessible from others, ranging from their closest relatives to their work colleagues, to community and national institutions. If one is generally convinced of having these resources and of being able to expect help from other people, then one will tend to believe in one's own inherent self-worth, perceive the world as a safe enough place, and feel capable of coping with most difficulties.

The ways in which people try to reduce their anxiety levels are not always positive. Frequently alcoholism, drug addiction, violence against others, mental disturbances and suicides are the consequences of inner insecurity. The higher the general level of insecurity within a society, the greater the risk of such negative phenomena. Many respondents of this study answered that they often choose to "calm" themselves with the help of alcohol, drugs or medicines, which are short-term and illusory solutions.

## Abuse and attachment disorders

Attachment disorders also reinforce people's sense of insecurity (Bite, 2002). Often they stem from experiences of childhood abuse or neglect. Abuse is detrimental to victims' sense of self-esteem, sense of personal integrity and views regarding relationships. Partner relationships are a primary focus of attachment in adulthood. People who have experienced abuse are more likely to enter into abusive or other dysfunctional partner relationships, thus continuing the cycle of abuse. Men who reported being abusive towards their partners also have higher ratings of insecure attachment styles (see definitions in Box 4.4 of Chapter 4).

## Anger and intolerance

Similarly, childhood experiences of abuse can result in anger and intolerance, mainly against the abusive parent, as well as a lack of self-esteem. Often, the victim's feelings of repressed anger are

redirected toward seemingly weaker individuals, who have nothing to do with the abuse that the victim has endured. Thus the victim can become a victimizer of others.

Manifestations of anger and intolerance are also related to an individual's socio-cultural and socio-historical context. People are affected by the political climate in which they have lived and by the politically motivated abuse that they may have experienced. Nevertheless, research in Latvia shows that anger and intolerance are much more closely linked to abuse within one's family, than with abuse that one may have experienced as a result of politically motivated persecution (Sebre, 2000). Many people in Latvia have suffered from politically provoked acts of violence during the Nazi and Soviet occupations, but not all display signs of anger and intolerance. These are manifested most often by those who have experienced additional trauma and abuse within the family.

## Suicide

Extreme forms of insecurity can lead to increasingly intense feelings of anxiety and depression, and ultimately, to the attempt to take one's own life. Psychiatrist Elmārs Rancāns has studied suicide statistics in Latvia from 1980 to 1998 and analyzed the factors that might be responsible for marked changes or fluctuations in the indices of male and female suicides. The lowest rate of male suicides was in 1988, at 35 per 100,000 inhabitants. It then experienced a marked increase in 1990 and culminated in 1993 at 72 suicides per 100,000 inhabitants. Since 1995 this number has been gradually decreasing. Rural males aged 45 to 64 were the most likely to commit suicide during the period. The number of female suicides during the entire period of study was stable at 12 to 14 per 100,000 inhabitants.

Rancāns' research suggests that the increased numbers of male suicides from 1990 to 1993 coincide with a sharp decline in Latvia's economy and GNP, along with a corresponding rise in unemployment. At the beginning of the 1990s many collective farms and industries ceased functioning. Many people lost their jobs and source of income, which had a negative effect

on their social relations and status. The study concludes that Latvia's rapid political and economic changes caused great stress for many. Those who felt unable to cope with these changes resorted to the extreme measure of suicide. The fact that the number of suicides in recent years has been decreasing is a positive sign that coincides with an overall improvement of the economic situation in the country, and with the increasing ability of people to accept, adapt to and successfully deal with new conditions.

## Summary

The **Survey** measurement of anxiety levels indicates that those who have suffered or are currently suffering from emotional and/or physical abuse, those not in the workforce (such as the disabled, the unemployed and senior citizens), those suffering a grievous loss (such as the end of a close relationship or job loss), those with relatives who suffer from addiction and those with relatives who have attempted to commit suicide – all are among those with the highest anxiety levels.

This Chapter also discusses the interrelated issue of abuse, which is further analyzed in Chapter 4. An understanding of the implications of abuse is essential for finding solutions to this insidious problem, which is kept secret by many of its victims. Abuse has a negative impact on all aspects of human security.

Perceptions of threats to human security are not distributed uniformly across social and demographic groups. High insecurity levels are exhibited by economically disadvantaged people, those in poor health, women, those who say they are dissatisfied with life, and those who lack the ability to establish a close personal rapport with others. Residents of Latgale show a higher degree of insecurity than residents of other geographic regions, mostly likely due to issues connected with economic security. Children from economically disadvantaged and/or dysfunctional families also risk experiencing a high degree of insecurity, as do other individuals who experience multiple insecurity factors. These are the people whose *securitability* must be enhanced as rapidly as possible.



## The Individual and Positive Close Relationships as *Securability* Factors

Individuals with a strong sense of security feel sheltered and protected, and capable of maintaining and developing their physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. As described in previous chapters, any sense of security depends upon both objective and subjective factors. People's sense of security is influenced first and foremost by their actual objective situation – in other words, the extent to which they are protected from real threats to their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. It is also influenced by how they perceive their immediate environment, and by the significance that they attribute to favourable or adverse circumstances. Last, but not least, a sense of security can be negatively influenced by irrational fears that are related to non-existent threats or insignificant issues.

This Chapter will focus upon the individual and his or her closest relationships. It will analyse how these reciprocal relationships, together with the individual's own personal characteristics, influence his or her sense of security, and their significance in ensuring a high degree of *securability*. Interviews will appear throughout this Chapter as illustrative examples of the importance of individual *securability* factors.

This Chapter will also address the following issues:

- Factors that enhance people's sense of security: family, friends (also considered as informal networks in Chapter 5), self-reliance, religious faith, sense of ethnic belonging, and other factors such as life satisfaction, confidence in one's ability to effect change or take initiative, self-esteem and health. Several recent studies in Latvia have shown that people's sense of security is to a large extent associated with positive close relationships within their families. Consistent parental love and care fosters feelings of security, which in turn encourage feelings of positive self-esteem and trust in others throughout one's lifetime.
- Possibilities and opportunities for overcoming or minimizing feelings of insecurity and anxiety.

### Positive close relationships – at the core of individual *securability*

When asked to cite three factors that most enhanced their sense of security, respondents of the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002** most frequently mentioned their families, relatives and friends. In answer to the closed question: "Which of the following increases or decreases your sense of security?" – the family ranked first as the most significant *securability* factor for both women and men, and among both Latvian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents. "Friends" ranked second, while "one's own actions" placed third.

Regarding the significance of the family in enhancing his own sense of security, psychologist Alexander Kolyosov answered the question: "What creates a sense of security for you?" as follows:

"I have experienced various social systems, and I am truly glad that throughout these changes our family has remained central. I feel that family ties and family support are also important for my son and that they create a sense of security for him."

Psychologist Jānis Grants expressed similar views regarding the role of the family in developing and enhancing his sense of security.

"In childhood I always felt that my parents would help me if I needed them. Even if they did not always answer my questions immediately, I knew that they would be there for me. I never felt unloved or neglected. That was very important for me."

According to leading psychologists, the family is a primary factor in enhancing people's sense of security. Erik Erikson emphasizes that young children who receive consistent parental love and care during their first year of life will develop feelings of trust and reliance toward their parents. Such infants develop the feeling that their parents are reliable, and that they will be present when their support and care is needed. This initial reliance upon parental care and responsiveness is the most meaningful basis for a sense of security – and the basis for the child's ability to trust other people later on in life.



## The role of parent-child attachment in human security

The subjective sense of security of each individual is related to biological, psychological and social aspects. It may change during the individual's lifetime, impacted by changes regarding any of these dimensions, and influenced by the attitude he or she assumes in regard to these changes. Nevertheless, most psychologists agree that the basis for the individual's sense of security is formed in childhood (see Box 4.2).

Close adult relationships show similar attachment tendencies to those experienced in childhood. In both cases there is a strong need for an attachment figure in situations of stress. There is comfort and security in the presence of the attachment figure, in contrast to discomfort and anxiety when separated from this person. Close, mutually trusting relationships minimize stress for people in all age groups.

### Box 4.1

**Jānis Stradiņš**  
Professor, President of the Latvian Academy of Sciences

### On enhancing human security

**What should be done to reduce people's sense of insecurity and to enhance an overall sense of security in Latvia today?**

We need to establish a psychologically more stable society. Latvia is a society in transition, a nervous society. Part of the problem lies in the fact that too many families in Latvia are unstable. Couples need to feel sufficiently close to want to have children.

**Which values should be emphasized in particular?**

Diligence and enterprise. I think that Latvians are perhaps lacking in enterprise, maybe also in self-confidence – that is important as well. One of our most important priorities is an educated society. We need educated, enterprising people and strong families. I think that we speak too infrequently about the family. We need more tolerant attitudes towards elderly people. We have a great deal of elderly, cultured people with very high moral standards. It is important for them to go to a concert or to read a book or newspaper from time to time. In other words, it is important to guarantee a decent standard of living for them.

**The results of a recent international study showed that Latvians are less satisfied with their lives than people from other countries with lower levels of economic development. What is your opinion about this?**

Latvians have rather high demands. The economic progress that was made after the wars was very fast – both during the first period of Latvian independence and after the Second World War, for example, in Brezhnev's time. We achieved a state of economic well-being quite quickly. Thus, people's expectations today are fairly high. This dissatisfaction may be something positive, if it is coupled with positive attempts to look for solutions. On the other hand (and I do not know if it can be called a general characteristic), there is a widespread feeling of envy toward those who are better off, particularly those who have become rich very quickly, and maybe undeservedly so. Latvians also have a perception of social injustice.

**What is the role of the family in relation to your own personal sense of security?**

I am truly grateful to my father and my mother. They supported me and never imposed their will upon me, but calmly directed me onto my course. In a certain sense they also accepted my mistakes and failings. My father, with his superhuman work capacity, provided a decent living for us in very difficult times – there were four children in our family. Our family unity provided us with a sense of protection and security, especially during our childhood. I am very grateful to my parents for this. There is even a kind of spiritual bond – sometimes I feel as if my parents are still close by me.

UNDP Latvia, 2003

## Attachment styles in Latvia

In recent years several studies of attachment styles have been carried out in Latvia (see Box 4.4 for a description of different attachment styles). A study of people belonging to various professions in the 25 to 50-year age group (office workers, doctors, police officers, etc.) showed that only about 40% of the respondents reported a secure attachment style, while 60% reported an insecure attachment style (Bite, 2002, see Box 4.3). A similar study carried out in the U.S.A., using the same research methodology, found that 47% of respondents reported a secure style of attachment. Latvian women exhibit attachment styles that involve more negative self-perception than do men. Latvian men more frequently report a dismissive attachment style, which implies pseudo self-confidence and a lack of trust in other people. They do not feel that others can be relied upon, and thus avoid close relationships.

The formation of attachment styles is first of all related to how secure people have felt in their relationship with their parents during childhood (see Box 4.4). The loss of a parent and/or insufficient parental care and abuse are the two factors that contribute most to a sense of childhood insecurity that may con-

tinue through adulthood. Insecure attachment is also directly influenced by the experience of abuse and traumatic experiences (such as war, terrorism, etc.), both within and outside the family.

## Support of the family and self-reliance

A content analysis of the interviews of 56 respondents from various age groups (Box 4.5) shows that respondents from younger age groups are more likely to mention “family” as a security-enhancing factor that helps them to overcome difficulties. The younger the individual in Latvia, the greater the significance of family, friends and close relations in regard to a sense of security. Respondents aged 40 and older have an increasing tendency to mention reliance on themselves as the major factor that helps them to overcome difficulties. The ability of the younger respondents to enlist the support of family and friends is a positive indication and implies that they have a greater ability to trust other people. This would also indicate more positive self-esteem. Those with more positive self-esteem are secure enough about themselves to enlist the help of others when appropriate.

### Box 4.2

#### Attachment theory

Attachment theory has been developed during the past several decades by British psychotherapist John Bowlby and his colleagues. It became better known in Latvia following the 1998 release of the Latvian translation of his book *Secure Base* (“Drošais pamats”).

Attachment theory is based on the view that human infants seek to create a bond with their parents, who serve as a source of security. This type of bond-seeking is inborn and has evolutionary significance – the preservation of the infant’s life. Therefore, attachment is defined as a biologically determined urge to establish strong emotional links with one’s primary care givers, usually the child’s parents. Attachment behaviour – which includes crying when one yearns for one’s mother and smiling when she is present – is a means by which the infant maintains this bond. This system of attachment helps to ensure closeness between the child and the care provider, especially under dangerous and threatening conditions. The sense of security provided by this attachment system will be determined by the parents’ reactions and responsiveness to the child’s signals. The quality of the infant’s early attachment relationship determines the degree to which the child will rely upon his or her parents as a source of security.

Children who know that their parents will be accessible when they need protection will feel confident in new situations and will develop a healthy degree of independence, as well as trust in others. In the opposite case, they will exhibit general uneasiness, or will develop a posture of pseudo-confidence in an attempt to hide feelings of inner insecurity and/or anxious attachment behaviour.

*Bowlby, 1988*

## Box 4.3

## Prevalence of attachment styles for Latvian women and men (%)

	Women (n=103)	Men (n=89)
Secure style	40	43
Fearful style	20	12
Preoccupied style	23	14
Dismissive style	17	31

n = number of respondents

*Bite, 2002*

### "What has helped you to overcome difficulties in life?"

The following answers are excerpts from **Report** interviews with 56 people from different walks of life, different regions in Latvia, and between 20 and 80 years of age.

#### **20 to 29-year age group:**

**43% of the answers are related to "family/ friends/ people close to me"**

"Help comes from people who are close to me. My family provides moral support."

"Well, I might say friends."

**43% of the answers are related to "self-reliance/ optimism/ life experience"**

"I have an optimistic attitude towards life. I am an easy-going person, an optimist. My principle of life is: 'the storm will blow over.'"

"After the accident I was afraid to drive a car, especially at high speeds. Then gradually I started driving more often, and so eventually I overcame even this fear."

#### **30 to 39-year age group:**

**35% of the answers are related to "family/ friends/ people close to me"**

"Thoughts of those people near me, who love me and will always help me."

**46% of the answers are related to "self-reliance/ life experience"**

"Life experience. If you are ready for any situation, then you are no longer afraid. This is also taught in the martial arts. One has to think two steps ahead about what the adversary might do. You have to divert the negative, you should not allow anything to frighten you."

"You must be able to focus, to mobilize yourself. You have to be confident and assured, you have to engage in self-development."

"My parents taught me not to be afraid in my childhood. They explained the essence of many things so as not to be afraid of them."

#### **40 to 49-year age group:**

**18% of the answers are related to "family/ friends/ people close to me"**

"My wife. We both live one life. In general, my family means a lot to me."

**63% of the answers are related to "self-reliance/ life experience"**

"Most of all I like working with my hands. When I go into my garden and start tending the soil, all of my negative thoughts disappear. The freshness that comes from the soil is so very comforting."

"When I analyse my fears, I understand that in fact there is nothing to be afraid of. I look my fear straight in the eye. I saw my parents overcoming their fear and insecurity, so I understood that I have to cope with my own fears."

**50 to 64-year age group:**

**21% of the answers are related to “family/ friends/ people close to me”**

“My close relationships help me a lot. I find comfort and help in advice given by other people. It helps if I can talk to someone. Half of the problem is solved by sharing it with someone.”

**52% of the answers are related to “self-reliance/ life experience”**

“In our family people do not impose their problems upon others – everyone has to cope with his or her own problems. When I have difficult times I read books.”

“I help myself to overcome difficulties, comfort myself by saying that in the end everything will be all right. I have always envied those who believe in God.”

**65 to 80-year age group:**

**11% of the answers are related to “family/ friends/ people close to me”**

“I have always had people around me whom I can meet and talk to. It makes the situation easier – we support one another. I know that I shall never be alone.”

**66% of the answers are related to “self-reliance/ life experience”**

“Self-reliance, nothing else! Determination helps! And perhaps a little stubbornness.”

“I have always relied only upon myself. I am strong and in difficult situations I always push forward like a tank.”

As individuals grow older, support from their family, friends and close relations may lessen, particularly among people aged 65 to 80. They have the most limited possibilities in this respect, as many of their relatives and friends are already deceased or may be in ill health. They themselves may also have impaired health and restricted financial means, which limit the possibilities of social encounters. People aged 50 to 56 might also encounter some of these limitations, but to a lesser degree.

Why do respondents between the ages of 40 and 49 rely on the support of “family/ friends/ close relations” less frequently than others? The older the individual, the more failures in social contacts he or she

**Box 4.4****Basic styles of attachment****Secure attachment**

Adults and children with a secure attachment style are confident, autonomous and independent. They feel worthy and valuable as human beings, and are able to defend their views and opinions. It is easy for them to form close relationships and if necessary, to seek support and assistance. In general they trust other people and can deal with negative emotions. They exhibit the individual *securitability factors* of “confidence in one’s ability to effect change/Initiative,” “positive self-esteem,” and “sense of belonging to a group or community.”

**Insecure attachment**

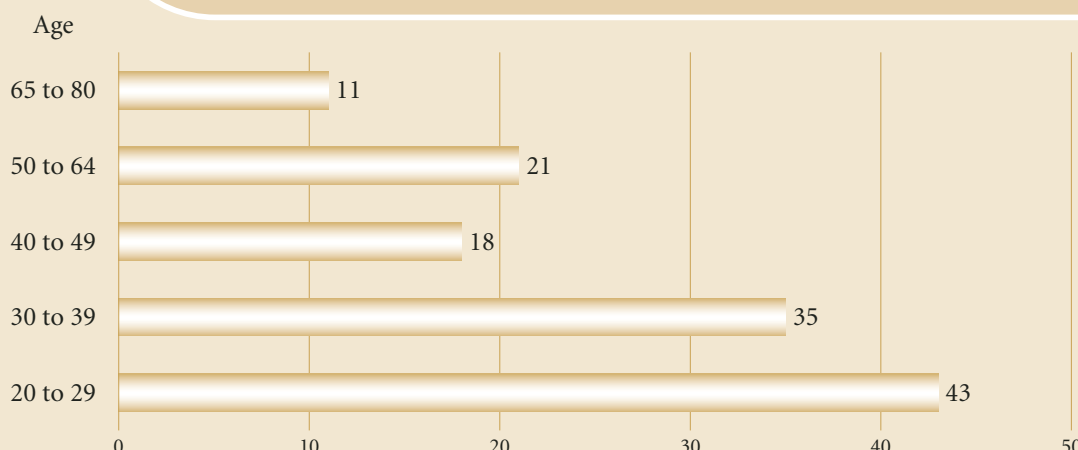
Insecure attachment is characterized by a general feeling of insecurity and high anxiety. The following three styles of insecure attachment erode individual *securitability*:

- Fearful style – An inner sense of unworthiness (the sense of being unloved) accompanied by negative perceptions of others. These individuals long for relationships, yet at the same time are afraid of them. Fearing rejection, they usually avoid close relationships with others.
- Preoccupied style – These people are confused, anxious, overly dependent, jealous and overly expressive emotionally. They demand increased attention from others. They have a negative self-perception, but perceive others in a positive (often idealized) manner. They seek acceptance and recognition in the hope that others will provide them with the love that they do not feel towards themselves.
- Dismissive style – Pseudo self-confidence in combination with a negative attitude towards others. These people develop a pseudo-positive self-perception to counter their inner sense of insecurity. By avoiding close relationships and creating an image of independence and invulnerability, these people seek to defend themselves from potential disillusionment.

*Bartholomew and Horowitz, 1991*

Box 4.5

### Family, friends or other close relations as a source of security (%)



UNDP Latvia Interview Analysis on Human Security, 2002

may have experienced. Such negative experiences may render one cautious and less prone to openness. However, childhood experiences within one's own family, coupled with the socio-cultural conditions that reigned during one's childhood, also play a role.

During the Soviet occupation of Latvia, Moscow's family policy was inconsistent. This inconsistency was at times related to political changes in ideology, while at other times it had no apparent motivation. Changes in ideology regarding the family seem to be connected to changing views on the role of the mother and the role of women. Lenin emphasized the equality of women and men, as well as the importance of women working outside of the home. Stalin, however, placed greater emphasis on the woman's role as mother, sometimes even fostering a so-called "cult of motherhood" to increase the population of the Soviet Union. After Stalin's death, the emphasis on motherhood underwent continuous transformations until Gorbachev urged women to return back home to the family hearth. This was in contrast with previous periods when women took care of the family and also worked outside of the home as doctors, teachers, tractor drivers, etc.

It is generally considered that before Gorbachev, the role of emotional bonds within the family was not emphasized. Young women were urged "to work for the building of a communist future," rather than to provide emotional warmth for their children. The mother provided food and clothing, but was not encouraged to be emotionally expressive toward her

children. It was not the tradition to remind one's child "I love you." The family itself was not necessary as an "oasis of security," because security was to be guaranteed by the government.

## Individual characteristics as securitability factors

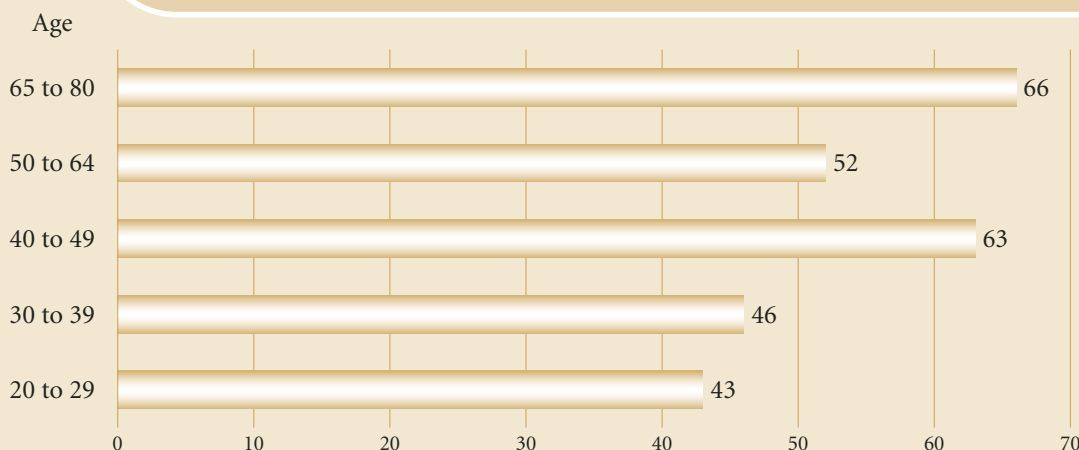
### Self-reliance

The UNDP interview analysis reveals that respondents from the age of 40 increasingly rely on themselves as a main source of security (see Box 4.6). This is most notable for the oldest group of respondents (aged 65 to 80), although in fact they would warrant receiving the most assistance from both their family and friends. Unfortunately, many of the elderly have become socially isolated and compelled to fend for themselves.

The emphasis on self-reliance is also striking in the 40 to 49-year age group. Specific interview answers indicate a firm belief that one should be able to cope on one's own. "I think to myself – if others can do it themselves, then why can't I? I do not want to be inferior to others." This belief seems to echo the once prevalent prescription – "a Soviet woman can accomplish anything!" In any analysis of the situation of Latvian women, the beliefs that were formed in the pre-Soviet times within the context of Latvian cultural traditions should also be taken into

Box 4.6

Self-reliance as a source of security (%)



UNDP Latvia Interview Analysis on Human Security, 2002

consideration. Literary works concerning the pre-war period and Latvian folk songs often emphasize the primacy of diligence and industriousness, rather than communal work or support by the family or other close relations.

The “self reliance/life experience” described above is just one of the many individual characteristics singled out in interviews and surveys of the **Report** as significant to *securitability*. Some of these characteristics are directly linked to childhood and socio-historic experience, but there are other influences as well. For example, a person’s sense of life satisfaction is often associated with his or her economic situation. Below is a compilation of the main characteristics that the authors encountered repeatedly and singled out as significant in a person’s ability to be self-reliant.

### Life satisfaction

Since 1990 Latvia has been included in an annual international study of “life satisfaction” in the *Euro-pean Values Survey*. Respondents from each country indicate how they evaluate their satisfaction with life. The study concluded that satisfaction with life is largely related to the average income within each country, but only up to a certain point. In those countries that have reached a “critical,” favourable average level of income so that people in general can live “comfortably” (for example, afford to buy the books they want), people’s life satisfaction rating cannot be directly correlated with average income. How-

ever, in those countries that have not yet reached this “critical” level, financial considerations are very important for life satisfaction.

The international study noted that in the former republics of the Soviet Union, satisfaction with life was much lower than in other low-income countries such as Brazil, India or China. The authors suggest that the sudden transition from a Communist system to a market economy and the disappearance of the centralized system’s social security blanket has resulted in heightened dissatisfaction on a wide scale. On a positive note, the average rate of life satisfaction for Latvian respondents had risen from 4.8 out of 10 in 1996 to 5.5 in 1999 (Baltic Data House, 1999). This might be explained by the slow but gradual improvement of the economic situation in Latvia, and by the increasing ability of people to better adapt to political and social changes.

### Confidence in one’s ability to effect change/Initiative

Confidence in one’s ability to control one’s life, to take initiative and to see results is important not only for one’s self-esteem, but also for strengthening one’s sense of security.

The **Survey** asked respondents to rate how much control they have over their lives on a scale from 1 to 10. The mean score was 6.6 points. Forty-one percent rated their ability to control their lives as high, while 48% gave a medium rating, and 11% rated



their ability to control their lives as low. These are positive indications, especially in comparison to the results of the *European Values Survey* of 1999.

People who have lost the capacity to work, are disabled or already unemployed have fewer possibilities to exercise control over their lives – at least over their professional lives. However, the ability to be in control is not related exclusively to external conditions. Many people who are disabled, for example, successfully adapt to their physical limitations and continue to develop their talents and skills.

Finding aspects of life that one can influence and control is essential for persons subject to physical or other limitations. This helps to foster a sense of security and inner strength and provides additional sense and meaning to people's lives.

## Entrepreneurial spirit

Entrepreneurs exhibited the lowest levels of anxiety in the **Survey**. This led the **Survey's** authors to question whether these individuals' incentive to start their own businesses was due to a reduced predisposition to anxiety, and whether they received the childhood care and parental attention that is required for the development of a stable sense of security. It is possible that entrepreneurs experience less anxiety than others because they derive satisfaction from their entrepreneurial social status, are generally confident of their ability to control situations in their professional life, or simply have higher average incomes. Their lower anxiety rates are probably reinforced by the principle of reciprocity. In other words, entrepreneurs may have a greater initial sense of personal security and a lowered predisposition towards anxiety than others from the very outset.

### Box 4.7

Ieva Plaude  
*Entrepreneur*

### On a personal sense of security

#### How would you rate your present sense of security on a scale from 0 to 10?

My personal rating of security is 8. That means that in principle I feel secure and self-confident. The remaining 2 points I keep in reserve, with the admission that things could always be better and with the hope that my individual sense of security will increase once Latvia joins NATO and the EU.

#### Which objective and subjective factors enhance your sense of security?

I think that any sense of security is an absolutely subjective phenomenon. I personally do not relate it to material possessions. It is very closely related to one's level of education and to one's practical and emotional life experiences. Of course, it is influenced by objective factors, the most important among them being the political stability of the government.

Undeniably, the re-establishment of Latvia's independence twelve years ago was the strongest factor for enhancing our sense of security and freedom, both in the subjective and objective sense – the opportunity to travel without restrictions, to obtain an education in any country of the world, to exchange information and to read uncensored press. These benefits, which raise one's level of self-confidence and open up a wide range of possibilities for the development of one's personality, have now become ordinary aspects of daily life.

#### Which factors generate a sense of insecurity?

In the context of society I would first of all mention a lack of education. An understanding of the cycles of history and global processes in general strengthens the sense of security for all individuals.

#### What has helped you personally develop a sense of security?

The most important resources are the people around me. In this regard I fully agree with the old proverb: a shared grief is half the grief, a shared joy is double the joy.

UNDP Latvia, 2003

The success that they experience in their entrepreneurial activities serves to further enhance these positive feelings.

Psychologist Jānis Grants, in an interview for this **Report**, explains the manner in which such reciprocity has manifested itself in his personal experience:

“My entrepreneurial activities have enhanced my sense of security. I know that no one will dismiss me from my job. I could lose my job only if I did not perform it well and the results were bad. That realization induces me to do more.” Grants compares the positive feeling of being in control of one’s professional activities to the results from research with airplane pilots. During simulated flights, the pilot who sits at the controls feels less anxiety when the plane comes under the threat of an accident than the co-pilot who is sitting beside him and cannot influence the situation.

## Religious faith

For more than a decade, people in Latvia have experienced unrestricted religious freedom, but the consequences of the anti-religious atheism of the Soviet era are still in evidence. Only 7% of those interviewed by the UNDP cited “faith in God” as a factor that helps them to overcome difficulties. When asked to mention the three main factors that enhance their feelings of security, only 2.7% of **Survey** respondents mentioned religious faith or the church as a primary factor.

However, when asked to note which factors listed in the UNDP **Survey** enhance or decrease their sense of security, “faith in God” placed fourth as a security-enhancing feature, albeit not a primary one (chosen by nearly 53% of respondents). Faith in God was cited most often by women, and particularly by Russian-speaking women. Psychologist Nataliya Bahmachova explained this connection with the church and with God as follows:

“Both men and women attend church, but maybe for women it is more meaningful. Perhaps men attend church not because of their firm religious beliefs, but because of some social obligation: ‘On religious holidays everyone goes to church, how can I not go?’ I think that women attend church to follow the needs of their heart. I go to church because this is the place where I can worship and feel a kind of energy. Of course, there are also men who truly believe. Perhaps women have a greater ability to value something intangible such as religious faith. Men have a greater need for something tangible, something concrete.”

Nevertheless, as the following interview with Lutheran pastor Juris Rubenis reveals, the option to seek and find a sense of security in religious faith and the church is now available to all (see Box 4.8).

## Sense of belonging to a group or community

A sense of belonging and skills in belonging are important in any society. The **Survey’s** ethnic Latvians assessed “belonging to my ethnic group” as a very important aspect of life that enhances their sense of security. Latvian men ranked ethnic belonging as the fourth most important security-enhancing factor. Ethnic belonging was less important for Russians in enhancing their feelings of security. Russian respondents placed greater emphasis upon religion, the church and commercial security services (an analysis of the latter is not within the scope of this **Report**).

The answers by Latvian respondents in regard to their sense of ethnic belonging as a security-enhancing factor is not surprising, considering the strong ethnic and folkloric traditions that have been cultivated through various historical periods under various political regimes. The psychological strength provided by the sense of a Latvian ethnic identity has been previously addressed by the President of Latvia, Dr. Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, in her speeches and writings as a professor of psychology in Canada. According to Dr. Vīķe-Freiberga, ethnic identity provides a sense of continuity with the past and has the psychological benefit of generating a sense of stability and security. For Latvians, it also provides an enduring strength of spirit that has been passed on through successive generations, and that is “inscribed in our entire culture,” most prominently in Latvian folksongs.

During the Soviet occupation, ethnic belonging was of particular significance in Latvia as a means of inner resistance against a foreign regime. In other parts of the world, the Latvian ethnic identity provided a sense of security and psychological balance for hundreds of thousands of exiled Latvians living as émigrés in foreign countries.

Ethnic belonging is still relevant among young people in Latvia today, despite the spread of fast food chains and Western pop culture. According to one 24-year old female student: “My sense of Latvian belonging is a means by which I become aware of myself through my language and culture. I cannot imagine myself without it.”



Juris Zalāns, a member of a folk dance club, stated that his connection with Latvian folk traditions is to a large extent determined by the social benefits: “I meet really fine people at these events. There is a feeling of solidarity and unity.”

Lauma Garkalne, a member of a Latvian folk music ensemble, states that while ethnic belonging does enhance her sense of security, these feelings are rooted mostly in her love for the Latvian land and landscape: “My sense of security comes from living here on this land. It conveys its own, unique type of information, which is manifest in the Latvian culture. We receive our spiritual heritage through this land.”

Within Latvian culture (both traditionally in folk songs and in contemporary art), the land and various natural phenomena are attributed special symbolic and sometimes even mythical significance. This serves to strengthen the link between Latvians’ sense of belonging to their ethnic group and culture, and their love of the land and nature. Most young Latvians do not associate feelings of ethnic pride and belonging with ethnic conflict. According to one Latvian youth, “feelings of ethnic belonging must not become fanatical, and must not lead to dislike of people from other ethnic groups.”

## Box 4.8

**Juris Rubenis**  
*Theologian and Lutheran pastor*

### On internal stability

This period of transition makes the issues of “inner security” and “inner stability” more timely. In an established political system, an individual can more or less rely upon stable external factors. Only when the visible signs of security collapse, does the existence or lack of stability within a person become apparent.

I think that the Soviet period encouraged certain traits of infantilism in people. Many decisions came from above. One could feel resentment against the government, but it certainly was convenient to have someone else making the decisions for you.

One significant problem for people in Latvia today is learning how to make decisions and taking responsibility for them. Making choices demands a certain level of competence, as well as advanced ethical criteria. The lack of such criteria creates confusion. People say that everything is bad, but do not know what to do in order to improve the situation.

This is a period when it is possible to help people by stimulating the development of their personality, identity and values. By helping people to get to know the Bible we urge them to look creatively for solid foundations in their lives.

I have observed that a positive, friendly and tolerant Christian environment helps people to find a course in life, to establish clear values and goals. Soviet ideology formerly took the place of religion in society. In order to see a genuine renouncement of this ideology, which was crippling to the people, firm values need to replace it.

Insecurity is an existential condition, therefore it cannot be overcome by economic or social means alone. One has to address human existence as a whole. People with a very stable system of values can feel safe and secure also under extremely adverse conditions.

I think that a stable society may grow out of the internal stability of individuals, and not *vice versa*. The more people there are with well-ordered internal lives even in a disorganized society, the sooner social changes will take place.

UNDP Latvia, 2003

## Increasing the *securitability* of the individual

In order to enhance people's sense of security and reduce their sense of insecurity, both their risk factors and their *securitability factors* (including protective factors, external resources and internal resources) should be considered. Risk factors are all of the previously mentioned conditions that give rise to a sense of insecurity – financial difficulties, irregular employment, abusive relationships, health problems, the threat of terrorism, etc.

Protective *securitability factors* enhance the opposite – an increased sense of security. Positive relationships within the family and with friends, one's own positive actions, faith in God, and especially for Latvians – a sense of ethnic belonging, are among the

most important protective factors to figure in the studies for this **Report**. Internal resources come from the people themselves – their abilities, talents, actions, behaviours, and positive thinking. External resources surround the individual, – people and institutions that offer help, as well as financial resources. By identifying and evaluating the potential positive resources one has at one's disposal, one can develop a security strategy.

An active, positive attitude is essential. First, one must be aware of one's insecurities, which at times are inevitable. It is important not to pretend to be unfailingly secure and calm, or to deny difficulties with the cliché that "everything will be all right." One must find answers to such questions as: What am I afraid of? How real is the threat? What are my resources? Who can help me?

Ieva Stokenberga  
Psychologist

Box 4.9

### On humour and human security

#### Why is humour important according to psychologists?

Freud wrote that humour is a self-defence mechanism. This is a very old idea. More recent theories identify three main reasons why using humour increases one's sense of security. The first aspect is cognitive and related to the ways in which thought processes occur. On encountering a problematic situation we usually feel stress. The perspective of humour, on the condition that we are able to find something funny in the situation, helps us to withdraw our focus from the negative, and to look at things from a completely different perspective. It helps us to cope. The other aspect could be called emotional. It is related to physiological studies about the way the whole process of humour – the perception of what is funny and laughing itself – helps to create positive emotions. Under stress and fear levels of tension are higher, but these are negative emotions. Whatever we gain by laughing is positive. It is another way of creating a sense of security. The third aspect is social. People in shared situations of stress and insecurity help each other to cope through humour.

#### To what extent do people in Latvia use humour in this positive sense?

The studies that have been carried out in Latvia show that the Latvian sense of humour is not entirely different from the Scandinavian or North American sense of humour. Latvians have a good ability to notice things and to use the comical to create good feelings and to solve problems.

There is a new trend in the world – therapeutic humour. Humour is used a lot when working with people who have serious health problems – particularly when working with terminally ill patients and hospitalized children. Medical nurses in other countries now have programmes for using humour in interactions with their patients. Studies show that laughter improves the condition of the human immune system and helps it to deal with illness. It activates our physiological self-defence systems. At present we lack such programmes here in Latvia for those who really need it. Humour is not so much an inborn quality. It can be developed. Much is related to one's attitude.

UNDP Latvia, 2003

By pretending not to see real risks or attempting to deny situations from which one has suffered, feelings of insecurity may remain in spite of the denial. Often this results in various psychological symptoms (neuroses, depression, anger etc.) and somatic symptoms (stomach and intestinal dysfunction, coronary diseases, psychosomatic pain) or destructive behaviour (abuse, excessive alcohol consumption, etc.). Becoming aware of one's insecurities is the first step in finding constructive solutions for taking care of oneself, avoiding potential threats, becoming aware of one's future possibilities and seeking assistance when necessary.

Certain measures can be taken to increase *securitability* at the **individual level**:

#### **Breaking the intergenerational cycle of abuse**

The intergenerational continuation of abuse is not unequivocally determined. A recent study reveals that among those mothers who had experienced childhood abuse, 37 to 39% had been able to develop more constructive and positive ways of relating to their children (Sebre, 2002).

Often the ability to break the cycle of abuse, to form new perceptions and to develop new behavioural models is encouraged by positive relationships with other people in childhood or later in adult life. A current relationship with an adult who has had a positive childhood experience may provide positive support for those who have been abused. Close friends or community groups may also do the same. Parenting literature (such as *A Secure Base* by J. Bowlby) and information from the mass media may help the parent to develop a more positive relationship with his or her child. As in the resolution of any problem, the first step is to identify it. Another effective way of breaking the cycle of intergenerational abuse is to seek the advice of professionals – psychologists or psychotherapists specialising in these issues.

#### **Developing positive self-esteem and awareness of one's own worth**

Quite often people get carried away by criticising themselves and their actions. Becoming aware of one's positive aspects and abilities can do wonders for enhancing one's feelings of self-worth. This helps one to become stronger; to develop positive, close relationships and to put one's talents to good use, thus providing for an increased sense of security regarding the future.

#### **Taking responsibility for one's own life**

The awareness that each individual is responsible for shaping his or her own life is a major *securitability factor*. Blaming others for one's troubles and allowing others to dominate the course of one's life is ultimately unproduc-

tive. Irrespective of what has happened in the past, the chances to shape the present and the future will increase if one bears a positive and pro-active attitude. Taking responsibility for one's own actions, thoughts and feelings is as important as allowing others to take responsibility for themselves. Once one assumes personal responsibility, one can better engage in time and resource planning.

#### **Taking care of one's physical health**

Even though many people associate a sense of insecurity with threats to their physical well-being, many do not always take sufficient care of their health. Both an objective and subjective sense of security can be enhanced by regular health check-ups and disease prevention measures such as immunizations. Healthy nutrition, physical activity, as well as the reduced consumption of alcohol, caffeine and other addictive substances are important means for enhancing one's physical well-being and security.

#### **Taking care of one's mental and psychological health**

Taking care of one's psychological health involves an awareness and understanding of one's thoughts, feelings and actions; the ability to share one's emotional experiences with others; and seeking professional help when needed. Since the re-establishment of Latvia's independence, psychological and psychotherapeutic help services have become increasingly accessible. Many are financed by the State or by municipalities.

#### **Developing stable relationships built on mutual trust and respect**

Secure relationships based on trust and respect are a source of security. They allow the sharing of feelings, thoughts and experiences. This applies to relationships within the family (partner, parent-child) and among friends. Positive, close relationships offer protection against stress and depression. They have a beneficial impact upon one's physical and mental health regardless of age, and can help victims to overcome serious traumas such as that of abuse.

#### **Developing spiritual values and engaging in creative activities**

People are not only biological and social creatures. Each must be able to manifest their spiritual beliefs and be creative. The values of art and culture help to make life more meaningful for many, as does faith in God and the practice of religion.

Other measures can be taken to increase *securitability* at the **government level**:



While feelings of insecurity are experienced at the individual level, the government could contribute greatly to reducing various aspects of insecurity for wide segments of the population. A closer analysis of the principal factors that generate a sense of insecurity among the so-called risk groups of society might provide government decision-makers with a clearer picture of State-wide measures that could be taken to increase people's overall sense of security.

**Distribution of information and co-ordination of activities with various aid-providing services.**

People in Latvia require substantive, multi-faceted, opportunity-oriented information that focuses not only on the identification of problems, but also on their solutions. Although different services providing aid and assistance are being implemented in Latvia, people often

lack information regarding these services. The public's access to such information must be increased through informative materials and advertising in the mass media. A comprehensive network of social, medical, psychological and legal help must be developed to simplify the procedures for receiving assistance.

**Educating society about psychological, social and medical problems and their prevention**

The public also requires more information about such *securitability*-related issues as the link between alcohol consumption and abuse, the consequences of abuse, etc. In recent years several NGOs have developed materials on the problem of abuse, and the government has partially funded the distribution of such materials. This work should continue in a more systematic manner and on a wider scale. The most widespread problem of addic-

**Box 4.10**

**Governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) currently addressing abuse**

During the past several years, several important measures have been taken by the national and local governments, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations in Latvia. These have been designed to encourage positive relationships within the family, to uphold the rights of children, and to work towards the prevention of abuse and the rehabilitation of the abused.

One of the first prevention and rehabilitation programmes was developed in 1997 by a local NGO, the *Centre Against Abuse: Support for Children and Families*. This programme provided training seminars for professionals from various disciplines (psychologists, social workers, medical personnel, teachers, police officers, court officials) and from various regions of Latvia. It sought to provide a better understanding about abuse and the means for preventing and treating it.

That same year the *Riga Crisis Telephone* hot-line became the first in Latvia to provide 24-hour crisis intervention services. Other examples of such supportive programmes and services include the *Crisis Centre for Children and Women* in Talsi (established in 1998); the *Skalbes Crisis Centre* in Riga (opened in 1999 on the basis of *Riga Crisis Telephone* and providing both in-walk and telephone consultations); and the *Dardedze Centre Against Abuse* in Riga (since 2001). These programmes have been financed by the national as well as local governments, international grant programmes, various foreign embassies in Latvia, and private enterprises.

Since 1999 the national government has been funding the rehabilitation of children who have suffered from abuse. Since 2000 it has also provided funds to train groups of psychologists, psychotherapists and social workers in specialized approaches for working with abused children. In addition, the government has supported training programmes for care workers who work with institutionalized children. Local governments are supporting the rehabilitation of abused children, and providing specialized training for care workers in orphanages and other institutions. NGOs have recently developed and implemented various support groups for parents, women and children who have suffered from sexual abuse, women who are suffering from domestic violence, and men.

UNDP Latvia, 2003



tion in Latvia has traditionally been alcoholism, but many people have limited knowledge about its manifestations and the opportunities available for treating it. Similarly, the education and screening of employees of the police and justice systems must continue in order to eliminate negative attitudes displayed by police officers, judges, lawyers and prosecutors towards victims of abuse. Presently this work is being carried out mainly by NGOs with the support of various foundations. The government should assume a more active role in this regard.

### Development of family-support policies

The government has recognized the significance of the role of positive, close relationships and has created a Ministry of Family and Children's Affairs, which is preparing a new State Family Policy. The policy document addresses such issues as improving the quality of family life and supporting parenting. It also seeks to provide relief for families in crisis situations and for families living under conditions of risk (poverty, long-term illness or disability of a family member, abuse in the family or alcohol or drug dependency in the family).

The policy document is being developed with the active participation of non-governmental organizations and is a positive example of a coordinated security strategy. For more on family policy, see the section on community security and family policy in Chapter 6.

### Improving the system of education

Along with the important issue of teacher remuneration are the issues of teacher-pupil relations and teaching methodology. The educational process, together with positive personal relations at school, should facilitate the development of children's self-esteem and self-confidence. Schools should help pupils develop such security skills as the ability to cooperate with others, health consciousness, the ability to find opportunities in complicated situations, and the ability to develop strategies for dealing with life's difficulties.

Violence among children at schools also deserves serious attention. Cooperation between schools, children, parents, social assistance services and psychological assistance centres is of crucial importance for the prevention of violence among schoolchildren.

## Summary

The family lays the principal foundation upon which all other aspects of *securitability* are built. Consistent parental love, care and support engender feelings of security that encourage positive self-esteem

and the ability to trust other people throughout one's lifetime. Self-esteem and the ability to trust others, together with other positive individual traits, are the building blocks for further improving *securitability* at the societal, national and global levels.

The basis for individual security is formed in childhood through relationships of mutual trust with close attachment figures. Less than half of the people studied in Latvia exhibit secure attachment styles. This indicates that many people's sense of security could be increased if they experienced better relations within their family and elsewhere during their childhood, such as in their schools. Individuals must be encouraged to improve their relationships and to break the continuation of abuse if it exists in their families. If they cannot do this on their own, then they should be informed about the professional help that is now available.

Self-esteem is also closely related to other individual characteristics that give persons the required skills to ensure their own security. An analysis of 56 respondents in Latvia reveals that people above the age of 40 tend to rely more on themselves than on others. Individuals who are satisfied with life have a more optimistic view of themselves as agents of change. Their numbers are steadily increasing, and suicide rates have been falling since 1995. People who feel that they can effect change also have the initiative to act alone or with others to improve their situation.

Entrepreneurship has been on the rise in the past twelve years, and there are indications that people who run their own businesses are among those with the highest sense of security in Latvia. Further studies should be made on whether the encouragement of entrepreneurial activity would serve to strengthen the *securitability factors* of people with low levels of *securitability*. Religious faith also helps many people to feel more secure in changing circumstances.

The sense of ethnic belonging that was so important for the Latvian people during the Soviet occupation has not lost its significance to young Latvian people today. The role of ethnic belonging as a *securitability factor* might increase in light of the upcoming changes that will follow Latvia's accession to the EU and NATO. Finally, healthy persons are usually better able to influence their own security. Encouraging people to lead a healthy lifestyle is an investment in all aspects of security.

## Social Contact Networks as a *Securitability* Factor

Social networks (or social contact networks) are a significant source of *securitability* for many people in Latvia, providing both actual security and a sense of security. A large number of people network successfully in informal groups. However, due to historical reasons (i.e. the 50-year Soviet occupation), formal networks that could unite people to prevent, mitigate and cope with risks are an underused resource. Because social capital increases the *securitability* of those who know how to use it, polarization can and does take place: those with advanced networking skills improve their *securitability*, while those with fewer networking skills become increasingly insecure.

This Chapter includes information about the theoretical underpinnings of social networking. This type of information is not typical in UNDP Human Development Reports, but is essential in the case of Latvia, since few people in this country are aware of the advantages and mechanisms of social networking. The background offered in this section will show how networking can facilitate people's security, and how people can initiate their own networks or support existing ones.

This Chapter will examine:

- Definitions and dimensions of social networks and social capital;
- The advantages of networks;
- Differences between formal and informal networks;
- Who uses networks;
- How networks operate in Latvia;
- How networks enhance security and *securitability* factors (using case studies);
- Action necessary to increase social networking.

### Definitions and dimensions of social networks and social capital

**Social networks** consist of relations between people, groups or organizations that are based on cooperation and reciprocity in order to achieve common goals. They might concentrate within just a single household, or they might extend further as formal

networks to the local community, region, city, country and even across the globe. They may be long-standing or short-lived. The term "network" is symbolic, describing people, groups and organizations as the knots of a "net," and the relations among them as the lines. Analyzing the characteristics of social networks and the specifics of their development in Latvia has led the authors of this **Report** to develop recommendations on how to improve social networks as a *securitability* factor.

Social networks create definite advantages, or **social capital**, for those who network. Just as with "human security," the term "social capital" is still in the state of being conceptualized and defined worldwide. According to researcher Pierre Bourdieu, social capital provides significant advantages to those individuals, families and groups with the best mutual contacts. The World Bank began to emphasize the significance of social capital in the context of human development during the 1990s. It initiated a systematic study through the *Social Capital Initiative*, in which it outlined social capital in the context of various disciplines.

Although it is sometimes difficult to differentiate between formal and informal networking, doing so is necessary to understand the specifics of the Latvian situation, in which informal networks are highly developed and considered as a primary source of security, while the potential of formal networks remains to be fully realised.

*Informal networks* exist among such groups as families, relatives, friends and neighbours. Informal networks are not usually regulated by written rules and are often guided by informal agreements or norms.

*Formal networks*, on the other hand, are usually based on relationships at work (personnel relations, unions) or within organized group activities (education, sports, entertainment, music, art, church, voluntary, self-help, etc.). Formal groups often have a definite structure, annual meetings, regulations, and formalized financial procedures, and for the most part are officially registered. They can be local, nationwide and international.

## Aspects crucial to the success of networks

Certain aspects are crucial to the success of networks. These factors determine whether networks achieve their goals and can continue to exist when challenges arise. Networks can be successful if they harness the resources of their individuals and organizations to achieve their goals. Social networks mainly provide a structure for the exchange of resources. In order for them to be effective, they must efficiently access and coordinate their members' time, expertise and money. Another key to success is the ability of networks to interface with the external environment. They must have strategies for utilizing the resources available in the outside world.

Social norms enforced by networks must be aimed at facilitating cooperation. The most important norms are *trust in the performance of duties* and *keeping one's word*. The principle of *reciprocity* is important, since members of each social network are linked to each other through commitments, expectations and a mutual understanding that joint efforts will be productive. Networks are also self-regulated by their so-called "restricting solidarity." For example, people within a network monitor each other's behaviour because the unfair or immoral activities of one member can cast a shadow on the entire organization. The price for breaking any of the norms of the network is very high – loss of honour and trust in the eyes of the network members.

Some additional aspects are specific to the success of formal networks. These are analyzed later in this Chapter.

## How social networks generate securitability

Networking in and of itself does not promote *securitability*. Networks can put an individual at risk to guarantee the safety of a group. Social networks also do not always reflect the interests of society at large. There are cases in which social networks act solely in their own interests, for example, criminal groups (mafia, street gangs) and ultra radical religious or political groups. Here, too, the activities of such networks are based on mutual trust, norms and sanctions, only their aims and the means they use for reaching their goals are detrimental to society.

Networks facilitate people's sense of security in four ways (see Box 5.2):

*Different kinds of support* (emotional, material, physical). Members of social networks can help each other in various situations such as lending or donating money, helping with child care, looking after an apartment or house during the owner's absence or illness, etc.

*The exchange of information*. The social network is a direct source of information that can serve to enhance security. For example, it may provide useful information about employment opportunities, the safety of streets after dark, or the best medical practitioners available. Information provides security when people are informed about their rights, receive warnings that help them to avoid risks, and receive confirmation or denial about perceived

### Box 5.1

#### Definitions of the terms used in this Chapter

**Social networks** or **networks** refer to contacts and relations that are based on cooperation and reciprocity in order to achieve common goals.

**Networking** is a process whereby people approach each other for help and support.

**Social capital** is understood as networks of people and/or institutions working together in a spirit of trust, solidarity and inter-dependence to improve the productivity and well-being of their communities or interest groups.

**A community** is a group of people who may be united by a particular geographical location, some aspect of social identity and/or common motives.

UNDP Latvia, 2003

threats. If people successfully use social networks to get information, they can gain other significant resources, mainly time and new connections.

*Socialization.* The ability of individuals to rely on themselves and others for improving their *securitability* lies at the core of sustainable human security. The family is the primary socialization network that helps people to master the skills for improving their own *securitability* – how to overcome crises, develop positive relations, ask for help and provide help to others. Socialization skills, however, are honed by participation in any network.

*A sense of belonging.* Members of social networks develop a positive social identity and opportunities to maintain and develop ethnic, linguistic, religious, professional or other types of belonging.

## Advantages of social networks over the individual and government in providing *securitability*

Social networks are irreplaceable in the benefit they provide to the individual, the community and the country as a whole (see Box 5.3). From the point of

view of the individual, social networks are flexible, effective, tailored to their needs, accessible, and efficient. From the community perspective, networks can enhance people's sense of identity and belonging, positively influence individual behaviour and serve to strengthen relationships. In politics as well, the participation of social contact networks in political decision-making leads to sounder policies.

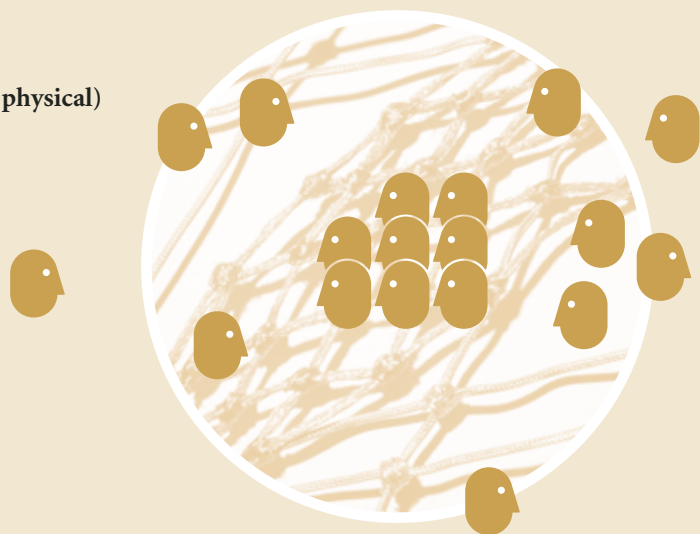
Historically, networks have been undervalued in Latvia as a political force. Recently, however, there has been a trend to recognize the value of social capital and the functioning of social networks at the local and regional levels, especially in government-supported social programmes. In order for social networks to flourish and attend to people's human security issues, community development must be seen as a priority at all levels of government.

Social networks must not compensate for the State's inability to carry out its role in full as an enhancer of security. They are not the main force in addressing large-scale unemployment, low wages or weaknesses in the social security system. Social networks do not usually have the widescale resources needed to provide uniform coverage or nationwide access to their services. Networks also cannot compensate for the lack of government investment in areas that are the responsibility of the State, such as the health care system.

Box 5.2

### How social networks generate *securitability*

- Support (emotional, material, physical)
- Information
- Socialization
- Sense of belonging



UNDP Latvia, 2003

## Box 5.3

### Comparing sources of *securitability* Social networks vs. the individual and the government

#### Advantages over the individual

Awareness that the individual is not alone with his/her problem

Collective problem-solving often leads to better solutions

Wider range of available resources

Broader support base

#### Advantages over the government

Less red tape and more flexibility during the formulation and implementation of decisions

Often a more efficient means of resolving social problems at the local level

High personal interest and motivation of participants

Able to respond more quickly to changes in people's needs

UNDP Latvia, 2003

## Network participation in Latvia

How intensely and how often people participate in both formal and informal social networks depends on different factors, the most important being: their economic situation, their subjective assessment of their economic status, place of residence, gender, age, occupation and type of education (see Box 5.5).

### Economic situation

The **Survey** shows that participation in informal social networks is extremely important for enhancing the *securitability* of people with lower incomes. People feel safe if they are surrounded by others with whom they can meet and exchange information on a regular basis, as well as ask for advice, help and support. The *Survey on Living Conditions in Latvia in 1999* showed that respondents with lower incomes tend to meet their parents (or one parent) more often than others. Parents may be their primary source of reassurance, information, goods or services, loans, etc.

According to the *Views of the Poor: Social Appraisal of Poverty in Latvia* (World Bank and UNDP Programme on Poverty, 1999), the lack of money to cover travel expenses, gifts for visits and other expenses makes it difficult for low-income people

to maintain social contacts at either the formal or informal level. The resulting decrease in social contacts leads to social isolation, creating a negative effect on people's perception of their ability to influence events in their life.

Children and families with children are subject to the biggest risk of poverty and social exclusion. The Ministry of Welfare study *Identification of the Risk Factors of Social Exclusion in Children from Poor Families* (2002) shows that families with two or more children, children who live with one parent, families with at least one unemployed member, children whose parents are disabled, children who are disabled, children from otherwise disadvantaged families and families from Latgale are most likely to be poor. The more children there are in a family, the greater the tendency for these children to interact in a closed circle amongst themselves, rather than in wider social circles.

The support of education in the broadest sense of the term widens social contact opportunities for children and makes it easier for them to find healthy and useful ways to spend their free time. Relationships developed during the learning process provide emotional security and help children to expand their contacts for the further exchange of information, as well as the improvement of their employment prospects.



## Self-assessment of level of income

The **Survey's** results show that people with an optimistic assessment of their *level of income* are more likely to recognise that active participation in social networks is an important *securitability factor*.

## Special needs

Children with special needs and families with a parent who is disabled often find it difficult to improve their social contact opportunities due to the lack of physical access to educational institutions, specific education and training needs, and limited financial means. Only 14% of adults registered in Latvia with special needs are employed, illustrating that social exclusion continues into adulthood. In order to limit the social exclusion of such children, the government should plan for their integration into regular public schools. This requires substantial funding because such schools have to be adjusted to the children's specific needs, special staff has to be trained, and study aids purchased. Nevertheless, this is a real avenue for advancing the *securitability* of one very vulnerable segment of society.

## Type of residential area

The less urbanized the environment, the more social networks play a role in enhancing people's security. This is seen in the *Survey on Living Conditions in Latvia 1999*, which shows that urban people are less inclined to contact their neighbours. The exchange of information and mutual support among neighbours is much more pronounced outside of Latvia's cities.

## Gender

Male and female respondents hold fairly similar positions regarding the frequency of their social contacts. The *Survey on Living Conditions* reveals that both men and women meet their relatives equally often. However, more than a quarter (26%) of male respondents meet their colleagues after work, compared to only 16% of female respondents.

## Age

The frequency and scope of people's social contacts decrease with age. People aged 65 and over have the fewest contacts, while 18-24 year olds

### Box 5.4

**Kaija Gertnere-Ozola**

*Director, Centre for Non-Governmental Organisations*

### On civic participation

Civic participation is based on the belief that individuals should be given a voice in their governance. However, it is often difficult to get people to participate or take an active interest in policy making. Solutions proposed by bureaucrats often leave little room for lay citizens to add their input. While the benefits of an active and engaged civil society can contribute to improving policy development, renewing faith in the public sector and building social capital remains a challenge.

Cooperation between Latvia's NGOs and the government is in the process of being structured. NGOs often criticise the government for neglecting the needs of society and for relying on communications that are one-way, rather than based on dialogue. The Rules of Procedure for the Latvian Cabinet of Ministers, which took effect on June 1<sup>st</sup> 2002, provide for NGO representation at weekly meetings of State Secretaries. The adoption of these Rules is a positive outcome of the State Chancellery's initiatives to establish greater transparency and to enable civil society to participate in (or monitor) decision-making processes. As a result, the NGO sector in Latvia has been provided with an excellent opportunity, but often lacks the capacity to use it fully.

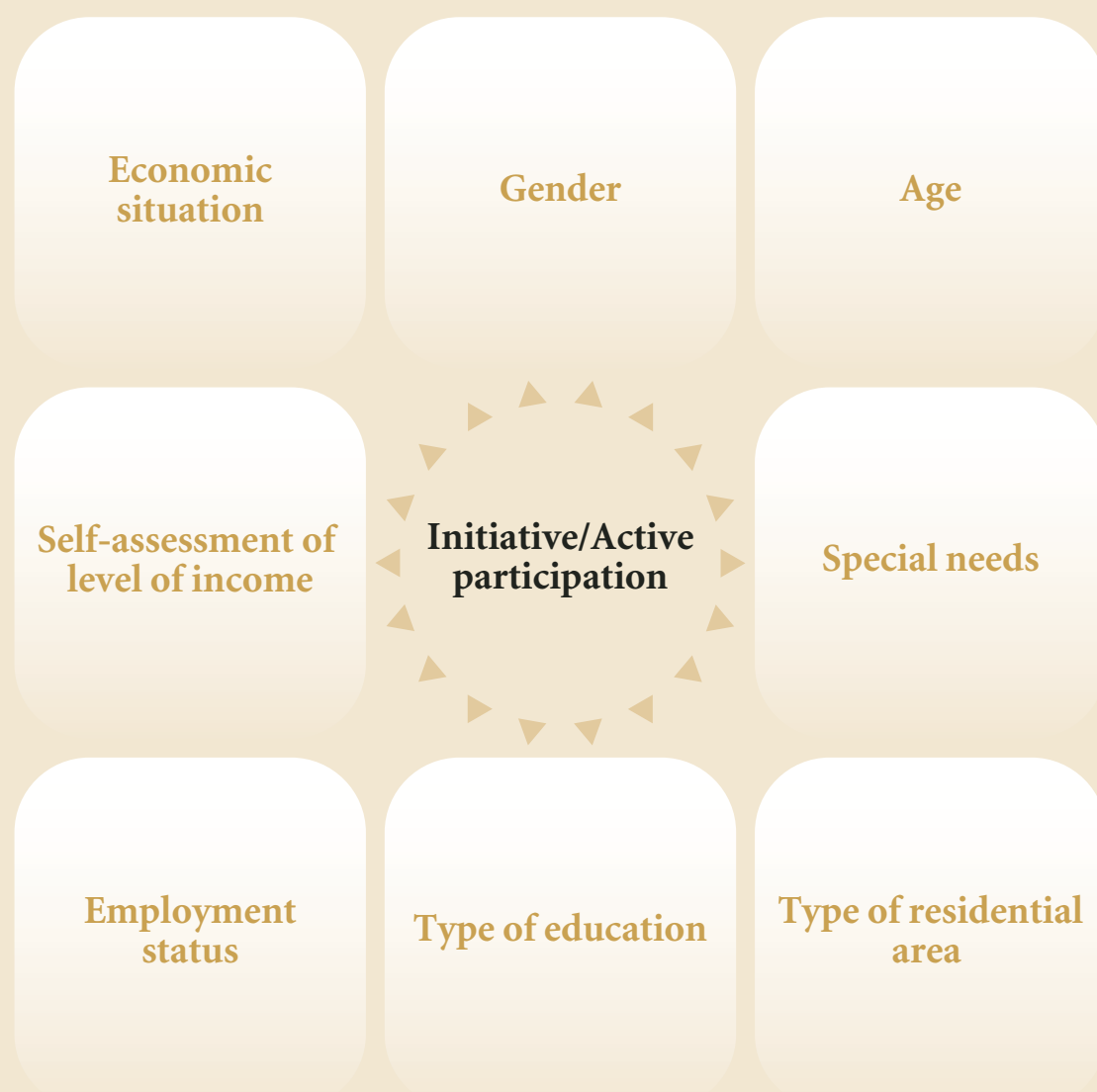
If civic participation is to have a valuable impact, it will require commitment, cooperation, transparency, and resources to guarantee quality representation and input by society.

*UNDP Latvia, 2003*



Box 5.5

### Significant factors influencing participation in social networks



UNDP Latvia, 2003

socialize most often. According to the *Survey on Living Conditions*, a sharp decline in the frequency of contacts with friends occurs after the age of 44. As age increases, the individual's ability and readiness to use social networks as a source of security diminishes. Up until the age of 65 few people have any problems finding someone to contact if they really need to. However, every tenth person aged 75 and over feels lonely and unable to find company. Elderly people also experience more difficulty in finding a reliable person with whom to discuss their personal problems. One in seven of those over 65 have no

weekly contacts with relatives or other people outside of the household.

The elderly are a group with a high risk of social exclusion and insecurity, and could benefit from social networks. However, their reluctance to use the social contacts at their disposal for security purposes appears to increase with age. For example, those aged 65 and over contact their neighbours more often than other groups (84.1% at least once a month), but often use these contacts for other purposes than to help themselves become more secure.

## Employment status

According to the *Survey on Living Conditions*, the unemployed have the most frequent social contacts with their relatives and other people outside the household. Entrepreneurs and the self-employed opt more for professional ties.

## Type of education

Research on participation in different organizations (trade unions, political parties, religious, sports, leisure, interest/environmental and other organizations) or formal social networks shows that people with a lower level of education participate in formal social networks less often than others. For example, about 40% of respondents of the *Survey on Living Conditions* with a university education are members of some type of formal organization. However, the figure drops to nearly 27% for those with a technical post-secondary education, close to 22% for those with a high school degree and less than 14% for those with a primary education.

Although social networks can be used to help friends or relatives who are elderly, chronically ill or disabled to increase their security, this is not always done. The *Survey on Living Conditions* showed that less than 14% of respondents had taken care of a friend or relative free of charge. A different study on social networks in Latvia showed that over 47% of respondents had no one they could rely on for even a

small loan. Over half (57%) said they had no one to turn to in the event of major financial problems (Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Latvian Academy of Sciences, 2001).

## Differences between informal and formal networks as security-enhancing factors

Studies reveal a difference in attitude of people in Latvia toward informal and formal networks as *security factors*. Most of the **Survey's** respondents place primary importance on informal networks as "active" sources of security. They would first turn to their family, friends, neighbours, and other informal circles when in need. Social organizations are rated as secondary or "passive" sources of security, along with the government. (see Box 5.7)

As reflected in the *Survey on Living Conditions*, Latvia's informal contact networks are common and close-knit. Eighty-three percent of the respondents contacted their friends and neighbours at least once a week, 79% contacted their parents, 65% contacted their spouses' parents, and 62% contacted their siblings.

However, people in Latvia are only gradually getting involved in social organizations. Latvia's inhabitants may have the desire to act, but still lack the impulse to take initiative. Many have a passive attitude

Box 5.6

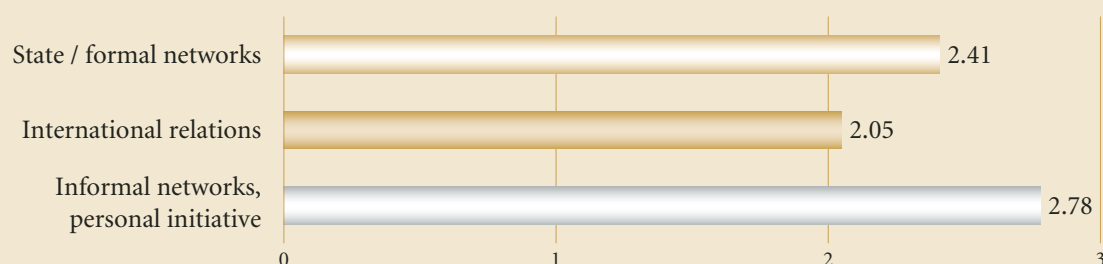
### Who helps whom?

In the case of illness 80% of men and 60% of women would ask for assistance from their spouses with household tasks. The next most important source of household support for both genders is their mother. Only 2% indicate that they would not seek assistance from anyone with household tasks. In the case of emotional difficulties (feelings of depression and a desire to talk to someone) 22% of men and 11% of women would not seek out anyone.

This and other data indicate that relatives expect more help from the women than from the men in their families. Men rely on their spouses or partners to a greater degree than do women, while women are more likely to look for help from a close friend. Men seek emotional assistance from others less frequently, even in cases when their emotional and physical health is at risk. Women are more deeply involved in mutual assistance networks than men. They are called on for help more often, and they assume more responsibility for the health and well-being of other family members.

*Statistics from the Social Relationship and Social Support Network Study, Institute of Philosophy and Sociology at the University of Latvia, 2001*

## Box 5.7

Factors enhancing *securitability*

1 – decreases my sense of security 2 – does not affect my sense of security 3 – increases my sense of security 4 – greatly increases my sense of security

*The State / formal networks* pertains to the justice, police and internal security, social security, health care and employment services systems, as well as the national government, local governments, national armed forces, churches and social organizations.

*International relations* pertains to NATO, the UN, the EU, the USA and Russia.

*Informal networks / personal initiative* pertains to family, friends, neighbours, informal circles and one's own actions.

UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002

toward State institutions and NGOs (see Box 5.7). According to a Ministry of Justice commissioned survey on integration issues (Market and Public Opinion Research Centre [SKDS], 2002), only 10.1% of its respondents participated in trade unions, 9.7% were active in sports clubs, 9.1% were members of churches or religious organizations, and 8.7% participated in different clubs and activity groups. Fifty-eight percent stated that they do not participate in any formal group.

Of those polled in the **Survey**, over half said that they have not participated in any activities to solve their personal problems or those of their closest relations. Twenty percent had turned to local governments for help, 12% to the police, 8.5% had participated in meetings where they could express themselves, and only 2.2% had taken part in any NGO activity.

The precise number of people involved in NGOs in Latvia is not known, since no such official statistics are collected. Yet it is clear that formal social networking in the form of NGOs is developing at a slower rate than would be desirable for Latvia's successful national development. According to the Centre for Non-governmental Organizations (<http://www.ngo.org.lv>), a correlation exists in Latvia between the number of NGOs and the level of people's welfare. There is a higher standard of living in those municipalities in

which NGOs are most active. The NGO Centre concludes that: "considering the role of the NGO in diminishing social tensions and in providing non-traditional solutions, it would be beneficial to encourage the creation of NGOs and their activity in smaller towns and in the countryside."

Although the prevailing attitude is that friends and family provide more security than more formalized forms of networking, there are many cases in which this is not true. Economic security issues such as wages and job safety are better resolved through formal, collective action. United neighbours can get local governments to ensure neighborhood safety, and environmental groups can stop polluters from infringing on people's long-term health security.

The reasons for the different perceptions of informal and formal networks are partly due to Latvia's recent history. Economics professor Chris de Neubourg, in a study of social risk-prevention strategies in transition-period societies, noted that the Soviet-era social security system did provide the minimum basic necessities. Nearly everyone had a job, and the employed were covered by basic accident and illness insurance. Daycare facilities and housing were subsidized by the State, as were health care, energy, and university tuition fees. Those who were employed and had families could feel generally secure. Others, such

as people who were disabled and had special needs and orphaned children living in institutions, were subject to greater insecurity, since they were not recipients of guarantees given to the employed and lacked the contacts and support of family members.

The USSR did not provide a sense of security for those seeking to address such issues as human rights, freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, and other liberties that are normally taken for granted in democratic societies. Those who did so ran a great risk of being harshly dealt with by the Soviet regime, and of having their personal security severely compromised.

## The development of formal networks to enhance security and securitability

### Preconditions for the success of formal networks

The development of formal networks for the purpose of enhancing people's security can be fostered if there is public recognition and support of the need for their establishment.

**Anita Jākobsone**

*Former UNDP Project Consultant, Latvian Ministry of Justice*

#### Box 5.8

### On connections and social contact networks during the Soviet period and today

Were there social contact networks during the Soviet period? Undoubtedly there were – primarily informal ones. The main difference lay in the degree of freedom within society and the possibility of real civic involvement. During the Soviet period, society was run on the basis of such “collectivism” stereotypes as: “the majority is right,” “the collective good is more important than the individual good,” “family responsibilities are less important than social responsibilities or distinction at work,” etc. These stereotypes were in conflict with peoples’ everyday needs, which they met through informal “connections.” Connections were used to gain access to a better physician, to receive an apartment, to obtain tickets to the theatre, to buy imported shoes or French perfumes, or to place a child in a pre-school establishment. Social networks based on connections cannot be likened to social contact networks, which are formed on the basis of individual freedom and respect for human rights. Connections put people in humiliating situations involving the exchange of services and/or the payment of bribes.

Social contact networks develop as an act of free will in a civil society, based on the understanding of one's rights, duties, needs and abilities. They are a sign that alienated individuals are striving to renew their belonging to an “us” – and to establish relationships that will help them to overcome their limited individual possibilities and resources.

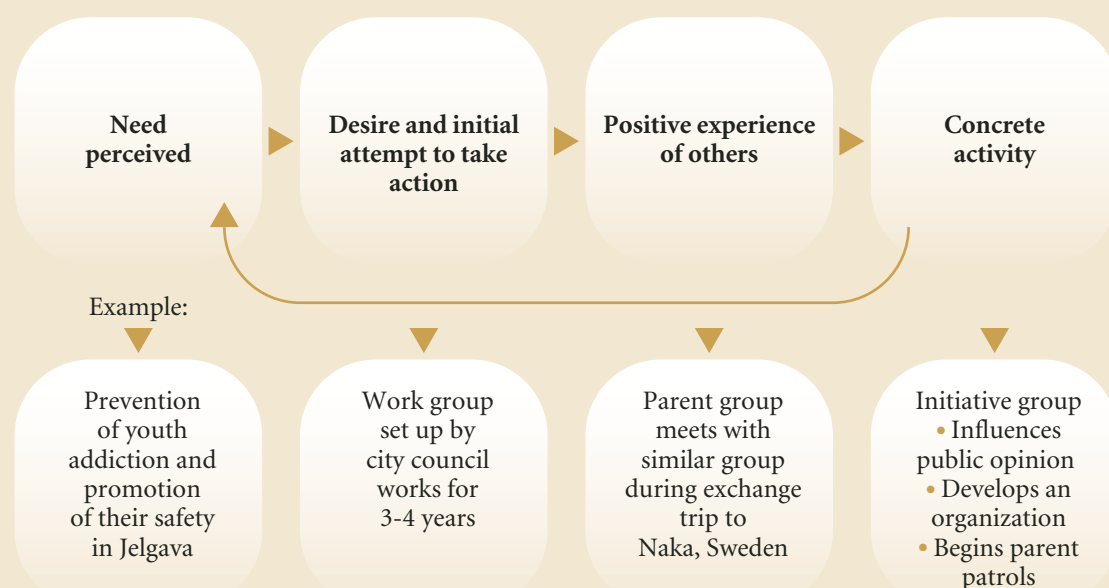
The study on poverty done in Latvia by the World Bank confirmed that those who have lost a sense of identity, who feel alienated from their families and neighbours, and who are isolated from sources of support tend to sink deeper into poverty and depression.

The development of social networks in Latvia is being hindered both by a lack of interest and a lack of resources. People who try to develop social networks find themselves in a situation that can be likened to children playing in a sandbox. They can do all they want within the confines of the sandbox, but the adults (municipalities, national government and parliament) remain uninterested in their activities. Their resources for the most part are very limited. Currently the development of a civil society and the creation of NGOs in Latvia is being supported mainly by foreign donors. Many people still do not realize the potential effectiveness of social contact networks. It is for this reason that a better understanding of social networks and social capital is a priority for the people of Latvia.

*UNDP Latvia, 2003*

Box 5.9

### Preconditions for development of sustainable formal social networks in Latvia



UNDP Latvia, 2003

Formal social networks evolve according to certain patterns. The authors of this **Report** analyzed several successful networks in Latvia and drew out four important preconditions for the establishment and development of a sustainable social network – *a need or problem, a desire and initial attempt to take action, the positive experience of others and concrete activity* (see Box 5.9). Positive factors that contribute to the sustainability of networks, such as the upholding of social norms, the coordination of member's resources, and the successful use of external resources mentioned earlier in this Chapter also contribute to the success of networks.

The example of parents working together in the city of Jelgava to protect their children's security will be used as a demonstration of the four preconditions (see Box 5.10).

The creation of a social network begins when **a need** is perceived by members of the community. For *Parents for Jelgava*, the initial need was to prevent drug addiction among the city's youths.

The **desire and attempt to take action** for improving the situation is the next step that brings people closer to creating a network. The Jelgava City Council set up a work group of different types of professionals to address drug addiction among youths.

Another crucial step in the process of creating social networks is the **positive experience of others**. Under current conditions in Latvia, people don't often harness networks to enhance their *securitability* unless stimulated to do so by outside actors. Members of the working group in Jelgava gained an understanding of their goals, roles, procedures, etc. from the successful experience of a similar group of parents in Naka, Sweden.

Finally, **concrete activities** emerge, such as the launching of the *Parents for Jelgava* public organization and the initiation of parent patrols in the city.

This pattern holds true for all of the other cases examined in this **Report**.

**Leaders** also play an important role in the creation of formal social networks. They may have had previous experience in such networks, and are capable of inspiring others to contribute their time and energy for the good of the public.

The **support** of the local inhabitants, municipalities and entrepreneurs is crucial to begin the process, as is pointed out by a number of respondents questioned within the **Survey**. Municipal support can come in the form of financial and human resources, the distribu-

tion of information, moral support and gratitude. Donations by entrepreneurs are often essential for the success of formal networks. Public support provides encouragement to the new organization's members, as do reports in the mass media, which forward the message and attract new participants.

As formal social networks develop, new needs are identified and new opportunities are created. In the short time since its foundation, *Parents for Jelgava* has already expanded the scope of its activities. It now organizes seminars and prepares information for parents on how to teach their children to enhance their own security and avoid violence on the street.

## The role of networks in increasing security in the seven realms

Networking can increase security in nearly any realm. It can be especially effective in strengthening individuals' **personal security** – as illustrated by the *Parents for Jelgava* case (see Box 5.10) – and in improving economic security.

As described in Chapter 2, **economic security** means having sufficient and predictable income, and is one of the main issues about which people in Latvia feel insecure. The same has been shown in *Attitudes to Particular Integration-Related Issues 2002*, a study commissioned by the Ministry of Justice. Over 40% of respondents mentioned unemployment and over 30% low income as the two major risk factors that make them feel insecure.

Chris de Neubourg points out that economic security is enhanced not only by participation in the job market, but also by a reliance on one's family and participation in other social networks. Social network researcher J. Coleman shows the correlation between social capital and economic development. He emphasizes that social systems with numerous and diverse social organizations that develop a high level of civic participation have a much higher potential for economic development than do those in which the civil society aspect is under-developed.

One of the primary advantages of networking as a source of **securitability** is its pro-active nature. In regard to economic security, an active approach and participation in social networks (family, friends, local community) and the utilization of their resources is much more

productive than the passive approach of harbouring high expectations toward one's local or national government.

Most of those surveyed for this **Report**, however, felt that the government is best prepared to reduce existing economic threats, and that individuals on their own are the next most important agent. The use of social networks through cooperation with others to reduce economic insecurity has yet to become a general practice in Latvia (see Box 5.12).

Further studies in the context of this **Report** reveal that the more people involve friends and family in the resolution of their problems, the less they fear about their future economic well-being. Most people in Latvia have tried resolving their economic difficulties first and foremost within the circle of their family and friends. The lower one's income, the greater the significance of active participation in informal social networks to increase one's sense of security.

An analysis of the results of the **Survey** in several different ways supports the assertion that participation in a social network decreases people's fears about their economic security. Active participation in social networks is related to levels of income. Respondents with a higher per capita income believe to a greater extent that their participation in social networks contributes to avoiding a sense of insecurity (see Box 5.11).

## Networking enhances other securitability factors

The ability to network is not only a **securitability factor** in its own right. It also enhances other **securitability factors**. For example, it helps individuals to increase their own role as **securitability factors**. Involving passive people with high expectations towards the government and social organizations in formal networking activities increases their initiative and their understanding of themselves as sources of security. This increase in individual **securitability** then strengthens the networks these people have joined. The organization *Karosta K@2* is one example of such a reciprocal relationship (see Box 5.13).

## The polarization of society in relation to social capital

The differences in social capital that arise from networking can polarize society in the same way as



income disparity. Those who network continue to improve their human security, while those who do not are at a disadvantage. People who participate in networks (see Box 5.5) and have the skills crucial to the success of networks are able to take full advantage

of the benefits offered by networking. The example of the *Mežaparks Development Association* shows how a group of people with a high sense of security can further strengthen its positions through networking (see Box 5.14).

#### Box 5.10

### A network to enhance personal physical security – *Vecāki Jelgavai* (Parents for Jelgava)

*Vecāki Jelgavai* (Parents for Jelgava) is an NGO that organizes voluntary parent patrols along the streets of Jelgava on Friday nights. The principal aim of the patrols is to protect young people from different dangers, including drug addiction. The patrols take place within the framework of a project entitled *Liels un mazs drošā pilsētā* (Big and small in a safe city). This project was initiated by a group of parents who, with the support of the Jelgava City Council, had travelled to Sweden to see how a similar organization operates. Their further implementation of the project demonstrates that individuals with incentive can contribute to the development of security in their local municipality.

Every Friday night at eight o'clock in the evening, ten parents meet to discuss the assignments of the evening, before setting off on their weekly patrols around the city. Each participant receives a uniform of sorts – a jacket emblazoned with the reflecting sign *Parents for Jelgava* and a flashlight.

Two groups of parents set out on their rounds. Each group consists of three fathers and two mothers and is equipped with a mobile phone and a first aid kit. All of the patrols' equipment has been obtained with the help of Jelgava business leaders and the City Council.

The patrol covers about 12 kilometres. The routes are designed according to the recommendations of young people as to which streets and parts of the town are the least safe. The routes cover shops that sell alcohol and tobacco, cafés, bars, restaurants, casinos and Internet clubs, night clubs, parks and other places that are popular among young people. During the patrols, parents talk with the youngsters they meet and give them cards with the telephone number of the organization. They inform the youths of their mission, and are simply present if needed. The parents do not moralize and ask the youngsters to go home. Their aim is to guarantee the children's safety during the late evening hours, for example, by walking them home or ensuring that children under 16 do not spend the whole night at the Internet clubs. They also try to ensure that shops do not sell alcohol or tobacco to minors. *Parents for Jelgava* has established close cooperation with the police and a local hospital that provides assistance in the case of emergency. The patrols end at 2 a.m., when both groups of parents come together to discuss their experiences of the evening. Then they go home.

The organization has a rule against the participation of novices in such patrols. Each newcomer is tested and must go through training. A senior member must provide a recommendation on behalf of any potential newcomer. Currently there is a waiting list for parents wishing to participate, and most of the parents who have already gone out on patrols are eager to do so again.

Sarmīte Viksna, a mother from Jelgava, is pleased that the project has helped to create stronger links among parents, irrespective of their positions and professional affiliations. Entrepreneurs and even city council employees, as community members who care about the safety of their own children and that of other children, are welcome to provide material and moral support.

*This case study is based on an interview with Sarmīte Viksna, a mother and initiator of Parents for Jelgava. UNDP Latvia, 2003*

## Human security through a sense of community

When people unite in social networks, they gain the opportunity to increase the security of their community in unprecedented ways, such as by intervening among their own community members to prevent hooliganism and vandalism. Members of *Parents for Jelgava* said that their visual presence alone provided an added sense of order, for example, in Internet cafes where children younger than 16 are not allowed to be at night.

Social networks have a greater influence if they unite individuals that are respected in local circles. Minor crimes such as vandalism can be reduced, especially if those stopping the situation are friends of the family or parents of a friend. Social networks reinforce the sense of community and pressure those inclined toward criminal activities to abide by the community's norms.

Thus, social networks can increase both the personal security of those who participate and the security of the community as a whole. In the case of

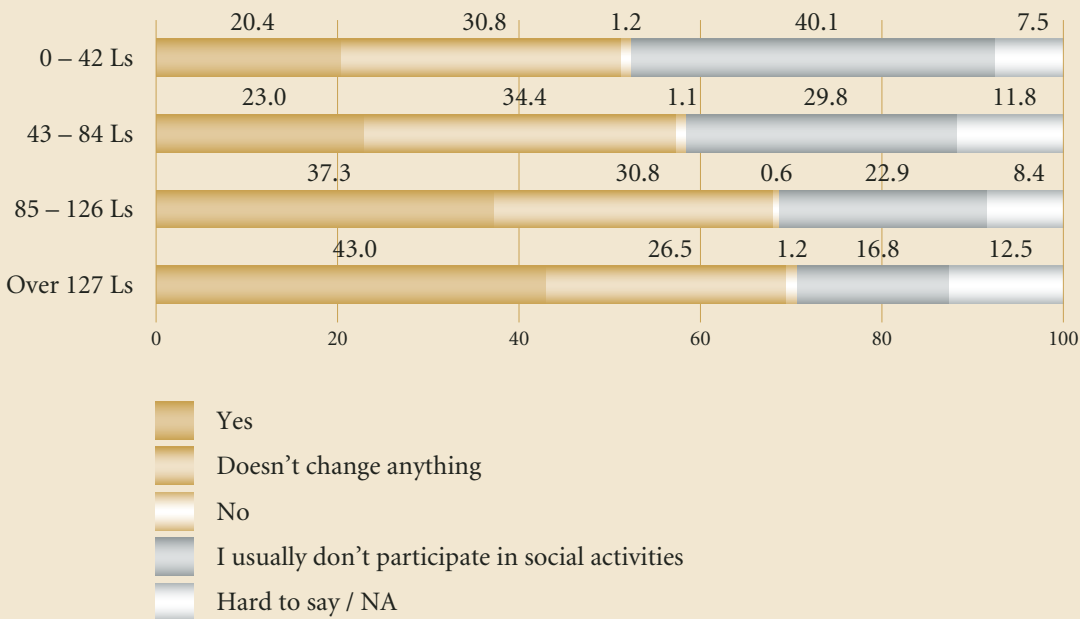
*Karosta K@2*, the image of Karosta's socially excluded inhabitants is being transformed. The events and activities organized by the artists' group are facilitating the positive socialization of the neighbourhood's children, giving them the opportunity to express their interests and show their potential. The skills and self-confidence these children acquire will help them to strengthen their individual *securitability factors*.

The *Mežaparks Development Association* helped to deter the controversial privatization of the *Saules dārzs* parkland, proving that social networks can protect the interests of the local community against the seeming omnipotence of oligarchic entrepreneurs. Its input into the city's development plan caused the local residents to feel that justice and security can prevail.

Networking has the added benefit of increasing trust in cooperation partners and reducing high expectations that people may feel toward their government. It strengthens people's belief in their own ability to effect change through their dialogue with

Box 5.11

**Can active participation in social activities improve one's life or that of one's closest relations? Range of opinions among different income groups (% of respondents in each income category)**



Market and Public Opinion Research Centre (SKDS), 2002

## Box 5.12

### Cooperative credit unions in Latvia – enhancing economic security

The credit union is a financial cooperative established and governed by its members to meet their financial needs and improve their well-being. The credit union's capital is accrued from its members' deposits, which are accepted irrespective of their amount. This allows people to accrue funds for particular purposes. Loans are issued only to credit union members.

Members of the credit union are simultaneously its owners and clients. Only members are eligible for its services. All participants have equal rights regarding the control of the credit union, because each member has one vote. The minimum number of members is 20 and the minimum capital is 2000 lats.

In most cases, people choose to become members of credit unions because they are not happy with the services provided by commercial banks. Second, people feel more secure when they discuss the private issue of money with familiar people in familiar surroundings.

Security is increased by the fact that the credit union's members are in similar situations. Wealthy people rarely get involved in the credit union movement. The income range of most members varies from those who live on welfare to the middle class.

*The case study is based on an interview with Brigita Baltace, Board Chairperson of the Cooperative Credit Union Association of Latvia, and from information in the home page of the Cooperative Credit Union Association of Latvia (<http://home.delfi.lv/lkss>). UNDP Latvia, 2003*

government institutions and leads, in turn, to greater responsiveness on the part of government institutions. This results in an improved climate of mutual trust.

## Summary

There are many issues in life that an individual cannot address alone, and that can best be dealt with in cooperation with others. Participation in social networks strengthens the relationships among individuals and among different social groups. It unites people with similar views and approaches toward achieving a common goal, facilitates trust and solidarity and encourages voluntary work. A united network of community members can work wonders to increase the security of its members and that of the community as a whole.

In Latvia, people enjoy rather extensive informal social contacts with their family members, friends, neighbours and colleagues, but often lack the required knowledge, skills to utilize formal networking in order to increase their level of security.

The family is the primary source from which a child's networking skills are developed. It is here that he or she first sees how people attempt to solve issues of insecurity – by asking for help and offering it to others, by finding ways out of conflict situations, etc.

The social *milieu* is a determining factor for the success of certain networks. It is difficult to develop vibrant social networks in insecure and weak communities. For this reason it is essential for people to strengthen their allegiance to their communities, and to understand that this allegiance can be based on such elementary factors as a common geographical location, as in the examples of Karosta and Mežaparks.

Formal social networking, especially in the form of NGOs, is developing at a slower rate than required for Latvia's successful development. Many people have serious doubts about their ability to effect change and have a passive attitude toward actions taken by the government. High expectations also prevail in regard to municipal and government institutions as sources of security. Latvia's evolution into a strong and prosperous nation requires the

## Box 5.13

**Karosta K@2 – enhancing individual securitability in Liepāja**

The *Karosta K@2* NGO operates in Karosta (War Harbour), a run-down, northern suburb of the city of Liepāja. This part of the city dates back to the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when it was built as a support base for the Czarist Russian Empire's Baltic Sea Fleet. The name 'Karosta' came into use only after Latvia established its independence in 1918. Karosta flourished during the first period of Latvia's independence, when it was considered to be a prestigious place to live.

During the Soviet occupation Karosta came to serve the needs of the Soviet military and was closed to the public. Once the Soviet army left Latvia in the 1990s, Karosta's population plummeted. Many empty apartment buildings were vandalized or destroyed. Karosta turned into a slum neighbourhood. Its partly inhabited buildings were being gradually taken over by homeless and other low-income inhabitants, including families with children.

Life began to change in Karosta when it was chosen as a venue for professional activities by a group of international artists. The artists designed numerous art projects, including an extensive art exhibition in 2002 called *Subjective Objective*, creative workshops for Karosta's children, and an international seminar of cinematographers, *Transit Zero*. Some artists then moved to Karosta permanently and began to work for the territory and its inhabitants. Together, they created the public organization *Karosta K@2*.

The goal of *Karosta K@2* is to use culture, education and information to help those living in Karosta to resolve such painful issues as social integration and poverty. *Karosta K@2* is cooperating with different international foundations and organizations to attract funds for new projects. Local artists, volunteers and visitors from abroad are already participating in various projects. According to one of the founders of the organization, "we have established a partnership with the European Culture Foundation because we can offer Europe something that others do not have."

*Karosta K@2* offers children and adults different ways to spend their free time, such as courses in the Latvian language, drawing, photography, Internet use, etc. One room is open for children on a daily basis. In cooperation with students of the Liepāja Pedagogical University, *Karosta K@2* has set up a New Media lab where young people can access the Internet, use video and audio equipment, and work on cultural exchange projects. A conference on the further development of the Karosta Dwelling Fund has also taken place.

The founders of the organization stress that relations with Karosta's inhabitants, especially with its children, are beneficial for everyone involved. They point out that "one of our achievements is to make children believe that nothing is impossible. That they are not smaller than others. Actually, they are a lot bigger." With the support of the organization, Karosta children have taken part in the movies *Kurpe* ("Shoe") and *Mostieties* ("Wake Up"). They have also made their own films and news programmes, and participated in local and international photography exhibitions.

The support of the city is crucial for the organization to carry out its plans of restoring Karosta, developing a culture centre and improving its infrastructure. *Karosta K@2* is hoping to set up a youth hostel, a Baltic international school of cinematography, and a multifunctional exhibition hall that could host concerts and performances. In this way the organization hopes to broaden its contacts and attract more visitors from abroad.

*The case study is based on an interview with the founders of Karosta K@2, Kristīne Briede and Calle Bjorsmark, as well as on information available in Karosta's Internet home page – <http://www.karosta.org>.  
UNDP Latvia, 2003*

readiness of its people to participate more in the policy-making processes of the country, and to work on providing security in realms not covered by the government, but still necessary for society.

*Securitability* can be enhanced by promoting public awareness of social networks and acknowledging their contributions, first and foremost by local governments. This type of promotion is extremely important in Latvia, where many people feel incapable of advancing their economic, physical and

community security. The promotion of positive examples increases awareness and encourages people to work towards resolving problems that are important both for them as individuals and for the community as a whole.

Local, regional and national government institutions need to support the wishes of local communities to organize themselves for creating a more secure environment. In Latvia, the wish to act often gets realized only with the assistance of an outside source.

#### Box 5.14

### The Mežaparks Development Association

The *Mežaparks Development Association* is an independent, voluntary membership organization set up in 1997 following a conference entitled *Mežaparks – the First Garden City in Europe*, which was widely attended by the people of the neighbourhood. The principal aim of the association is to facilitate the sustainable development of Riga's Mežaparks neighbourhood, to ensure a high-quality and secure neighbourhood, and to preserve its existing cultural, historical and natural heritage for the present and future generations.

Currently two networks operate within the association. One of them organizes lectures on historic and cultural issues of the neighbourhood, and offers consultations on Mežaparks' architecture.

The other network unites people who are ready to donate their time and professional skills for the benefit of their neighbourhood. Activities include open forums on such subjects as urban development, the elaboration of proposals and projects for the improvement of the neighbourhood, better building codes, green zones in residential areas, transport and waste management systems. The association organized a public opinion poll on the Riga City Development Plan and communicated the opinion of the neighbourhood to the relevant authorities. Its members publish articles on Mežaparks in the media. They cooperate with the Mežaparks Elementary School, the *Saules dārzis* Young Friends of Nature Centre, the Riga Samaritans, the local post office and housing authority, the Latvian Centre for Sculptors, the Riga Zoo and others.

The association's expanding membership includes active members of society from different professions – politicians, environment experts, artists, writers, historians, teachers, etc. The diversity of contacts is resulting in a broad range of avenues of cooperation with different institutions – local authorities, the mass media and NGOs. The association's high level of initiative and its adeptness at coordinating its resources, its dynamic interface with the external environment and the presence of other crucial success factors has lead to the sponsorship of its projects by such organizations as the Culture Foundation of Latvia, the Centre for NGOs, and the EU Phare ACCESS Latvia Programme, etc.

Currently the association plans to expand the functions of a Mežaparks elementary school so that it serves as a local culture centre as well, creating yet more networking opportunities among the young people of the area. The association also plans to enliven Mežaparks' social life by organizing street festivals and other events.

*This case study is based on an interview with Kristīne Āboltiņa, one of the founders of the Mežaparks Development Association and initiator of the Sustainable Mežaparks Development Plan 2002. UNDP Latvia, 2003*

Financial and moral support by local government institutions, NGOs and entrepreneurs is essential for the productive work of social networks. There are many different ways in which the surrounding community can support social networks. Each of the cases described in this Chapter demonstrates a wide array of support methods. Entrepreneurs can finance certain activities and provide supplies, inventory, and other resources. Local governments can provide moral support in the form of awards and praise, as well as assistance in dealing with administrative matters if necessary. NGOs can support the development of other social networks by offering information, advice, and help in attracting funding.

Social networks perform a crucial integration function for those with high insecurity levels and are the major source of *securitability* for poor people. Special attention should be paid to the role of social networks in facilitating children's integration in society. Children from poor families often have restricted social contacts, which are realized mainly among their peers. Social networks aimed at integrating children from poor families into society are centred around the system of education in the widest sense of the word.



# The State and Human Security

This Chapter analyses the role of the State in the provision of human security. According to the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002**, many of Latvia's inhabitants feel that the government and its institutions do little to promote their security. The purpose of this Chapter is to examine how the State can improve its performance in maximizing human security in Latvia.

Within its mandate, the State should defend the human security needs of its people in the wider regional and global arena, and promote human security domestically. The widespread opinion that the State is not performing sufficiently well in this regard can be attributed in part to the changing role of the State in Latvia. The transition from totalitarian to democratic rule, and from a planned to a market economy has caused individuals to become more self-reliant and resulted in increased social stratification. The State, with the limited economic means at its disposal, has had to balance such immediate needs as increasing pensions and public sector salaries with the longer-term macroeconomic stability requirements that ultimately create the conditions for economic development and human security.

This **Report** establishes that the more people feel confident about their own ability to effect change, the more they trust in the government's ability to do so. For this reason, the development of participatory instruments in government decision-making would likely improve the perception of the State as a *security factor*. The **Report** identifies several areas where the government must take responsibility for ensuring human security because the market will not create sufficiently equitable conditions on its own. For example, the government must create optimal conditions for people to find gainful employment and earn sufficient income, obtain access to quality and affordable health care and education, be safe in the streets, etc.

This Chapter examines different aspects of the State's role in providing human security. It focuses on:

- the changing role of the State *vis-à-vis* human security from the historical, international and public policy contexts;
- the interplay of policy and politics in addressing human security;
- perceptions of the State as a security provider for individuals;
- perceived security risks and role of the State in reducing them;
- risk management through international organizations;
- perceived areas of insecurity concerning the EU;
- the relevance of human security to national public policy.

## The changing role of the State

While it is generally agreed that the State has a vital role to play in maintaining people's security, establishing a consensus on its precise role has been difficult in light of changing political ideologies, economic processes, historical circumstances and technological advancements.

## Historical context

During the Soviet period, the role of the State in Latvia was markedly different from that in the previous period of independence and from that of countries of the West. In the USSR, political security – as expressed by the respect for basic human rights and freedoms, as well as free participation in politics – was not regarded as important by the State. Consequently, people's personal security risked being seriously compromised if they challenged the political regime. At the same time, socio-economic security, as expressed by a stable income and guaranteed employment, was declared to be a top priority. In practice, social security in areas such as housing, health care, employment, education, etc. reached a level that satisfied the basic requirements of human security.

Although the quality of social provisions was not always as high as could be desired, the certainty of their availability was valued and taken for granted. When the Soviet economy and political system collapsed, most of the former social security provisions were reduced in real terms. Gaining security under

new systems, such as the pension schemes, proved particularly difficult for the elderly and those who were approaching retirement age. Their whole working life experience suddenly had little significance in ensuring them a comfortable retirement, and this fostered a growing sense of injustice.

The changing role of the State in Latvia was due not only to a concerted policy of liberalization, but also to forced circumstances of a macro-economic nature. The economic transition from a planned to a liberal economy had a dramatic impact on human security in Latvia in the beginning of the 1990s. As noted in the *Latvia Human Development Report 1995*, the inflation rate greatly surpassed the increase of per-

sonal income for most people. Latvia's GDP per capita shrank more than by half from 1990 to 1994.

The transition was particularly hard for elderly people, families with many children, the disabled and the ill as well as for publicly paid professionals working in health care, defence, education and culture. In contrast to the OECD countries, where the role of the State regarding social transfers has increased significantly since World War II, the role of the State in Latvia saw a radical decrease in the early 1990s. Human security was at risk, as indicated by a peak in the suicide rate (see Chapter 3). The lack of resources did not allow the State to alleviate hardships for many people.

**Inna Šteinbuka**

*former Advisor to the Executive Director of the Nordic-Baltic Office  
of the IMF in Washington, DC*

#### Box 6.1

### The government's role in providing economic security

Current-day economic theory supports an active government role in the economy. An efficient government must achieve several goals. *First*, by implementing an adequate fiscal and monetary policy, the government has to maintain overall macroeconomic stability – namely, a stable and credible national currency and low inflation, so as to permit sustainable economic development. *Second*, the government should provide society with public goods, that is goods and services that cannot be sold effectively in the marketplace and are characterized by shared consumption and non-exclusion. Pure public goods, such as national defence, law and order and a clean environment are entrusted by the people to be managed by the government, since the private sector cannot guarantee these things on its own. In other realms, such as health care and education, the government also has an important role to play.

*Third*, the government has to step in where an uneven flow of information prevents smooth market operations and fair competition. Public activities in this domain range from the monitoring of food safety to the supervision of financial institutions. The government's role is also to implement an effective social safety net and to limit the risks of unemployment. *Fourth*, insufficient competition in some markets also requires government intervention, which may take the form of competition boards for *ad hoc* action or regulatory bodies for the continuous scrutiny of monopolies.

Aside from these broad cases, most other activities can be left to the private sector. One should note that in each country the specific activities under government control and influence may differ. Market economies differ in the degree of education and health services the government is responsible for reallocating; in the degree to which higher taxes on the rich are used to redistribute income; and in the scope and design of their social welfare systems.

The effectiveness of any government is high if its citizens feel secure. Economic security means first of all stable currency, predictable and stable prices, reasonable pensions, benefits and other social guarantees. The safety of household savings is also of utmost importance. For example, Latvia's banking crisis of 1995 reduced the savings of many people, particularly those with low income levels, including pensioners. This reduced confidence in the domestic banking system. The Latvian government and central bank adequately responded by strengthening the banking supervision system.

A credible banking system is essential because domestic savings together with foreign investments provide the capital for the development of new enterprises, job creation, and the reduction of unemployment risks. In addition, efficient institutions ensure the sustainability of economic processes, and public support for health and education provides a certain standard for the quality of life.

It might be useful to recall how government involvement in Latvia's economy has changed. Latvia's transition to a market economy was a challenging process in many ways. When the process started, the Latvian government had to foster greater personal responsibility for income and welfare, instead of providing generous guarantees to secure rather low but equal living standards for all. The reinvention of the government took place simultaneously with the fight against inflation, the reintroduction of Latvia's national currency, the establishment of credibility in international markets, the opening of Latvia's markets to competition, and the provision of social protection for those vulnerable groups who needed it most.

In the early 1990s Latvia's new leaders lacked the skills and experience necessary to design and implement market-oriented reforms. Many Soviet-era institutions were no longer operating, nor was the market capable of functioning normally. Now that the stability of the lat is internationally recognized, it is worth recalling that the Latvian national currency was reintroduced at a time when the country was experiencing hyperinflation. Production output and incomes had dropped dramatically. Tax reforms had to generate sufficient budget revenue and stimulate the development of a still fragile private sector.

Redefining government functions is a task that always offers new opportunities. Currently Latvia has to revise and adapt its government functions to the requirements of the European Union (EU) and its comprehensive policies. The most important issue facing the Latvian authorities is how to close the income gap between Latvia and the EU's current member States. The gradual convergence of incomes to EU levels will continue to serve as a key precondition for the economic security of Latvia in general and for each individual in particular.

*UNDP Latvia, 2003*

## The international context

Latvia's dynamic development has led to increasing interaction with social, economic and political networks on an international and global scale. This has been especially true in the European Union and NATO accession processes. As a result, the people of Latvia are becoming increasingly aware of global risks and opportunities, and of their effects at the local level.

As Latvia's economic and social systems are transformed, an increased sense of vulnerability is hindering many people's ability to differentiate between sources of security and security threats. Transition countries sometimes lack experience in using global and regional instruments to enhance their security, and in informing their citizens about the potential benefits of doing so. Latvia has cooperated successfully with the United Nations, the World Trade Organisation, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, the EU, NATO

and other international organizations. However, due to a lack of communication between the government and society, some of these potential sources of security are not seen to be helping the country. The creative power of regional and international organizations in enhancing human security has not been effectively implemented or conveyed to the public.

The economic security of individuals and their businesses in Latvia is largely dependent on economic events outside Latvian borders. Like other countries with small, open economies, Latvia depends heavily on foreign trade and capital flows. The Russian financial crisis of 1998 was an example of how an economic slowdown and currency devaluation in a neighbouring country can adversely affect the economic security of Latvia's inhabitants. As a result of this crisis, Latvia's rate of GDP growth slowed down during the following year and the level of registered unemployment grew significantly.

However, the role of the external environment should not be overestimated, since sound economic policies can provide safeguards against the adverse impact of crises abroad. The current global economic slowdown, for example, has had only a limited effect on Latvia's economic development, as evidenced by the fact that Latvia is experiencing one of the highest growth rates among the EU applicant and member countries.

## The public policy context

Latvia and other European countries are committed to a stable macroeconomic environment that envisages prudent monetary and fiscal policies. During the last several years, Latvia has experienced relatively stable and steady economic growth. However, this period has also been characterized by rising pressure for the government to increase its expenditures, especially in the area of public sector salaries (e.g. teachers, doctors, police, civil servants) and pensions. With additional pressure on the budget coming from EU and NATO accession requirements and from previous policy commitments that have yet to receive funding (the latter totalled 266 million lats in 2001, according to the State Chancellery), the demand for higher spending most likely will increase in 2004 and beyond. This pressure could be slightly mitigated by the availability of EU structural funds, which could reach 554 million lats during the period of 2004 to 2006.

Higher budget spending will only be possible if Latvia's GDP continues to grow. In order to promote economic growth, the government plans to further diminish the tax burden on enterprises. The assumption is that such an approach will encourage economic activity and create jobs – a key *securitability factor* according to this **Report**. In the longer term, this should generate tax revenues for funding new government policy initiatives. In the short term, however, such tax cuts, combined with tight fiscal deficit targets, could make it difficult for the government to abide by commitments it has made to the most needy segments of the population. The government is attempting to compensate for the drop in revenue brought on by these tax cuts by seeking to implement more efficient spending practices and by improving revenue collection.

The government needs to improve its performance in providing human security within the public policy context. For instance, it must be capable of ensuring that national legislation is enforced – a capacity that

still requires significant strengthening. It must also be in a position to provide public goods to the people. In the process of public policy making, the government should facilitate the role of the non-governmental sector, which opens up new areas of opportunity for individuals to influence decisions that affect them.

## The interplay of politics and policy in the provision of human security

It is the State's responsibility to monitor various aspects of human security and intervene to reverse such negative trends as increased poverty, as well as to provide assistance in the case of natural disasters or other calamitous events. This is done in many cases through the development and implementation of public policy (action plans to prevent poverty, campaigns against drunk driving, etc.).

Placing human security within a political context can be challenging, as the boundary between an objective security situation and subjective perceptions of threats is not always clear. The State can have a strong influence on people's objective state of security and on their subjective sense of security. The political process can be misused to artificially enhance people's sense of insecurity in order to win votes or to blacken the reputation of a political opponent.

The declared purpose of the political process is to ensure the participation of the citizenry in political decision-making, but often short-term interests cause politicians to elevate risk perceptions. One example is the public attention given to the shortcomings in Latvia's healthcare services, which were highlighted (and manipulated with) during the campaign preceding the 8<sup>th</sup> *Saeima* (parliamentary) elections in October 2002.

In the context of human security, public policy is often caught between short-term pressures and long-term objectives. This situation was particularly visible during 1998 and 1999, when changes to the pension system were discussed. Since 1995 the government has been implementing pension reform with the goal of creating a financially stable three-tiered pension system. The successful initiation of this policy allowed for a surplus of 26 million lats in the social insurance budget in 1998. These resources were to be used in order to introduce the second level of pensions. However, political pressure arose in the period preceding

parliamentary elections that same year to divert this surplus to the social insurance budget and increase general pensions. This pressure to satisfy short-term demands hampered the government's ability to implement a financially stable pension reform system. A comprehensive reform was thus delayed for several years afterward.

Hence, the State's actions are not always based on rational economic considerations. They can be driven by political concerns that reflect not only the interests of certain groups, but also the desire of politicians to be elected. The State's ability to act is also constrained by the availability of resources and by traditional patterns of resource allocation, which, irrespective of the political or administrative system, are usually very difficult to change.

## Perceptions of the State as a security provider

The **Survey** shows that people indirectly associate some of the most significant human security risks with the State, which is seen to either magnify such risks or as unable to prevent or mitigate their effect. In other words, people with a high sense of insecurity do not generally believe that the State can help them to any significant degree. Of twelve factors that most directly threaten individuals' overall sense of security, most are in the areas that fall within the mandate of the State to control, e.g. crime, the spread of HIV/AIDS, food quality, environmental pollution, health and employment.

The **Survey** listed a number of important State institutions such as the police, the armed forces, the health care system, the social protection system, local governments, the employment system, the judiciary, and national government, which respondents were asked to evaluate as security providers. The results indicated a marked consistency within certain age and income groups, within specific geographic regions, and within groups according to sex, nationality and citizenship. According to the results, almost none of the State institutions mentioned in the **Survey** were seen to significantly strengthen the respondents' sense of security, with the exception of the police and the armed forces. The latter received especially favourable marks. Respondents rate specific institutions higher than the national government as a whole.

As discussed in Chapter 5, a factor analysis done on the **Survey** reveals that a certain segment of the population has a passive attitude toward the government and non-governmental organizations, while simultaneously holding high expectations of them. Active persons with a higher degree of *securitability*, on the other hand, have a propensity to rely on themselves and their informal contacts to increase their sense of security.

The aforementioned observations have the following implications for the State's role as a *securitability factor*.

*Differing views on the role of the State.* The State is not perceived as a source of human security by those who would like to see a more equitable social security

### Box 6.2

**Māris Sprindžuks**

*Member of Parliament, 7<sup>th</sup> Saeima (1995-1998)*

### Politicians' Choices and Human Security

The greatest challenge for a politician is to choose between popular decisions that increase his or her short-term rating and help the re-election effort, and the tougher decisions which may cause short-term pain for society, but guarantee results in the long term.

I believe that an individual cannot feel secure if publicly elected officials – members of parliament, ministers, and local government officials – are not open and honest. It is better to be fully aware of prevailing opportunities and risks than to live in a world of second-guessing and suspicion. Ignorance always breeds insecurity, but truth, as bitter as it may be, motivates people to action – the kind of action that yields awareness and security.

*UNDP Latvia, 2003*



system in which the State guarantees stable employment and predictable income that is sufficient for satisfying basic human security needs.

*The insufficient capacity of the State* is what indirectly sustains people's sense of insecurity in areas such as the fight against crime and corruption, as well as in health care. This perception is influenced by two key factors. One is the actual performance of individual institutions – for example, the police's inability to solve some highly publicized murder cases, or firefighters' inability to save the Cesvaine Castle from ruin due to outdated equipment. (The castle is a historical landmark that housed a school. Its roof went up flames in December 2002.) The other factor involves the unsuccessful public relations policies of State institutions and the public administration as a whole.

*The passive role of the individual* in cooperating with the State in order to ensure human security. The National (State) Police has provided the authors of this **Report** with interesting insights into this problem. One of the most developed areas of organized crime involves the theft of expensive cars, yet many victims are reluctant to report such crimes. They would rather buy back their vehicles from their victimizers than file a report with the police, whose success rate in solving such thefts is not very high. Some end up filing a report only after the thieves fail to meet their part of the bargain. The root cause of the situation lies in a lack of trust of the police. Successful experiences of cooperation between State institutions and society are rarely covered in the press.

## Issues of concern

When analyzed through the prism of the State, the main security concerns explained in Chapter 2 of this **Report** reveal three trends. First, nowhere in the **Survey's** list of items regarded as risks of greatest concern do we find issues pertaining to national sovereignty. To a certain degree this may be attributed to successful work by the State in consolidating and strengthening Latvia's independence, as well as to the lack of direct threats in this regard. Second, respondents believe that greater efforts should be put forth in the area of political security, especially in the areas of combating corruption and improving the functioning of the court system. Third, many respondents are worried about their socio-economic security. This is a very broad field that encompassing health care, employment, pensions, etc. Personal security is another concern.

## Economic security

In Latvia, where politicians often point to the country's rapid GDP growth as evidence of its development, the issue of economic security remains at the top of the list of people's concerns. Personal economic problems are cited by 27% of **Survey** respondents as their number one threat, with 25% ranking this issue as number two, and 21% as number three. Economic security is directly linked with steady employment and income stability. It is also linked with social security. Employment opportunities are related to education, and the quality of medical care one receives is becoming increasingly dependent upon one's income, or ability to pay.

This demonstrates the interdependence of the macro and micro levels of security. Stability and dynamic development at the macro level is necessary, but an insufficient precondition for security at the micro, e.g. individual level. For example, the fact that a country may have an expanding economy does not in and of itself guarantee an increase in the welfare of the country's inhabitants if the average income per capita is low and the income distribution skewed.

## Employment

While GDP growth ensures higher employment and new jobs in the long run, the current rate of unemployment in Latvia is rather high (8.5% in 2002). In order to foster employment opportunities, it is not enough to promote macro-economic stability and high growth. It is absolutely essential for the government to develop job creation policies.

Steady and predictable employment is a key factor in maintaining a sense of security for those of working age. It provides the income that ensures accessibility to other human security-related services such as health care and education. While Latvia's unemployment rate has decreased by more than six percent over the past five years, over one-quarter (26.6%) of the unemployed had been out of work for over one year in 2001. This suggests that the country has a structural unemployment problem, and that the security of the long-term unemployed has not been increased by Latvia's overall economic growth.

It is the responsibility of the State Employment Service to provide re-training programmes for those who are out of work, as well as information about new employment opportunities. However, only about one-fourth of those who lose their jobs contact the



## Box 6.3

## Development Perspectives in Latvia

The Latvian government has approved a Draft Single Programming Document to serve as a basis for planning future EU assistance to Latvia's socio-economic development. It sets out the following analysis of development prospects for various sectors of the national economy.

Sectors	Traditional	Compensating	Lead	Future growth
Primary	Agriculture Fisheries	Application of non-traditional agriculture	Forestry  Primary / upstream food processing	Application of high-tech to the forestry production sector  Bio-tech in the farm food sector
Secondary	Metal and other manufacturing	Construction materials  Construction  Crafts	Textiles  Downstream processing  Timber products	Composite materials  Optical electronics  Nano- technologies  Organic chemistry
Tertiary		Tourism	Transit / transport	Transport logistics  Information technologies  Telematics and multimedia

**Traditional sectors** – in decline and losing importance in terms of their contribution to the GDP. Reduced investment, loss of jobs, and major restructuring;

**Compensating sectors** – in expansion and capable of absorbing new jobs;

**Lead sectors** – experiencing growth in terms of economic activity, investment and employment, but under-performing in terms of value added and contribution to the GDP;

**Future growth sectors** – potential growth in the knowledge-based economy with a high-tech component.

*Latvia, Draft Single Programming Document 2004-2006,  
Latvian Ministry of Finance, March 2003*

State Employment Service, according to Latvia's Central Statistical Bureau. Most prefer to seek employment through their friends and relatives, or by looking through newspaper ads and contacting potential employers directly. There is still room for improvement in the State's capacity to provide for human security in this regard. On the positive side, more than two-thirds of the unemployed who participated in government-supported professional training programmes succeeded in finding a new job in 2001, according to the State Employment Service.

When Latvia regained its independence in 1991, agriculture and manufacturing dominated the country's economy. Today the share of both sectors has diminished considerably. Manufacturing contributes to no more than 14% of the country's GDP, while agriculture accounts for only 4.4%. Latvia's economy has experienced a significant transformation and is now dominated by the services sector. Latvia requires a well-balanced economic policy that fosters growth in those sectors of the economy that have a higher likelihood of contributing to steady economic growth and employment, while promoting greater productivity in such traditional sectors as agriculture and manufacturing.

This analysis suggests that those employed in the traditional sectors will be more prone to insecurity due to employment and income unpredictability. The long-term objective of a knowledge-based economy appears to be the way forward. However, this will require significant reforms of the education system. The fact that 67% of the unemployed have a secondary/vocational education and 8.2% have a higher education suggests that there are significant problems with the effectiveness of Latvia's education system.

Latvia is not unique in this regard, as many nations today are restructuring to become "knowledge economies." The only way Latvia can do so is by investing in education, research and development, by developing its transportation and communications infrastructure, and by instituting tax policies that promote private initiative. Responsive and efficient civil service institutions, fair and clearly set legislation and appropriate enforcement are also required.

Latvia does not distinguish itself in terms of favourable preconditions for knowledge-based economic development. Using the Baltic countries for comparison, Latvia's indicators lag in infrastructure

#### Box 6.4

#### Comparison of some preconditions for knowledge-based economic development among the Baltic States

	Latvia	Estonia	Lithuania
Government expenditures on education, % of total budget, 2001****	7.86	10.24	5.82
Percentage of population aged 15 to 74 with post-secondary education, 2001**	14.9	23.9	33.3
Government expenditures on science and development, % of GNP***	0.3	0.6	0.8
Private sector expenditures on science and development, % of GNP***	0.2	0.2	0.1
Number of scientists and engineers involved in research per 1 million inhabitants*	1090	2164	2031
Percentage of science and engineering graduates of population aged 20-29, 1999	5.8	3.8	9.3

\* *Human Development Report 2002. UNDP, 2002.*

\*\* Statistical Office of Estonia. 2002. *Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania in Figures 2002*. Tallinn, p.8.

\*\*\* *Innovation Policy in Seven Candidate Countries (Preliminary Findings)*.

European Commission, DG Enterprise, November 2002, p.5.

\*\*\*\* *Latvijas Statistikas gadagrāmata 2002*. Riga: Central Statistical Bureau 2002, p. 232 (Lithuanian and Estonian data for 2000).

development, State investment in science and technology, the availability of risk capital, and the commercialization of scientific discoveries and innovations. (see Box 6.4)

At the same time, the government is undertaking initiatives to promote business initiative, employment and innovation. The Government's Action Plan for 2003 includes such novel measures as the creation of a risk investment fund to support new and innovative businesses, the establishment of a Science and Technology Park in Salaspils, the creation of 300 subsidized workplaces for disabled unemployed, and other measures. However, a major and concerted effort is required by all government institutions to deliver an economic and educational strategy that will bring about a true knowledge economy in Latvia.

### *Income level sufficiency*

In all societies there are individuals and groups that are unable to satisfy their basic needs without assistance. These include children from families with long term problems, pensioners, persons who are disabled, the chronically ill, the long-term unemployed and new, unskilled entrants into the labour market. Within these groups, of course, there may be individuals whose financial resources are sufficient to provide for their needs in full, but in Latvia they are a minority. Traditionally, the State has assumed at least partial responsibility for addressing the needs of these groups.

In Latvia the assistance provided by the State comes in the form of social insurance and social assistance. Social insurance involves income support when people reach retirement age, when a family loses a provider, when one becomes unable to work as a result of injury or illness, during pregnancy or maternity/paternity leave, in the case of a job loss, etc. Several important elements of the social insurance system in Latvia are almost fully developed and operate in a predictable manner, thereby helping to significantly reduce levels of social insecurity. The long delayed reform of the pension system – arguably the most important element of the social insurance system – is generally complete. The system is financially stable, and the Ministries of Economy and Finance estimate that by 2005 social insurance budget revenues will exceed expenditures.

Social assistance is aimed at providing monetary, material or other support to persons who have fallen upon hard times, while promoting their ability to improve their own situation. Social assistance pay-

ments can be divided into two categories – those paid by the State and those paid by local governments. The increase in State social benefits has been slower than the rise in consumer prices and GDP. In general, State social benefits are not related to the financial situation of the recipient. They depend more on the recipient's belonging to a social group that has the greatest chance of losing income. Examples of such social groups include families with children, guardians caring for children, and foster families. The financial aspect of social benefits is not the only or key source of *security* provided by the State. It is more likely that disabled people, for example, will appreciate those State services that foster their ability to participate in society.

The Law on State Social Benefits regulates the distribution of State benefits while the Law on Social Services and Social Assistance provides for a guaranteed minimum monthly income (currently set at 21 lats) to everyone in the country. This minimum income is paid out to the country's poorest inhabitants by local governments through their social assistance budgets. The State also provides special assistance to groups that are not under immediate threat, but whose welfare is considered to be in the interests of society at large – for example, families with young children.

As discussed in Chapter 2, income insufficiency remains the key human security problem in Latvia. According to the Central Statistical Bureau, more than one-fifth (21.4%) of the registered employed received less than 60 lats per month after taxes during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2002. Just over one-quarter (28.3%) received between 60 and 100 lats, 23% between 100 and 150 lats, 13.3% between 150 and 200 lats, and only 14% made over 200 lats per month. The average monthly retirement pension amounted to 63.50 lats. However, the official minimum income required to provide for one's basic human security needs was listed at 88.76 lats. It is small comfort for many that between 1995 and 2001 the increase in the average pension (185%) has outpaced the rise in inflation (144%) and the rise in average gross wages (178%). Latvia places last among the three Baltic countries regarding average salaries paid in 2002. That year the average monthly salary in Estonia was 368 USD, compared to 321 USD in Lithuania and only 288 USD in Latvia.

The **Report's** findings indicate that the government has several formidable tasks at hand in the coming decade. The first is to guarantee a sufficient income for those without employment opportunities, such as pensioners. The second is to pursue active

labour market policies and support the evolution of the knowledge economy. The third challenge regards aligning fiscal budget revenues by enhancing tax compliance (including the reduction of “envelope payments”) and by creating an equitable tax burden. A fourth challenge, on the fiscal budget expenditure side, is to make public expenditure more effective and ensure that it reaches the intended beneficiaries.

Some of these problems are already being addressed by the government. At the end of 2002 the minimum wage was increased from 60 to 70 lats a month, and the government is planning on increasing it further to 80 lats as of January 2004. The Ministry of Welfare has prepared proposals to further increase the minimum wage over the next five years so that it reaches 50% of the average wage in the economy. However, more efforts will be required to improve the tax collection system and create incentives for both employees and employers to pay taxes. The full operation of the new three-tiered pension system will mitigate the problem of small pensions in the longer term. In the short term, the State will have to implement measures to reduce a growing sense of injustice among those with the small-

est pensions. Some options include indexing these pensions or providing supplementary grants to those whose pensions are under a certain level.

## Health security

According to a survey conducted by the Ministry of Welfare in 1998, 41% of respondents in Latvia rated their health as “good” or “fairly good” (by comparison, the response in the Nordic countries between 1994 and 1996 was 70 to 80%). In a similar survey conducted in 2000, practically nothing had changed. The proportion of respondents in Latvia who rated their health as “good” or “fairly good” rose by only 1% to 42%. Latvia’s health ratings were among the lowest in Europe, especially regarding life expectancy, which for men in 1999 was only 62.2 years. (See Chapter 2 for more details on the health situation in Latvia.)

Latvia has approved several documents, which form the basis of its health care system reform. State policy is concentrated in three main directions: health

### Box 6.5

#### Total GDP expenditures for health care in 2001 – international comparison (%)

Latvia	4.8		
Estonia	6.1	Czech Republic	7.3
Ireland	6.1	Sweden	7.9
Luxembourg	6.1	Netherlands	8.1
Lithuania	6.2	Denmark	8.2
Slovakia	6.5	Belgium	8.8
Finland	6.8	France	9.4
United Kingdom	6.9	Switzerland	10.4
Spain	7	Germany	10.5

*World Health Organization, 2002*

care financing reform, which includes increasing the overall funding level; the establishment of an effective network of health care service providers; and the promotion of public health.

One of the main problems lies in finding sufficient funding for adequately financing Latvia's health care system. The reforms seek to create a stable, predictable and rational system of health care financing that is based on the principle of solidarity. Currently the State does not provide equal access to health care services. Poor and low-income individuals find it difficult to access State-guaranteed health care services because they either cannot afford the mandatory patient fee or prescription drugs, or lack the means to travel to a health care facility. According to World Health Organization statistics, 4.8 percent of Latvia's GDP was spent on health care in the year 2001, of which 70%, or 3.4 percent of the GDP, was covered by the State.

Currently Latvia spends 174 USD per capita (private and public) on health care needs. Other transition countries perform substantially better. Lithuania spends 185 USD (72.4% of which is covered by the State), Slovakia 210 USD (89.6% by the State), Estonia 218 (76.7% by the State), Poland 246 USD (69.7% by the State), and the Czech Republic 358 USD (91.4% by the State).

The objective of the government at the time this **Report** was written was to increase State spending on health care to 7 percent of the GDP. Under this system, every individual would be granted certain health care services that would be paid for either by the inhabitants themselves (through taxes) or by the State (for those not working). The system would also allow for increased investment in health care facilities and would ensure that those employed in the health care sector are adequately remunerated for their work.

In the long-term context of human security, and irrespective of the amount of public spending for health care, the State must ensure a system based on the principle of solidarity, in which those with the least ability to pay receive proportionately more State support (the principle that the rich pay for the poor and the healthy for the ill). In the short term, the State must ensure that the rules of the health care system are clear, that patients understand their rights and obligations, and that they know what State-funded services are available to them.

The development of an effective network of health care service providers should serve to guarantee accessible and cost-effective health care services close to

people's homes. Plans to address primary health care include reducing family physicians' financial interest in restricting patients' access to diagnostic examinations and consultations with more qualified specialists. Secondary health care is to be addressed by improving the cost-effectiveness of the health care service provider network.

The ultimate goal of increasing State financing for public health care services is to achieve an improved level of health for Latvia's inhabitants as soon as possible. Public awareness must also be increased and people's motivation to improve their health must be stimulated. This process requires support from many different sectors, which is why the Health Care Strategy approved by the Cabinet of Ministers in March 2002 lists twenty different action areas (too many to be covered in detail in this Report).

### *The spread of HIV/AIDS and drugs*

Public concern about the rapid spread of HIV/AIDS and narcotics in Latvia is understandable. In the **Survey** conducted for this **Report**, the prospect of increased drug use is rated as the number one general threat, while the spread of HIV/AIDS is rated third. The increase in drug use is of highest concern to individuals under the age of 30, women, and ethnic Latvians, as indicated by answers provided in the open-ended section of the **Survey**.

The high degree of concern expressed may partly be due to the increased attention these issues have recently received in the media, and to the objective increase in scope of this problem.

Many factors influence the spread of drugs and HIV/AIDS, which is why a multi-sector approach is needed to address them. Latvia has developed several policies to deal with these issues, including the *Concept for the Strategy to Restrict the Spread of Human Immune Deficiency Virus (HIV) and AIDS (1999-2000)*, the *State Family Policy*, the *Health Promotion Strategy*, and the *Action Plan for a National Drug Control and Prevention Strategy*. Most of these strategies have yet to be implemented.

The State must actively promote AIDS awareness through information campaigns to educate the public. These need to be complemented by harm-reduction programmes and by measures to support those living with AIDS. Latvia has been performing well in regard to the treatment of the HIV virus. The services provided by the State meet international standards and are well



financed. However, Latvia still needs to develop a strategy for HIV carriers who will require comprehensive treatment once they develop the full symptoms of AIDS.

## Community security and family policy

In accordance with the results of the **Survey** conducted for this **Report**, the family has the greatest effect in promoting a sense of security for the individual, and in strengthening local communities. However, according to the Ministry of Welfare, the situation for families has deteriorated over the past ten years. This trend is best illustrated by the high ratio of deaths to births, the economic stratification of society, increased alcoholism and drug use, high divorce rates, a greater number of children raised by only one parent and the increase in the number of orphans and children housed in orphanages. These trends can in large part be attributed to prevailing socio-economic conditions, which are expected to get better. Nevertheless, improved macroeconomic conditions and a rise in family income are in themselves insufficient to improve the situation.

Various surveys reveal that more than 70 percent of families regard financial support for families with children as the most important type of State support. However, the role of the State in promoting strong, healthy families must extend beyond financial support, which in any case is limited by the lack of State budget resources. In May 2002, Latvia approved the main principles of its *State Family Policy*. Its main tenet is that the State must create favourable conditions for families to be able to take care of themselves.

The main areas of action outlined in the *State Family Policy* include:

- Support to families when one or both parents are unemployed;
- Employment support upon return from maternity/paternity leave;
- Promotion and development of a “family friendly” environment: parks and recreation, public services, etc.;
- Housing support to families. Of prime importance in this regard is the *Housing Development Loan Programme* approved in September 2002. It is designed to increase the proportion of affordable housing (up to 20,000 lats) among the housing available;
- Increasing access to quality health care services for pregnant women and for children;

- Increasing access to family planning services;
- Promoting family values in school curricula;
- Support to informal self-help networks;
- Support for families in crisis.

One positive development in government policy towards supporting families and children can be seen in the establishment of a new ministerial post – the Ministry of Children’s and Family Affairs, in the Autumn of 2002 and its work on a new, more detailed, *State Family Policy*.

The ministry’s objective is threefold: to decrease the number of children in orphanages by promoting other types of care (e.g. family care); to reverse Latvia’s population decline by increasing and diversifying the number and types of support received by families with children; to change Latvia’s legislation and developing policy instruments to improve the security of children and prevent abuse.

For now, this well-articulated and important expression of intent (like other government policy papers in this area) remains just that. Whether its ideas and planned activities are implemented in practice remains to be seen.

## Personal security

Statistically, every member of society is vulnerable to such personal security threats as crime, although some social groups are far more exposed to this risk than others. While statistics in all three Baltic countries indicate a rise in crime, this rise has been lowest in Latvia. (See Chapter 2 for a general overview of personal security statistics in Latvia).

“Organized crime at the State level” was the number two threat cited by **Survey** respondents from a list of general risks given to them to evaluate. The wide debates on “State capture” and corruption during the parliamentary election campaign of 2002, when the **Survey** was conducted, may have heightened respondents’ concern for this potential risk. The broad sense in which “organized crime at the State level” may be understood includes both State-level corruption (including “State capture”), crimes committed in organized groups and crimes with international dimensions such as smuggling, prostitution rings, drug trafficking, etc. The **Survey** authors did not ask each respondent exactly how he or she perceived this risk.



The heightened public concern about corruption has given rise to the Bureau for the Prevention and Fight Against Corruption, which reports to the Prime Minister. However, to improve the chances of success in solving criminal cases and preventing new crimes, including cases of corruption, it is important to consolidate and improve the effectiveness of all existing State institutions in this area. The past performance of these institutions must also be evaluated. The government might consider the creation of smaller, yet stronger institutions with clearer roles and responsibilities and a mechanism to attract and retain highly qualified staff. One of the greatest challenges in fighting organized crime and corruption will be for Latvia's existing anti-corruption and law enforcement institutions to demonstrate their political neutrality and effectiveness.

Although Latvia has established a national strategy for combating corruption, it does not have one for combating organized crime. The fight against crime is expensive and requires significant resources. Some efforts have been made in this regard, including an increase in police pay by 20 to 50 lats per month.

The police are an important part of any efforts to foster greater trust between the State and the individual in the pursuit of greater personal security (see Box 6.6).

Emergencies are among the most visible cases when State institutions and individuals must cooperate to protect people's personal security from being undermined. Most emergencies are relatively small-scale incidents, such as the fires that engulfed the Cesvaine Castle and the Kandava Retirement Home in late 2002. How does the State deal with such emergencies, and does it have a well-developed system for doing so?

The State is nominally prepared to deal with such natural or man-made disasters as floods, large fires and chemical spills. The necessary contingency plans and standard operating procedures have been developed, and the institutional responsibility has been clearly divided among the National Fire and Rescue Service, the State Police, the National Armed Forces, and the National Emergency Medical Centre. Other State institutions may also be called in, depending on

## Box 6.6

*Senior Inspector of the Department of Crime Prevention, Ministry of Interior*

**Alla Maceiko**

### **The State Police of Latvia and its work to enhance children's sense of security**

The new programme Police Days in Latvia's schools aims to change existing stereotypes, so that children will no longer be afraid of the police. Sometimes parents threaten their children with the prospect of the police coming and taking them away. We want children to turn to the police when they need help, and not be afraid of us.

The Police Days have been running for three years and cover approximately 90% of all schools in Latvia. The schools outside of Riga and in the countryside are said to be the most responsive, while the "elitist" Riga schools sometimes are more reluctant to become engaged. Various police departments are involved in the programme, particularly police inspectors who work with minors. Sometimes police dogs are also brought along. The youngest children are taught about traffic safety. Older children are engaged in discussions about such current issues as violence, abuse and the spread of narcotics at school. Police from the personnel department visit senior classes and explain police work as a profession, as well as the career opportunities available.

Police officers sometimes compete against students or teachers in volleyball, football, and basketball games. Art and essay contests are held for younger children. The response has been positive. We play with the children, so that they will understand that police officers are like other ordinary people. So that they will come and discuss their problems with us, and ask for our help and protection.

*UNDP Latvia, 2003*

the emergency. For example, in cases where an outbreak of food poisoning occurs, or where such a possibility arises, the key institution is the Food and Veterinary Service. In cases of environmental pollution, cleanup efforts are coordinated together with institutions under the Ministry of Environment.

The National Emergency Management Centre is an institution that constantly monitors the situation throughout the country and provides the government with the necessary information and decision-making mechanisms in times of emergency. See Box 6.7 about the preparedness of the State for such situations.

The police, medical personnel, and firefighters provide the most immediate and primary assistance, but in many cases the emergency does not end there. The State should provide a comprehensive package of services to people that would help them overcome trauma following emergency situations. However, that is no longer an issue of crisis management – it is an issue of public policy.

## Risk management through international organizations

Global and international regional organizations can be a source of security for individuals in Latvia. Directly or indirectly, these organizations give people the opportunity to develop associations with others internationally. They open up new avenues for strengthening one's identity by allowing for the recognition of commonalities and differences among people and nations. Working together with others in international organizations increases one's understanding of the true intentions of other countries and people, and decreases suspicion of the foreign and unfamiliar. Identification with a larger community helps individuals to recognize their interconnections with people living in other countries.

International organizations enhance security because they can deter parties with conflicting interests from unfriendly courses of action. Their material, intellectual, and financial resources are mobilized

### Box 6.7

**Modris Stašuls**  
*Director of the National Emergency Management Centre*

### Emergency management

It is essential for the State to identify risks in a timely manner, and to take action to prevent risk situations from becoming emergencies. Most major accidents or emergencies, such as the Cesvaine Castle fire, happen without warning. However, there are also emergencies that can be predicted and avoided by simply following elementary safety precautions. Emergency management, by its very nature, resembles a surgical intervention – it's a scalpel to be used only in situations when regular therapy is useless. Identifying risks in advance and informing society can often prevent major emergencies.

The role of emergency management is not to compensate for acts of negligence, policy failures, or a lack of funding for the implementation of safety precautions. The Cesvaine Castle fire is a perfect example of a situation in which one of the most important State institutions, [the State Firefighter and Rescue Service – ed.] was forced to respond belatedly and with obsolete equipment due to limited funding.

Ultimately, one can train in advance for a variety of responses to emergencies and major accidents. However, one can never prevent all fires, floods and other catastrophes from occurring. An oil tanker like the one that sank off the coast of Spain could just as well have spilled oil near the port of Ventspils. It is difficult to estimate the consequences of such a catastrophe on our country's development. This is why it is so important to invest in preventive action, and to inform and involve the public. Many State institutions held in low regard by the public are indeed capable of providing quality assistance. At the same time, we have to ensure that these institutions are adequately equipped and prepared, so that in an emergency response we are not hindered by obsolete equipment or a lack of funding.

*UNDP Latvia, 2003*

instead for the accomplishment of common goals. International organizations can also serve as instruments for implementing national interests. They can also decrease people's feelings of insecurity by generating a sense that one is not alone in the world, that enemies will not attack unexpectedly and that people can work together against common threats.

The results obtained by the **Survey** indicate that people in Latvia are concerned about global and regional issues, but are not always confident in international institutions as sources of security. **Survey** respondents mentioned many international factors when asked to list the top three issues that cause them the most concern: terrorism, war, HIV/AIDS, the loss of Latvia's independence, an influx of refugees into Latvia, global warming, nuclear threats, threats from Russia, the EU, NATO, famine, the influence of large foreign institutions on Latvia's government, germ warfare, the loss of human rights.

Many people in Latvia are not sufficiently aware of what international organizations have to offer for enhancing human security. International organizations ranked near the bottom of a **Survey** list of 26 potential sources of security. The UN ranked 21<sup>st</sup>, NATO 22<sup>nd</sup> and the EU 24<sup>th</sup>.

People in Latvia, just as in other transition countries, often do not have sufficient experience in identifying and utilizing global and regional resources to increase their security. One positive aspect is that as old systems are replaced by new ones, individuals and their diverse interests are influencing politics more than before. Rapid development is creating the impression of Latvia's increasing inclusion in global networks. This process, however, simultaneously makes people feel more vulnerable to external threats. Their sense of vulnerability hinders their ability to distinguish between consumers and creators of security, and between threats and tools that increase security.

For the individual, risk management at the global and regional levels seems remote and inaccessible. How can people whose daily lives are spent in small villages or towns and in relationships with a limited number of other people, develop relationships and communication networks with global and regional structures? Traditionally individuals have mandated the government and its structures to form relationships with the international environment. On occasion nationally and internationally based NGOs have taken on the role of the mediator in developing such relationships.

The development of the individual's relationships with regional and international organizations is dependent on several factors.

- *First*, on the individual's own *securitability factors*, which include an active interest in global and regional processes, sufficient financial resources to consider reflection on global issues, the ability to make use of social networks and government mechanisms, the ability to assess prevailing threats and find ways of reducing or even preventing them through action ranging from individual initiatives to activities with international organizations. The better one's *securitability factors* are developed, the likelier one is to develop relationships with regional and global organizations to resolve human security issues.
- *Second*, on the rules created by the State for its relationships with individuals and international organizations. If the State maintains only a formal presence in international organizations and does not invest sufficiently to take full advantage of available opportunities, then individuals, social structures, and the nation itself can become alienated from the world community. The government must act as a service provider and advocate for its people in creating relationships with regional and global institutions to help its people orient themselves in the range of services offered by world political structures.
- *Third*, on the financial and other resources available to international organizations and on their ability to elucidate their goals in an understandable manner. The more clearly global and regional organizations formulate the reasons for their existence, the easier it is for individuals and societies to act within them and support them.

## Areas of insecurity concerning the EU

Latvia's upcoming membership in the European Union will have a wide range of implications for human security in the country. The European Union was founded with two objectives: to ensure that Germany would never threaten her European neighbours again, and to rebuild the war-torn Western European economies. The instrument put forth by the heads of European nations in the 1950s was simple – a framework that would help develop friendly relations

though increased cooperation and to resolve potential conflicts in a peaceful manner. The European Union of today is the result of long-standing democratic cooperation that balances the rights of the individual with the needs of a just and equitable society.

The European Union’s requirements in such areas of current concern to the people of Latvia as food quality and environmental protection, its policy decisions concerning the preservation of rural lifestyles, the credits it offers for small and medium sized enterprises, etc. should ultimately serve to increase the level of human security in Latvia.

However, the **Survey** shows that people in Latvia have mixed attitudes concerning the EU’s role in ensuring human security, seeing it both as a threat to and a source of security. Those surveyed in September 2002 ranked the European Union 24<sup>th</sup> out of 26 security-enhancing factors, below the UN, NATO and the government. Somewhat less than one-fifth (17.4%) felt that the EU decreases their sense of security, 43.3% were not influenced by the EU, 23.3% saw the EU as advancing their security, while 2.3% saw it as greatly enhancing their security.

Results of the European Commission’s multi-country, qualitative *EU Accession Opinion Survey* in 2001 revealed a series of weaknesses in people’s *security factors* and *security skills*. The study concluded that many of those interviewed had no basic knowledge about the history of post-war Europe and about the circumstances that led to the founding of

what is now the EU. The stereotype of an abstract EU hindered respondents from seeing the Union as a form of cooperation between 15 member states that coordinate their interests to maximize benefits.

Participants of the study in Latvia did not mention the EU’s potential in preventing organized crime, the proliferation of narcotics, war or other forms of conflict. Rather than addressing policy issues, they verbalized such defensive stereotypes as “the EU will swallow us.” Respondents in Latvia were the only ones in the multi-country survey not to mention opportunities provided by the EU in education and culture, or the potential benefits of the EU in consumer protection and in the improvement of Latvia’s health care system.

To gain a more complete understanding about the risks perceived by the people of Latvia in connection with EU membership, the **Survey** included questions that had been asked in the European Commission’s Autumn 2002 study of *Attitudes Toward the EU. Arguments For and Against* (see Box 6.8).

Perceived risks as stated in the **Survey**:

*Foreign producers forcing local producers out of the Latvian market.* Respondents ranked this risk as 14<sup>th</sup> of 31 general risks (average security coefficient – 2.92). (See Box 2.3 in Chapter 2.) The vast majority of those surveyed (87.4%) were sceptical about their ability to overcome market pressures from foreign producers, with only 8.5% expressing an optimistic view in this regard. This reflects a widespread fear of competition

Box 6.8

Attitudes toward the EU in Latvia

Perceived opportunities	Perceived risks
New jobs and educational opportunities	Collapse of the agricultural sector
Improvements in the economy	Application of inhibiting EU standards
Reduction in the level of corruption	Fear of job loss and loss of control of enterprises resulting from the influx of foreign capital
Possibility to safeguard one’s national identity	Influx of migrant workers
Improvements in one’s socio-economic situation	Loss of national identity tied to decreased use of the Latvian language

*Attitudes Toward the EU*, European Commission, 2002

from Latvia's neighbouring countries. The positive side of competition is that it can serve to stimulate modernization and improvements in production. It does not necessarily mean that local products will be considered as inferior, and provides new opportunities for local producers to sell their products abroad. Competition can result in lower prices for consumers, higher quality products and greater choice, as long as there is a functioning competition policy that works against unfair competition, the abuse of market power, collusion and dumping.

*Foreigners buying up land in Latvia* (15<sup>th</sup> place, average security coefficient – 2.87). As Latvia's agricultural sector experiences restructuring, one of the arguments against EU membership concerns the low income levels of people working and living in rural areas. This lack of income is preventing them from increasing their land holdings to expand production. The fear that foreigners will move in and buy up land is also connected with Latvians' attachment to the rural milieu and lifestyle, which they see as an integral part of their culture and national identity. Those under age 29 were relatively less concerned, with this fear placing only 18<sup>th</sup> in rank, compared to 15<sup>th</sup> for the others.

*Threats to the survival of one's own language and culture* (21<sup>st</sup> place, average security coefficient – 2.66). Over half of the **Survey's** respondents (57.2%) expressed fears concerning the survival of Latvia's national identity. The concerns have also been expressed in other analyses. Although this question seems just about equally important to all of those surveyed, it placed slightly higher on the scale of threats amongst those under 29 years of age. This may appear somewhat surprising, in view of the widespread perception that younger people are more open to the surrounding world and perceive greater advantages in contacts with other cultures and traditions. Only 44.2% of respondents believed that they could promote the preservation of their language and culture on their own or together with others, while 48.9% felt that they could not.

*Partial loss of Latvia's sovereignty* (27<sup>th</sup> place, average security coefficient – 2.40). This EU-linked threat is perceived unevenly and saw the greatest divergence in answers. Latvian-speakers place the loss of sovereignty in 24<sup>th</sup> place, whereas Russian-speakers rank it 30<sup>th</sup>. Responses were similarly divided between citizens (26<sup>th</sup> place) and non-citizens (30<sup>th</sup> place).

The above-mentioned risks are ranked low in the **Survey**. The respondents' greatest concerns were of an economic nature and linked to access to the basic

necessities of life. The results of the **Survey** and other studies reveal that perceptions of the EU as a source of insecurity are due in part to weaknesses in respondents' *securitability factors* and skills.

The widening economic and information gap between the wealthy and the poor in Latvia contributes to feelings of insecurity with respect to the unfamiliar and the unknown among those with low incomes. Wealthier individuals see the opportunities offered by the EU and may already be benefiting from some of them, while the poorer social segments tend to view the EU as a potential source of insecurity that may exacerbate their state of poverty. Most people in the lower income brackets who participated in the previously mentioned study *Attitudes toward the EU* by the European Commission had not heard that the EU supports various projects in Latvia. They were unaware that since 1992 the EU has provided Latvia with approximately 300 million euros worth of assistance.

Residents of the EU member States have benefited directly from EU activities that increase peoples' safety and security, which is why their view of EU policies is generally more favourable than that of Latvian residents. The top five EU priorities mentioned by EU residents are directly concerned with human security and perceptions of security – combating unemployment (90%), maintaining peace and security in Europe (89%), fighting against organized crime and drug trafficking (88%), combating poverty and social alienation (87%), and maintaining a clean environment (83%).

One of the main *securitability factors* for individuals is the ability to view a potential situation as an opportunity rather than a threat. The study *Attitudes toward the EU* showed that people in Latvia focused more on the threats than on the opportunities resulting from Latvia's accession to the EU. Each of the risk statements in Box 6.9 reflects not only an aspect of threat, but also the potential to use the tools offered by EU membership.

The degree to which people's lack of knowledge concerning EU issues is overcome will depend upon their desire and skill in accessing information, and on the ability of institutions working with issues of EU membership to address people's principal concerns revealed by the EU attitude study.

A serious communication gap has developed in the country. Latvia began to take purposeful steps towards EU accession during 1994/1995, several years later than the Central European countries. Latvia's progress



Box 6.9

EU accession: examples of risks and opportunities

Area	Risk	Opportunity
Economy	Latvian products could lose their market share in more competitive circumstances	Competition offers new opportunities to local producers in the EU market
Currency	The introduction of the Euro would entail a partial loss of Latvia's national identity	The Euro will make travel easier and reduce the costs associated with currency exchange
Agriculture	Latvian farmers could lose their livelihood	The EU offers support programmes for agricultural production and rural development to farmers and people living in rural areas

UNDP Latvia, 2003

proceeded at a very rapid pace, as evidenced by the fact that Latvia's accession talks ended at the same time as those of the other applicant countries, despite having begun two years later. In their efforts to ensure that Latvia caught up with the other applicant countries, Latvia's successive governments engaged in the EU accession process without involving the public in any extensive dialogue and without offering sufficiently accessible explanations about the necessity, logic or consequences of this complicated endeavour.

Due to the fact that the Latvian public had not been involved in the country's integration processes from the outset, people formed stereotypical views of the EU, which were based less on knowledge than on emotions. The public was introduced to EU issues in greater detail during the late 1990s, but has had difficulty in reconciling this information with existing biases. As a result, the government's belated but well-intentioned communications policy may prove less successful than hoped because it is based primarily on providing information and not on countering stereotypes.

The government's communications strategy during the last two years has been largely limited to highlighting Latvia's accession process, rather than the broader context of integration into a common Europe. Consequently, some people in Latvia still fail to perceive Europe as an open area for interaction and self-enrichment. Instead, they see the EU as a threat to their identity and security.

The aforementioned communications gap with the public about Latvia's future in the EU is exacerbated by the general lack of trust in the government. This low level of trust in State institutions and politicians is also reflected in people's attitudes towards the EU. The fact that politicians have been the most energetic in promoting Latvia's accession drive has generated a degree of scepticism about its true merits among some people.

Despite the critical and sceptical views expressed about the EU, 67% of those participating in the September 17th, 2003 referendum expressed support for Latvia's membership in the EU. While at present the EU is often perceived as a risk, it is nevertheless widely seen to be a guarantor of security for the future.

## The relevance of human security in public policy

The government could consider integrating the concept of human security into its policy-making in order to enhance human development in Latvia. The concept of human security could serve as a prism through which public policy issues can be analysed. Policy makers can use the concept of human security as an analytical tool not only to understand the motivation behind people's actions, but also to improve their living conditions.



For example, an analysis of people's fears and risk perceptions might provide a better understanding of why some individuals feel helpless, turn to crime or resort to suicide. Such an analysis might also help to formulate the required policy intervention for successfully dealing with people's insecurity. A good example of the use of human security as a policy analysis tool for understanding criminal behaviour can be found in the case of the Latvian Probation Service (see Box 6.10).

The findings of this **Report** are a first step in exploring the use of the concept of human security as a policy tool. Subsequent discussions are needed among policy makers on the practical application of the use of the concept of human security in the policy planning process. For example, an evaluation of the human security costs for vulnerable groups could be a mandatory component of social impact assessments; communications policies about such key issues as health, increasing the competitiveness of the work force, traffic safety, trust in the police, etc. could be aimed at providing information for individuals with a low degree of *securitability*. Human security concerns should be taken into account

when developing emergency procedures, and ought to be considered when planning budget priorities, etc.

Although decisions concerning the application of the human security concept can be made case by case, a more systematic approach to the utilization of this policy instrument would increase the likelihood that the government efforts in strengthen the *securitability* of it's people would yield results, paving the way for improved human development.

## Summary

This **Report** does not aim to provide concrete recommendations to the government in specific policy areas such as employment and social policy, as that would be outside of the **Report's** scope and focus. Ultimately, however, the State can influence human security in two ways. At the macro level, the government should maintain its prudent monetary and fiscal policies to ensure stable macro-economic growth, keep prices stable and ensure that banking deposits are safe.

### Box 6.10

#### The new probation system: using the concept of human security in designing policy intervention strategies

At the macro level, the overall level of crime in Latvia is not significantly higher than in neighbouring countries. However, the actual number of crimes committed is rising each year. Latvia's prisons house approximately 8800 inmates, with a huge social, health and economic cost to the detained and to their families, as well as to the State (around 11.6 million lats per year).

At the micro level of the individual, crime is a complex phenomenon brought on by a myriad of factors, which can largely be attributed to the perpetrator's level of insecurity. Latvia's high rate of recidivism, for example, has a great deal to do with the situation in which former inmates find themselves after leaving prison. Each year about 2500 persons are released from incarceration. Often they have no home to return to, have no identification documents, and cannot find work or other legal means to sustain themselves. During their incarceration, which on average lasts 4.5 years, these persons' social skills often deteriorate and they lose contact with their family and friends. Frequently they suffer from health problems after contracting TB, HIV/AIDS or other communicable diseases while in prison. Finding themselves in such positions of insecurity, many again resort to crime and return to prison, where they find greater "security" than in society at large.

To address this situation, the government is in the process of establishing a State Probation Service, and the draft *Law on the State Probation Service* is undergoing a second reading in the Saeima (parliament). The mission of this probation service is to provide those released from prison with the necessary assistance for their re-integration into society, thus serving as a preventative measure to curb future crimes.

UNDP Latvia, 2003

The government should also make its budget spending more effective to attain the priorities it has set for the provision of health, education and other dimensions in which human security is at risk. At the *micro* level, the government must continue to search for ways to help individuals deal with specific situations of insecurity – illness, crime, unemployment, etc.

Human security cannot be obtained without the investment of resources. In the context of Latvia's EU accession, a balance between growing expenditure pressures and requirements for sound fiscal management will have to be found in the years to come. An informative and transparent budget process that achieves maximum expenditure efficiency is important.

It is also incumbent upon the State to help people increase their own level of security. This **Report** offers a range of ideas on how this could be done through the use of *securitability factors*. Some of these ideas have direct relevance to State policies regarding education (such as curriculum reform), health, the family, and other important issues.

The capacity of the State to respond to security threats is influenced by the degree and quality of citizens' participation in and access to decision-making processes. More effective consultations provide *ex ante* and *ex post* feedback to policy makers, parliamentarians and politicians about the potential impact of their decisions. The practice of effective consultations has experienced a promising start in many State institutions and needs strengthening.

An analysis of public policy confirms that individuals cannot simply be passive recipients of government assistance. As the case of personal, physical security has shown, law enforcement institutions – no matter how improved – cannot perform their duty to the fullest extent if the public does not trust them or fails to report crimes or perceived threats. Mutual cooperation is the key, with the public placing more trust in State institutions, and with these institutions working hard to justify that trust.

The State and its institutions are an important *securitability factor* and a source of support that an individual may turn to when he or she feels at risk. In those instances where the State does offer assistance, it should provide accessible information about the services it provides, and make it easy for the individual to access these services.

Finally, this **Report** has introduced the concepts of security realms and *securitability*. Both can be used as tools in the formulation of public policy. While there is no need to establish a comprehensive human security policy at the government level, human security can serve as a useful analytical concept for use in policy analysis and design.

In order for the people of Latvia to prevent, mitigate and cope with global and international regional threats, they must be aware of the resources they have at hand to address global risks. The State must ensure that the individual supports government initiatives at the global and regional level. It must participate in international organizations by taking full advantage of the opportunities they offer, and position itself as a manager of global public goods for the inhabitants of Latvia.

The government should also improve its public communications strategy to avoid situations in which the inhabitants are not informed about the costs and benefits of government action on their behalf both domestically and in international organizations, and are unwilling to support the government's decisions financially or at the ballot box.

Individuals and society can improve their security on their own only to a limited extent. Many, especially those close to the *securitability* threshold, require the assistance of policy makers. Focussed activities on improving *securitability* will reduce the polarization of society, promote individual initiative, unleash the benefits of social capital and improve trust in the government, leading to flourishing human development.

# Conclusions and Recommendations

The **Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003** centres around the theme of human security in Latvia.

The preceding Chapters of this **Report** have illustrated that the *securitability factors* of a great many individuals need to be strengthened in order to increase the capability of the people of Latvia to deal with perceived threats and potential risks that impinge on their human security. The **Report** has identified five *securitability factors*: four of which refer to “actors” – (extending from individuals to their closest relations, to larger networks and finally to the government and international organizations) – as well as one that is overarching: the need for economic security. The five *securitability factors* (SF) have been identified as follows:

## **Securitability factor 1: Individual characteristics**

- Life satisfaction
- Confidence in one's ability to effect change/Initiative
- Self-esteem
- Health
- Religious faith
- Sense of belonging to a group or community

## **Securitability factor 2: Positive close relations**

**Securitability factor 3: Economic security** (predictable, sufficient income)

**Securitability factor 4: Ability to network** (informal and formal)

**Securitability factor 5: Ability to trust in and cooperate with government and international organizations**

People with a high degree of *securitability* are able to develop effective **security strategies**, which help them to evaluate perceived threats to their security, assess the extent of their available resources for dealing with these threats, and take appropriate action. To do so, they need **security skills**, which they acquire through the process of learning.

Among the most important are:

- the ability to perceive warning signals;
- the ability to access information about a problematic issue;
- the ability to systematize this information;
- the ability to develop scenarios for action;
- the ability to take action;
- the ability to interact constructively with other people.

Individual action alone is not always sufficient or effective in addressing security issues. Cooperation in **security constellations** with others at the community, State and international levels often leads to action that can better improve security. This entails coordinated activities, in which each actor is aware of his or her role and relies on the others to do their part.

*Securitability factors*, strategies and skills must be nurtured in everyone, but especially among **those most at risk** of suffering from the consequences of extreme anxiety and insecurity. These include individuals with a combination of the following attributes:

- have irregular or no employment;
- live below the subsistence level;
- are in poor health;
- have suffered a grievous loss;
- live in the low-income region of Latgale;
- suffer or have suffered from abuse;
- are women;
- are distrustful of others;
- are generally dissatisfied with life.

**Children** are a special group whose needs must be addressed, since the strengthening of their *securitability* would have a compounding effect on strengthening the *securitability* of future generations.

## Areas of concern

The findings of the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security** suggest that there have been at least five major **areas of concern** regarding human security in Latvia in 2002/2003.

These relate to the:

- overarching issue of economic security, notably predictable and sufficient income;
- access and affordability of quality health care;
- proliferation of narcotics;
- spread of HIV/AIDS;
- consequences of organized crime.

The **Survey's** results are to a certain degree situational. They may mirror concerns voiced by political parties at the time of the **Survey**, which took place immediately prior to the parliamentary elections of October 2002. The results do not reflect changes in the intensity of concern about issues that have gained prominence since the **Survey** was held, such as the global spread of SARS, recent wars and terrorist attacks. However, the **Survey's** results do coincide with other analyses. The authors therefore are convinced that its findings reflect current human security perceptions in Latvia quite comprehensively. Most importantly, the **Survey's** results confirm that human security is indeed an issue.

Strategies to diminish human insecurity in the areas of concern identified above should aim to:

- Promote economic security and reduce income disparities;
- Increase the competitiveness of the people of Latvia in this age of globalization by orienting the education system to foster a knowledge economy, entrepreneurship, and income-generating activities;
- Provide accessible, affordable and quality health care in a system in which the rules are transparent and understandable, while encouraging a healthy lifestyle;
- Implement coordinated and comprehensive actions to reduce and control drug proliferation;
- Continue informing the public on HIV/AIDS prevention and harm reduction;
- Considering Latvia's geographical position at the crossroads of Eastern and Western Europe and the potential changes in the region following accession to the EU and NATO – implement a government strategy in cooperation with regional and international organizations and NGOs to address organized crime and its manifestations, which include prostitution rings and the enslavement of human beings, the proliferation and abuse of drugs, the trafficking of arms, and various forms of smuggling and theft.

## Enhancing people's *securitability factors*

This **Report** is unconventional in that it does not provide detailed recommendations in traditional policy areas, such as employment, social and environmental policy. Instead, its recommendations aim to enhance the *securitability factors* identified in the **Survey**, interviews and other studies, so as to give individuals, groups and the government the tools to prevent, mitigate or cope with real and perceived risks, including those identified as being most urgent in 2002/2003.

The following is a preliminary list of suggestions that have been gleaned from some of the **Report's** findings. These have been designed to stimulate public debate and generate new ideas for initiatives by government policy makers, community groups and individuals.

The suggestion list is organised around the *securitability factors* developed in this **Report**. They have been arranged here in order from the broadest (SF 5) to the most specific (SF 1). Given the all-encompassing nature of human security, many of the ideas suggested under specific *securitability factors* overlap and reinforce each other.

### The ability to trust in and cooperate with government and international organizations. *Securitability factor 5*

#### *Promoting human security in the realms mandated to the government*

The government is encouraged to:

- Continue implementing policies that ensure democracy, political development, social cohesion and economic security in the country;
- Sustain and support institutions and initiatives that help individuals with low levels of human security (together with local governments). This includes the access of the lowest-income groups to food and of low-income groups to various forms of social security;
- Continue to promote a stable macro-economic environment, advance those sectors of the economy that contribute to steady growth and job creation, and ensure conditions for the continued dynamism of the economy;
- Facilitate the evolution of the knowledge economy by supporting research and

development, education, and innovative entrepreneurship;

- Stimulate human resource development that promotes the skills people need to be competitive domestically, as well as on an international (regional) and global level;
- Continue its pro-active role in domestic and international initiatives in such areas as the environment (i.e. deforestation, environmental pollution, global warming, nuclear threats) and other issues in which individuals acting alone or together with others cannot achieve the same results.

## Informing the public

The government should:

- Provide easily accessible and understandable information about its political objectives and policies in all areas of human security, about its social security benefits, and about its efforts to address human security issues;
- Provide objective and comprehensive information about both opportunities and perceived risks arising from regional integration and globalization, including concerns voiced about the implications of EU accession;
- Provide its citizens with more comprehensive information about the opportunities offered by international organizations. It should also position itself more visibly as a manager of such global public goods as a sustainable environment, and inform the public about the measures it is taking to combat such global concerns as the spread of disease and international crime.

## Encouraging participative government

The capacity of the government to respond to security threats experienced by individuals is influenced by the degree and quality of citizens' participation in decision-making processes.

The government needs to:

- Enhance trust and confidence in it by encouraging public debate about political issues, promoting the transparency of decision-making and ensuring that corruption is curtailed;
- Ensure the genuine political engagement of the public through more systematic and effective

consultations – by enabling NGOs and individuals to provide *ex ante* and *ex post* feedback to policymakers, parliamentarians and other politicians. The practice of effective consultations that has been initiated in several State institutions must be expanded at the government and local government levels;

- Enhance cooperation between government agencies and the public through outreach. For example, law enforcement institutions would gain the confidence of the public through information campaigns that address peoples' concerns with concrete evidence of their performance.

## The ability to network (informal and formal). *Securability factor 4*

Several things could be done to promote the formation of well-functioning social networks in Latvia:

### Pinpointing network development factors

Local municipalities and the national government could commission studies about the role of networks in solving human security issues at the individual, community and national level. Such studies would generate ideas on fostering the development of networks. To this end, additional information on existing social networks, their activities and success factors would be helpful.

### Fostering the creation of networks

Local governments can create genuine opportunities for people to participate in the development, implementation and evaluation of municipal projects. Successful dialogue between community members and local government officials would give municipalities the opportunity to make the best use of their community resources. Simultaneously, residents would gain the ability to improve their human security.

### Encouraging public support of local networks

Public support (both moral and material) is essential for networks to be effective. This support



can be provided by entrepreneurs, local governments, NGOs and individuals, for example:

- *Local governments* could exhibit a more positive attitude towards network activities through the public acknowledgement of individuals and groups who have contributed to human security; through systematic information about network activities (i.e. in cooperation with the mass media); or even through administrative assistance. Support to community centres would facilitate networking by giving people access to information about NGOs, for example.
- *NGOs* could support the development of social networks by offering information and advice to individuals and groups. This might be on fundraising and project writing skills, or on the enhancement of networking skills through seminars, training programmes and coaching sessions.
- *Entrepreneurs* could provide material and technical support to networks. The government could support such philanthropic activities by offering meaningful tax breaks for those donating to NGOs. Businesses could engage more actively in socially responsible entrepreneurship to encourage human security.

### Economic security – predictable, sufficient income and steady employment. *Securability factor 3*

Economic security is an overarching *securability factor* that spans all the other factors. Some areas for action include:

#### *At the government level*

- The government should:
- Continue to promote investment-driven, non-inflationary macro-economic growth and financial stability;
  - Pursue fiscal policy that increases tax compliance and supports an equitable tax burden, while making public expenditure more effective and ensuring that it reaches the intended beneficiaries;
  - Develop pro-active labour market policies;
  - Promote Latvia's competitiveness among the "knowledge economies" through research, development and education strategies;
  - Continue to provide income support to

vulnerable groups such as the long-term unemployed, pensioners, the long-term ill and large low-income families.

This set of policies could help to reverse the growing income disparities identified as a major contributor to insecurity.

#### *At the community level*

- Municipalities and local organizations such as credit unions, trade unions, and patients' rights organisations can promote formal networks to increase people's economic security;
- Municipalities and local organizations can also stimulate informal networks that provide economic and social assistance to individuals. Examples include child-care sharing or assistance to the elderly by family members and neighbours.

#### *At the individual level*

Individuals need to:

- Invest in a broad-based education and life-long learning that would contribute not only to their careers, but also to Latvia's knowledge economy;
- Develop personal initiative and be pro-active;
- Acquire the necessary skills to be competitive and to see potential opportunity in risks.

### Positive close relationships. *Securability factor 2*

#### *Fostering positive, close relationships*

- The government, formal networks, families and individuals – each in their own way – need to encourage positive intra- and inter-family relationships (including parent-child relationships), positive relationships among adults, and positive teacher-child relationships.
- Governmental family support policies could be more pro-actively implemented and information regarding relevant programmes should be made more accessible to the public.
- Governmental and non-governmental organizations should facilitate and support such training programmes as positive parenting.
- Governmental and non-governmental



organizations should facilitate and support training programmes for teachers to foster positive teacher-child and peer relationships.

## Individual characteristics. *Securitability factor 1*

- Life satisfaction
- Confidence in one's ability to effect change/Initiative
- Self-esteem
- Health
- Religious faith
- Sense of belonging to a group or community

## *Fostering positive physical, mental and spiritual health*

The government, NGOs and individuals should encourage a positive and healthy lifestyle. This includes healthy eating habits, physical exercise and spiritual development. It also includes the early recognition of physical or psychological health problems, as well as their appropriate treatment and remediation.

- Professional groups – psychologists, psychotherapists, social workers, and others – need to provide increased opportunities for children and adults to recognize and appropriately express their thoughts and emotions, and to share their positive and negative experiences with others.
- Individuals could explore opportunities for addressing their spiritual values and needs, and engage in creative or spiritual endeavours.
- The government needs to provide improved access and increased financing to physical and mental health care services.
- The government and NGOs should provide more accessible and better targeted information concerning the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse, raise public awareness about issues of dependency and co-dependency, and provide increased opportunities for the rehabilitation of substance abusers.

## *Enhancing positive self-esteem*

In order to enhance their overall human security, individuals need to recognize and appreciate their

own positive aspects, talents and abilities. Positive self-esteem enables people to take greater responsibility for their lives. It entails the ability to recognize personal problems, seek solutions, and enlist the help of others when necessary.

Governmental and non-governmental organizations should facilitate and support:

- Parent training programmes for the recognition and fostering of children's positive traits, talents and abilities.
- Teacher training programmes for the recognition and fostering of students' positive traits, talents and abilities.

Professional groups – psychologists, psychotherapists, social workers, and others should:

- Provide increased opportunities for adults to participate in individual and group activities that foster the development of positive self-esteem.

## Human Security – priorities for action

In order for the above-mentioned *securitability factors* to take hold in Latvia, the following **priorities** must be implemented:

1. Since individuals and the government each have limited resources on their own, individuals must be encouraged to network in order to upgrade their security and sense of security. People must be made aware of the benefits of networking. They must have the skills that make networks work and they must have support from the government in initiating such networking. Care must be taken to ensure that networking upholds human security, rather than infringes upon it.

2. Child abuse must be addressed immediately and the cycle of physical and emotional abuse in families must be stopped.

3. Individuals and families need stable and predictable incomes, ideally from formal-sector employment, and alternatively through unemployment, welfare, disability, health and other insurance schemes. Government and municipal-level proactive employment policies and schemes, as well as training and retraining opportunities for the unemployed are also needed.

4. Individuals with a passive attitude need to be encouraged through participative measures to address their own areas of insecurity. They must be given access to the appropriate skills and knowledge through traditional and continuing education. People must understand that with increasing globalization, the pace of change will increase. Skill and knowledge enhancement is an ongoing process.

5. The government is the key actor in promoting human security and in encouraging the strengthening of people's *securitability factors*. It must be seen to be working on behalf of those with a high sense of insecurity. This means that it must demonstrate its capacity to function well and show that the trust invested in it is well-earned. The government must explain its actions and establish further avenues of cooperation with the country's inhabitants. Otherwise, it is unlikely that passive persons with high degrees of insecurity will spontaneously network or undertake other activities. Individual or family efforts to address acute human security threats will be destined to fail if they are not supported by proactive government policies.

6. The people of Latvia must be better informed about the government's activities on their behalf in international institutions. This would ensure greater public support for the government's policy positions within these organizations, which at present remain unclear to many people.

As Latvia's level of human development increases, and as the government adjusts its policies to strengthen human security and individuals' *securitability factors*, the proportion of active and secure people in Latvia will increase. As their own basic needs become satisfied, individuals will come to realize their important role in ever widening circles, be it in their neighbourhood or in a wider community, in interest groups or at the national, European and global levels. Eventually, the people of Latvia will come to recognize the extent to which they can contribute to the human security of a shared, global community.

# UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security

## Methodology

The UNDP Latvia commissioned the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002** to gain statistically significant information on those factors that influence people's sense of security in Latvia. The authors also sought to establish which issues are of greatest concern to the population, and to ascertain the most serious consequences of experiencing a heightened sense of insecurity.

### Survey selection of respondents

One thousand permanent residents above the age of 18 were chosen through the stratified random sampling method. The results of the **Survey** accurately reflect the makeup of the adult population according to sex, age, family status, education level, nationality, employment status, degree of satisfaction with income level and stated income level, religious affiliation, type of inhabited area and region. The **Survey's** selection of respondents was determined on the basis of the latest statistical data about the population of Latvia. To select respondents' places of residence, the random rote method was used.

### Time of Survey

September, 2002

### The method

The **Survey** was performed in two parts and was conducted in either Latvian or Russian at the respondents' places of residence. One part was conducted through direct, personal interviews, in which questions were both open and closed-ended. In a separate section, respondents were asked to answer several sets of questions in writing in private. These questions asked about adult and childhood experience of abuse within and outside the family, other stress-producing life experiences, alcohol and narcotics use, and anxiety and depression symptoms.

In the **Survey**, the respondents were asked to indicate their:

1. Degree of satisfaction with life
2. Health status (self-assessment)
3. Level of trust in others
4. Perceived ability to influence their own lives

The respondents were also asked to note:

5. Which of 31 potential threats to their general security they feared most
6. Which of 32 potential threats to their personal security they feared most
7. The most appropriate levels of action for preventing or mitigating 31 potential threats to their general security (i.e. people acting on their own, people acting together with others, government level, international level)
8. Their perception of their ability (on their own or together with others) to prevent or mitigate 31 potential threats to their security
9. The top three issues that caused them the most concern (open questions)
10. The top three factors that increased their sense of security (open questions)
11. \* *Stress-producing events experienced during the past year*
12. *Child-raising methods used by their parents/guardians during their childhood*
13. *The frequency of negative events (from a list of six such events) experienced within the family during the past year*
14. *The frequency of negative events (from a list of six such events) experienced outside of the family during the past year*
15. *The frequency of negative emotions and events (from a list of 24 such emotions and events) experienced during the past six months*
16. *Which of 31 listed tactics they employ to deal with difficulties, and how often*
17. Who they would turn to for assistance in a difficult situation (rank seven listed security providers by order of significance)
18. Which of 17 listed activities they have undertaken during the past year to increase their level of security
19. Which of 15 listed security factors help them most in dealing with difficulties
20. Which of 26 listed factors increase or decrease their sense of security

\* *questions in italics were completed by the respondents in private*

## Correlation of the selection of Survey respondents to population statistics

	Proportion of respondents in Survey (%)	Population statistics (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	46	46
Female	54	54
<b>Age</b>		
18 – 24	12	13
25 – 39	28	29
40 – 54	26	28
55 – 64	17	17
65 – 74	17	13
<b>Nationality</b>		
Latvians	57	58
Non-Latvians	43	42
<b>Region</b>		
Riga	33	32
Vidzeme	23	23
Kurzeme	14	14
Zemgale	15	15
Latgale	15	16
<b>Citizenship</b>		
Citizens	76	77
Non-citizens	24	23

Sections 5, 6, 7 and 8 were derived from the seven realms of security listed in the *Human Development Report 1994*, refined in *Human Security Indices. Methodology* (Vitosha Research, Sofia, 2002) and customized for the environment in Latvia (see Chapter 2, Box 2.1).

Respondents were asked to evaluate their sense of security on a scale from 1 (*not at all afraid*) to 4 (*very afraid*). The responses were then averaged and given a value showing the overall degree of concern, and subsequently cross-referenced according to various categories such as age, level of income, etc.

For the sake of manageability, issues were divided into two broad categories – 31 **general** risks (question: “There are different real and potential situations that cause people to feel insecure. Which of the following are you afraid of and to what extent?”); and 32 risks that could pose a threat to respondents’ **personal** lives (question: “What do you fear in your personal lives and to what extent?”).

The general and personal risk categories are not comparable to a full extent, since certain general risks such as hazardous waste dumps may personally touch the lives of some, but not all individuals; and many of the general risks, such as food poisoning, are not reflected in the personal risk category.

## About the Survey

The sense of security that people experience in Latvia has also been assessed through other research projects, interviews and case studies, as well as the *Attitudes to Various Issues of Integration* survey commissioned by the Ministry of Justice (Marketing and Public Opinion Research Centre, August 2002). The **Latvia Human Development Report 2002/2003** relies on all of the above. Together, these sources build a portrait of how secure people feel in Latvia and have led to the derivation of certain relevant *securitability factors*.

The **Survey** did not include such generalized questions as: “How secure do you feel?” since the generality of such questions is not recommended for research

purposes. Respondents can interpret such questions in many different ways, and the results may thus be imprecise.

The **Survey** was performed by the Latvian Facts (*Latvijas Fakti*) polling service in September 2002, less than a month before parliamentary elections took place. The topics brought up during the election campaign are likely to have influenced the respondents’ perceptions of human security.

## About future Surveys

The global *Human Development Report 1994* proposed the development of an index for the objective measurement of human security similar to that of the Human Development Index (HDI). The Human Development Index, which is published regularly in the Human Development Reports (see Annex), takes into account three measurable dimensions of human development – per capita income, health, and education.

To the authors’ knowledge, no comparable Human Security Index has yet been developed. This is because different countries and cultures interpret risks differently and attribute varying degrees of significance to them. However, researchers around the world are continuing to work toward the development of a Human Security Index.

This **Survey** provided one of very first insights into security in Latvia. It would be useful if a similar survey were to be conducted two years after such significant changes in Latvia’s development as European Union and NATO membership. Additional questions could be added to establish what changes have occurred in people’s *securitability factors*, to explore individual security strategies more in depth, and to gather further data about the cooperative efforts of individuals, networks and the State in addressing human security issues.

For the results and data of the **UNDP Latvia Survey on Human Security 2002** in SPSS format, see <http://www.un.lv>.



## Review of Latvia's Main Human Development Indicators

Human development as a whole is determined by the development of each individual in society. The effectiveness of investments into human development depends upon several factors, including the level of a country's economic development and the state and availability of its social infrastructure. The principal human development indicators concerning Latvia are treated briefly in this Review.

The statistical tables in this **Report** have been prepared in accordance with United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) specifications. The tables reflect the most significant human development indicators in Latvia, including health, education, the environment, and employment. Information from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia (CSB), as well as from various ministries, institutions and international organizations was used in the preparation of this Appendix.

The statistical information that appears in these tables has been obtained, for the most part, in accordance with internationally applied methodologies. Data obtained from sample surveys conducted by the CSB and other institutions has also been used.

In some cases, the information in these tables may differ from that which was published in the Latvia Human Development Report 2000/2001. This is due to the use of new sources of information and to the revision of certain data.

For example, with the transfer to 2000 average prices, the information on Latvia's Gross Domestic Product was revised regarding the period starting from 1995. Consequently, other indicators that are calculated on the basis of the GDP have also changed.

The calculation of some indicators is based on the population census of 2000. The number of inhabitants in Latvia was revised after the results of the census were finalized, and led to changes in another figures.

When possible, data is presented for 2002. If not otherwise noted, data is provided in comparison to the previous year.

The information obtained in the Household Budget Survey for the period from 1996 to 1999 was recalculated in accordance with the standards of the EU Statistics Office. This resulted in changes in some income level indicators.

The data of the Labour Force Survey is used as the primary source of information on employment. All the indicators from 1996 onward have been changed accordingly.

### Gross Domestic Product (GDP)

Latvia's economy has been growing rapidly since 1999, when Latvia recovered from the negative effects of the Russian economic crisis one year earlier. The country's overall economic situation is gradually improving. Notwithstanding the ongoing and sometimes painful processes of economic re-structuring, Latvia's unemployment level is decreasing. Latvia has been experiencing one of the fastest growth rates in Europe during the last few years. The country's economic development has been fuelled by growing domestic and external demand for its goods and services.

Latvia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased by 6.1% in 2002 in comparison to the previous year. The GDP volume in actual prices was 5194.7 million lats, or the equivalent of 2130 lats per capita. Latvia's GDP growth in 2002 was furthered by a 12.7% increase in the country's volume of trade (which made up 19.9% of the total GDP), as well as continued growth in the construction sector (+10.8%, or 6.1% of the GDP), processing industries (+7.2%, or 14.8% of the GDP) and commercial services (+5.7%, or 11.1% of the GDP).

The volume of retail trade (in comparative prices) increased by 18% in 2002. Trade in automobiles, motorcycles and automotive parts grew by 39%. Growth was also recorded in the retail trade of household items, furniture, lighting fixtures and tableware (22%), construction materials (17%), and alcoholic beverages (12%). The volume of wholesale trade (in actual prices) rose by 12% in 2002.



In the processing industries the volume of electrical machinery and equipment produced grew by 24%. Other increases were reported in the production of chemical products (16%), rubber and plastic products (15%), and food and beverages (6%).

In the commercial services sector volumes of trade (in actual prices) grew most strongly in computer services (27%), architecture and architectural drafting services (27%), advertising services (18%), and legal, accountancy and consulting services (14%).

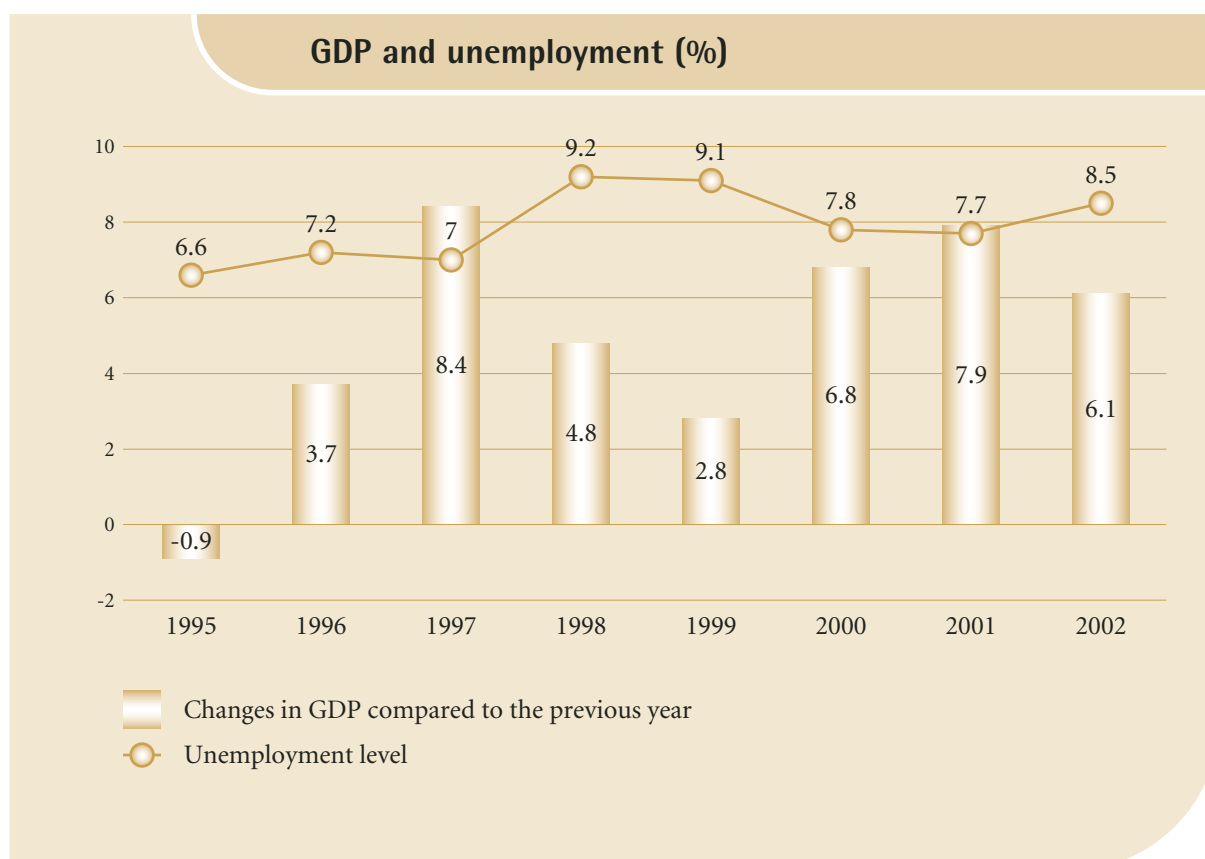
In the construction industry the ratio of construction of new facilities increased by 7%, while reconstruction activities decreased by 1% in comparison to the previous year.

Between 1996 and 2001, Latvia's GDP per capita rose by 40.5%, but is marked by significant regional differences. In Riga and its vicinity the GDP per capita is more than three times higher than in the eastern region of Latgale.

## Distribution of income

The economic growth of the country has been accompanied by an increase of individual income. The average household disposable income increased by 6.9% in 2000 compared to 1999 and reached 69.19 lats per household member per month.

The increase in household disposable income increased more in the cities (by 8.1%) than in the rural areas (by 2.4%). There are also differences among socio-economic groups. Income is significantly higher than average in the households of entrepreneurs and self-employed persons (92.86 lats per household member per month) and lower than average in the households of farmers (46.28 lats) and pensioners (61.29 lats). The level of income is determined not only by the socio-economic group to which household belongs, but also by other factors, such as the demographic nature of the household. Married couples with no children have the highest average monthly income (91.79 lats on average per consumer unit<sup>1</sup>), while single parent families with children under 16 have the lowest (71.73 lats).



<sup>1</sup> In recalculating the data per adult consumer, the OECD equivalence scale was used: the first adult household member equals 1.0 consumer unit, each subsequent member equals 0.7, and children younger than 14 equal 0.5 consumer units.

In recent years the remuneration for work to the employed has increased. Net monthly salaries for the employed increased by 58% between 1996 (79 lats) and 2002 (124 lats). The remuneration in the health and social care sectors, as well as in agriculture, construction, trade and other sectors remains much lower than the average in the country. The average remuneration is higher in the public sector (143 lats) than in the private sector (112 lats), and the salaries of those working in the public sector are increasing faster than in the private sector. Statistics about this, however, only partly reflect unregistered payments (envelope pay).

The increase of individual income is very uneven, and the polarization of material prosperity is increasing. The Gini coefficient<sup>1</sup> in Latvia has been rising steadily. Stratification has accelerated in rural areas.

The Household Budget Survey (data of 2002) shows that the poorest 20% of households had 10% of the total volume of household income at their disposal, while the wealthiest 20% of households had 40% of the total volume of household income.

As indicated earlier, the GDP per capita in Latvia is comparatively low – only 2223 lats (in actual prices) in 2002. However, the GDP per capita remains a general

### Gross Domestic Product per capita in parity standards of purchasing power (PPP) in 2001

	PPP	EU-15=100
Turkey	5230	23
Romania	5620	24
Bulgaria	5720	25
Latvia	7840	34
Lithuania	8880	38
Estonia	9260	40
Poland	9410	41
Slovakia	10,970	47
Hungary	12,270	53
Czech Republic	13,810	59
Slovenia	16,830	72
Cyprus	17,090	74

*Statistics in Focus. Theme 2-20/2003.*

<sup>1</sup> The Gini coefficient shows how equally a country's total wealth is distributed on a scale from 0 to 1. A coefficient of 0 indicates an absolutely equal distribution, while a coefficient of 1 indicates absolute inequality.

### Distribution of GDP by regions in 2000

GDP per capita (actual prices, in LVL)	
Average	1832
<b>Riga region</b>	2812
<b>Kurzeme region</b>	1829
<b>Zemgale region</b>	1032
<b>Vidzeme region</b>	1026
<b>Latgale region</b>	844

indicator that does not reflect the distribution of income in the country.

From the viewpoint of human development, it is important to examine the proportion of GDP expenditures allocated to health, education and science. Total State expenditures on health in 2002 represented 3.6% of the GDP, which is insufficient for the improvement and development of Latvia's medical services. Expenditures on education made up 7.1% of the GDP, compared to 7.5% in Finland and 8.3% in Sweden. Although expenditures on education and health are increasing annually, their actual volume is insufficient and fails to solve funding-related problems. The total GDP expenditures on science have remained almost constant for several years, at 0.2% of the GDP.

### Price changes and purchasing power

In recent years the increase in consumer prices in Latvia has been close to the inflation level of more developed countries and one of the lowest among the EU candidate countries. In 2002 prices increased by 1.9% (compared to 2.5% in 2001). Price changes differed in various groups of goods and services. The highest increase in prices was seen in educational services (6.3%), medicines and health care (4.6%), and foodstuffs (3.4%). Price levels decreased in communications (by 5.4%).

### Gini coefficient

1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001 <sup>1</sup>	2002
0.30	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.34	0.34	0.34

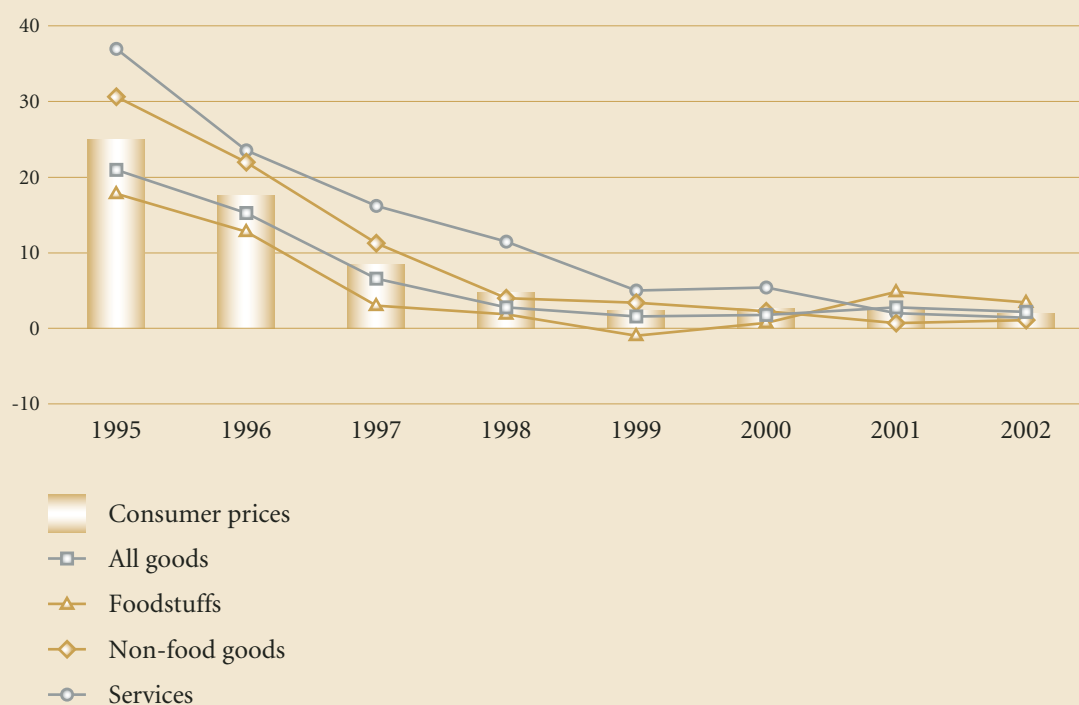
<sup>1</sup> Data on 2001 refer to the period between May 2001 and April 2002. The Gini coefficient is higher in Estonia (0.37), but lower in Lithuania (0.33).

Prices have a significant impact on the family budget. As prices rise, the purchasing power of households usually diminishes. According to the Household Budget Survey, disposable household income increased by 6.9% in 2000 compared to 1999. The increase of the consumer price index within this period was lower (2.6%), thus the average purchasing power of the population increased by 4.2%. However, the increase in income has been insignificant among the rural population and has not matched the increase in consumer prices. Thus, the

purchasing power of the rural population has decreased, while inequality between the cities and rural areas has grown.

Household consumer expenditures increased both in the cities and in the rural areas (by 4.5%). For all household groups in 2002 the main consumption priorities were food (35%), housing and public utilities (13%) and transport (9.7%). These expenditures, along with the purchase of clothing and footwear, made up 65% of total consumer expenses.

**Changes in consumer prices (%)**  
(compared to the previous year)



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Consumer prices	25	17.6	8.4	4.7	2.4	2.6	2.5	1.9
All goods	20.9	15.2	6.5	2.8	1.5	1.8	2.7	2.1
Foodstuffs	17.9	12.9	3.0	1.9	-1.1	0.7	4.8	3.4
Non-food goods	30.6	21.9	11.3	4	3.3	2.2	0.8	0.9
Services	36.9	23.5	16.2	11.5	5.1	5.4	2	1.3

### Employment and unemployment

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Economically active inhabitants (thousands) <sup>1</sup>	1196	1167	1149	1130	1100	1107	1123
Number of employed (thousands)	949	990	986	968	941	962	989
Employment rate (%) <sup>2</sup>	57.0	59.6	59.8	58.7	57.3	58.8	60.5
Out-of-work job seekers (%) <sup>3</sup>	20.6	15.1	14.1	14.3	14.4	13.1	12.0
Registered unemployment level (%) <sup>4</sup>	7.2	7.0	9.2	9.1	7.8	7.7	8.5

<sup>1</sup> Persons aged 15 and older (Labour Force Survey, 1996-2001) or aged 15-74 (from 2002 onward).

<sup>2</sup> Inhabitants between the ages of 15-74.

<sup>3</sup> Seekers of employment as a percentage of economically active inhabitants.

<sup>4</sup> Persons aged 15 and older (Labour Force Survey, 1996-2001) or aged 15-74 (from 2002 onward).

### Employment rate in the regions of Latvia (%)

	2001	2002
	Age 15-64	Age 15-64
Total	58.8	60.5
Including in the regions:		
Riga	62.0	64.0
Vidzeme	59.8	62.1
Zemgale	59.9	61.0
Kurzeme	56.5	57.7
Latgale	50.4	52.0

Labour Force Survey, 2003.

## Employment and unemployment

The recent improvements in Latvia's economy have had a favourable effect on labour market trends. Employment and unemployment indicators have improved in recent years.

The average number of people employed in the national economy in 2002 was 989,000. According to the Labour Force Survey, 54.4% of the population aged 15-74 was employed in 2002 (59.6% of men and 49.9% of women).

In 2002 the absolute majority of those employed in the national economy were working in the service sector (59.0%), followed by industry and construction (25.6%), agriculture and fishing (15.4%).

Lately an increase in the proportion of women has been observed in the global labour market. Between 1996 and 2001 the proportion of women in Latvia's labour force rose from 47.9% to 49.4%, then dropped to 49.0% in 2002. This is slightly higher than the average level in the EU. There are significant gender differences as to the type of employment undertaken. Women are employed more often in the service sector, while men predominate in industry and construction, as well as in agriculture and fishing.

The employment level differs among Latvia's regions. In 2002 the highest level was in the Riga region (64.0%) and in Vidzeme (62.1%), but lowest in Latgale (52.0%).

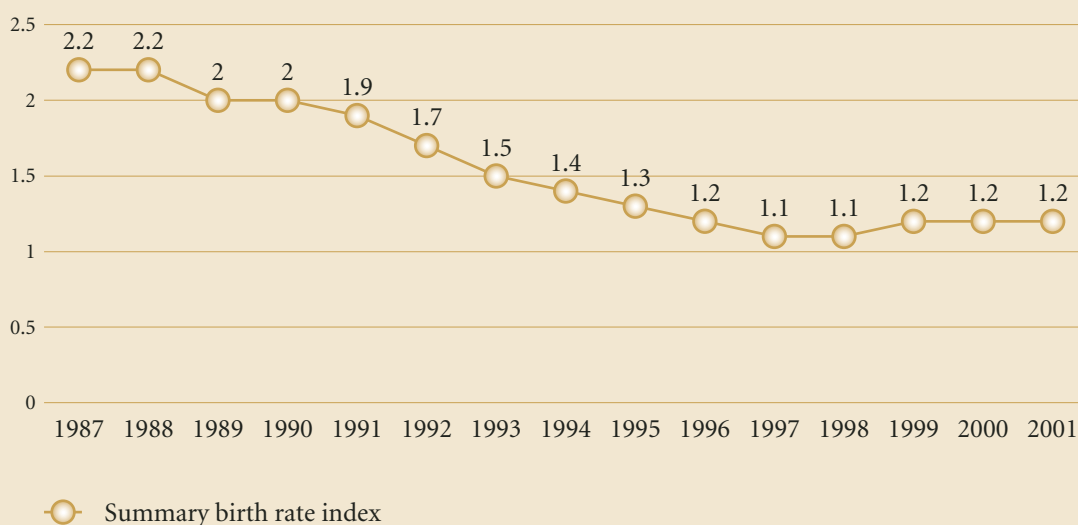
The number of self-employed has decreased in recent years, but rose slightly in 2002. The proportion of employers among the total number of employed – which had been on the increase – fell slightly in 2002.

One indicator of a country's economic stability is a low rate of unemployment. In Latvia unemployment has been officially registered since 1992. According to the National Employment Service, the highest unemployment rate of 9.2% was registered in 1998, with 111,400 people out of work at year's end. The registered unemployment rate began to decrease in 1999 and fell to 8.5% (89,700 people) at the end of 2002. More than half of the unemployed (58%) are women. The degree of long-term unemployment (i.e. the inability to find work for more than 12 months in succession) is still high. In 2002 the registered long-term unemployed represented 23,700 people or 26.4% of the total number of unemployed. Most of those who are chronically unemployed either have an education that does not meet the labour market's new demands, or lack relevant work experience.

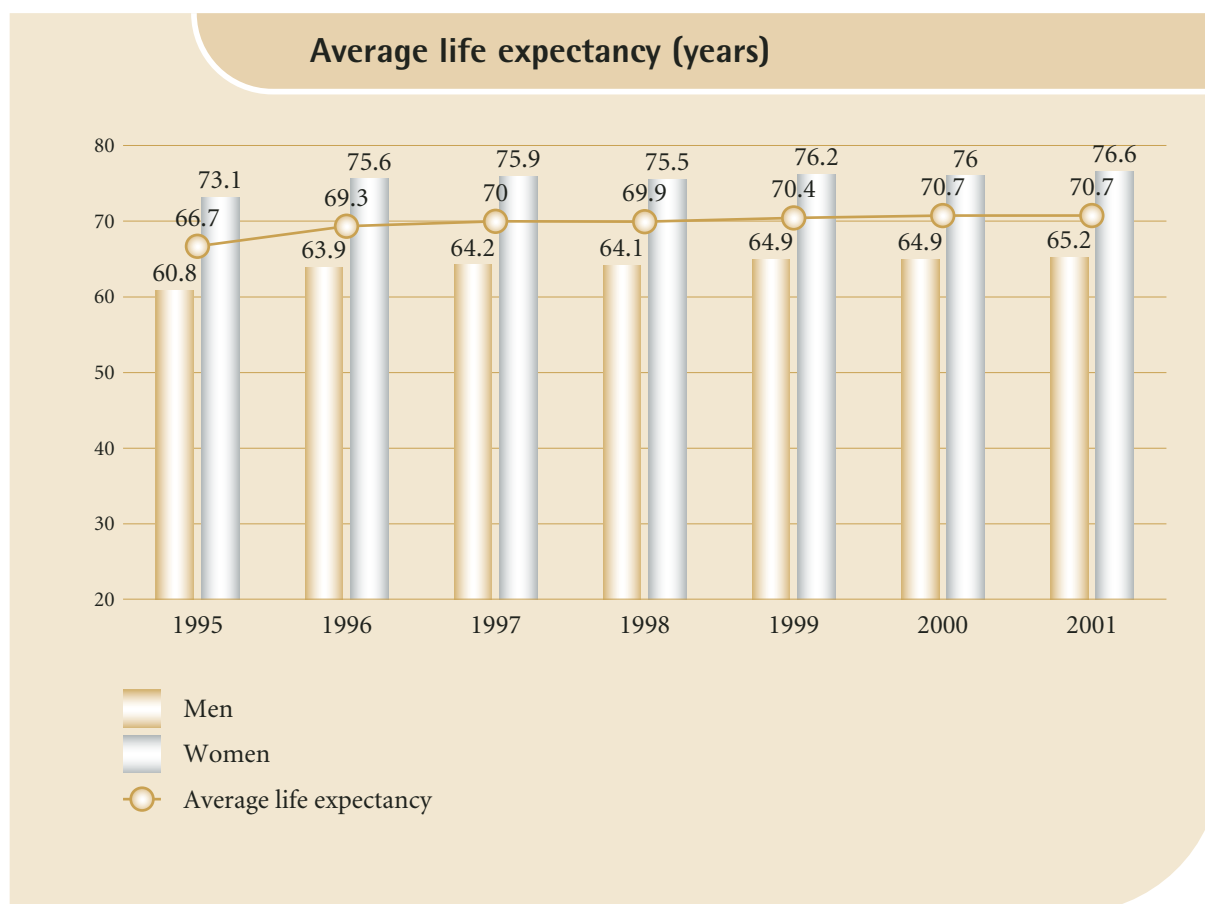
According to Labour Force Survey data, the actual rate of unemployment in the country is significantly higher (12.0% in 2002) than the officially registered one.

### Total fertility rate from 1987 – 2001

Average number of children per woman of child-bearing age







Regional differences in Latvia's unemployment rate indicate uneven economic development. The highest unemployment rate in December, 2002 was in the Latgale region of Latvia, reaching 26.5% in Rēzekne, 25.0% in Balvi, 24.1% in Ludza and 20.7% in Preiļi (and their surroundings). Latgale also has the lowest GDP per capita in the country.

## The demographic profile

Since the beginning of the 1990s, Latvia has experienced a significant population decrease. As the result of migration and natural movement, the number of inhabitants fell by 321,000 between 1990 and 2001. At the beginning of 2002 Latvia had a population of 2,346 million, or 12% less than during the previous population census in 1989. The number of urban inhabitants decreased more rapidly (by 14%) than the number of rural inhabitants (by 8%). This was largely due to emigration from Latvia, which affected the cities much more than the countryside.

Latvia's population decrease has slowed down in recent years. In 2002 the number of inhabitants decreased by 0.6%, compared to 1.2% in 1995.

The number of births decreased each year from the end of the 1980s until 1998, when 18,400 children were born. This was 2.3 times less than in 1987. Since 1999 Latvia's birth rate has been fairly stable. In 2002 20,000 children were born, which is 380 children more than in the previous year. The total fertility rate (TFR) in Latvia is one of the lowest in Europe. Currently it is approximately half of that, which is necessary for generation replacement (2.1 to 2.2 children per woman of child-bearing age).

The decline in Latvia's birth rate can be partly attributed to a decrease in the number of women of child-bearing age (15-49 years) by 11,000 or 1.8% between 1995 and 2001. Within the 20 to 29-year age group, which has the highest rate of birth, the number of women has decreased by 7800 or 4.6%. The proportion of children born to unmarried mothers in 2001 was 42.1%, compared to 16.9% in 1990.

The number of marriages has also been on the decline. In 2001, 9258 marriages were registered, which is 2.5 times less than at the beginning of the 1990s. The crude marriage rate (number of marriages per 1000 persons) has decreased from 8.9 marriages in 1990 to 3.9 marriages in 2001.

Latvia continues to have one of the highest divorce rates in Europe, with over 60% of all marriages ending in divorce. Nearly two-thirds (66%) of failed marriages are in families with children under 18 years of age.

Latvia's low birth rate, high mortality rate, and negative balance in migration have also led to the overall aging of the population. The number of children and teenagers (aged 0-14 years) decreased by 127,000 between 1995 and 2001. Their proportion of the population decreased from 20.9% at the beginning of 1995 to 16.6% at the beginning of 2001. The number of people aged 60 and over increased in the same period by 36,000, or from 19.0% to 21.9% of the population.

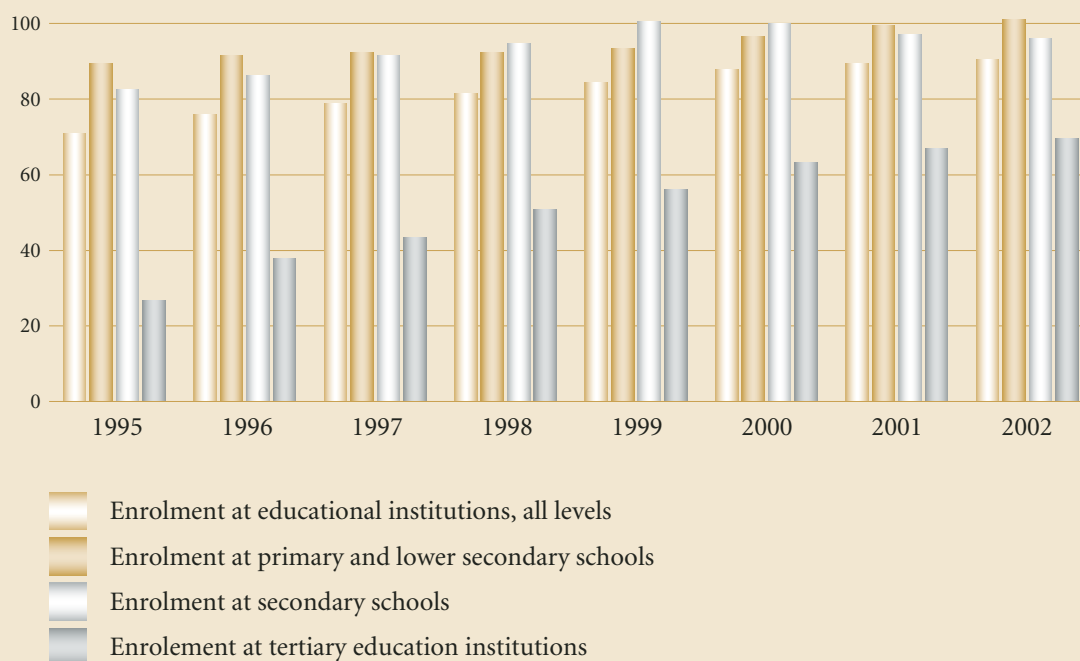
## Health

Average life expectancy at birth is a significant indicator of the overall health of a population. Latvia's average life expectancy increased significantly in 1996 compared to previous years, and this tendency has continued.

The average life expectancy at birth in 2001 was 65.2 years for men and 76.6 years for women, which is significantly lower than in the EU member States.

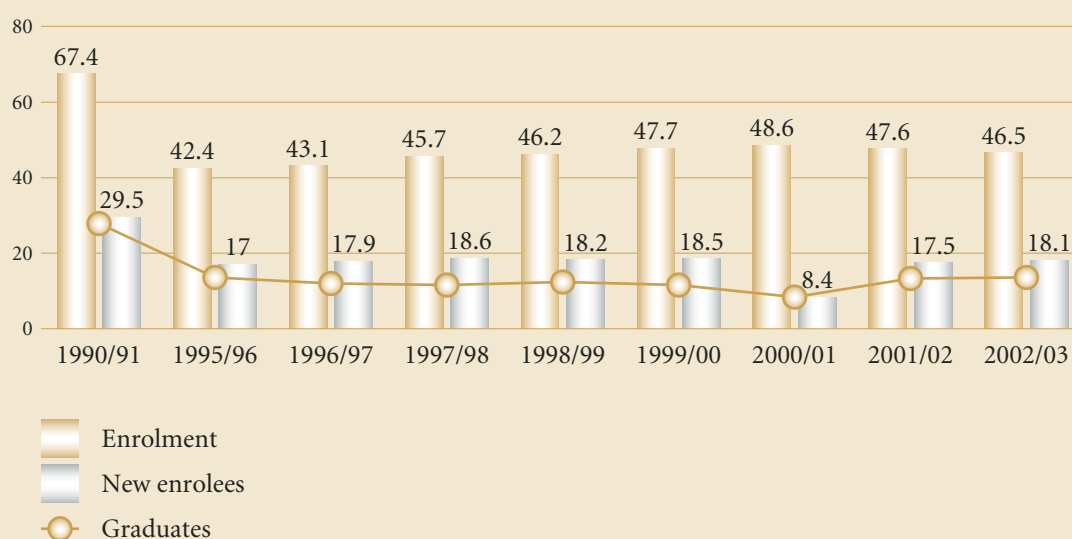
Latvia's death rate began to decrease in 1995 from 15.7 deaths per 1000 inhabitants to 14.0 deaths in 2001. The shorter life expectancy for men is predominantly caused by greater mortality in the

**Student enrolment at educational institutions (%)**



	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Enrolment at educational institutions, all levels	70.8	75.9	78.8	81.5	84.4	87.8	89.5	90.5
Enrolment at primary and lower secondary schools	89.3	91.4	92.2	92.4	93.3	96.5	99.4	101
Enrolment at secondary schools	82.6	86.3	91.5	94.6	100.4	100	97	96.1
Enrolment at tertiary education institutions	26.6	37.8	43.3	50.7	56.2	63.2	67	69.7

### Vocational schools: enrolment, new enrolees and graduates (thsd)



	1990/91	1995/96	1996/97	1997/98	1998/99	1999/00	2000/01	2001/02	2002/03
Enrolment	67.4	42.4	43.1	45.7	46.2	47.7	48.6	47.6	46.5
New enrolees	29.5	17	17.9	18.6	18.2	18.5	8.4	17.5	18.1
Graduates	27.8	13.6	12	11.7	12.4	11.7	12.8	13.3	13.4

younger and middle-age groups due to accidents, traumas and other external causes.

Circulatory diseases in Latvia are the most frequent cause of death. In 2002 they accounted for 56% of all deaths in the country. The second most frequent cause of death – malignant tumours – increased by 11% between 1995 and 2001. Mortality due to external causes (accidents, poisoning, traumas, etc.) was in third place, accounting for 17.4% of all deaths.

In recent years the mortality rate of children and teenagers has decreased.

Both specialists and the public are worried by the spread of HIV and AIDS, which poses a serious threat to society. The number of HIV-infected persons began to grow very rapidly in 1998, and had increased five-fold by the end of 2001. This was

largely due to a growing number of intravenous drug users. In 2002 the incidence of newly registered HIV cases decreased to 542.

Health indicators reflect the state of a country's health care system, as well as the degree of people's health consciousness. The fact that people in Latvia could display greater health consciousness is reflected in the country's statistics on diphtheria. Diphtheria is a contagious disease that can be controlled and prevented through vaccination, yet Latvia's morbidity rate from diphtheria is among the highest in Europe. Although diphtheria vaccinations are free of charge, only 56.4% of the adult population had been vaccinated in 2001.

The funding of the health care system is one of the most serious problems, both from the perspective of the State budget and that of the individual. The Declaration of Cabinet of Ministers of November 5, 2002

envisages a health care system based on principles of solidarity, quality and general accessibility. Several measures have been planned for reaching this objective. These include defining the minimum health care services basket guaranteed by the State, and the implementation of a mandatory insurance system for public health services. Plans to increase State budget allocations to the health care system to 7% of the GDP are also envisaged.

## Education

From 1995 to 2001 special attention was paid to the alignment of Latvia's educational system with European standards. The social and economic changes that Latvia has experienced are imposing new demands on its system of education. The State needs to provide a firm foundation for the consolidation of an educated society in which the inhabitants of the country can compete in the global labour market. Latvia's educated population and qualified labour force are crucial for maintaining the country's competitiveness.

Latvia's government is seeking to improve the quality of education at all levels, to guarantee its accessibility in the context of life-long learning, and to increase the effectiveness of expenditures on education.

The number of students enrolled at educational institutions has been gradually growing since 1993/1994, mainly at the tertiary level. The number of tertiary students reached 119,000 in the academic year 2002/2003, which is 3.1 times more than in 1993, and one of the highest proportions among the EU applicant countries.

The established network of institutions of general education is supposed to guarantee students the possibility to acquire an education close to their place of residence, as well as the opportunity for students and their parents to choose their educational institution.

In the academic year 2002/2003 there were 1052 institutions of general education in Latvia. Among these were 69 primary schools (grades 1-4), 500 lower secondary schools (grades 1-9), 384 secondary schools, 35 evening schools and 64 special schools.

In the academic year 2002/2003 there were 124 vocational schools, as well as 20 State and 17 private higher education institutions and colleges.

At the beginning of the 1990s the number of students at vocational schools was rapidly decreasing, but starting in 1995 the situation became more stable. Understandably, changes in the sectoral structure of Latvia's economy have influenced the choice of professions made by young people. With the increase of employment in services, the proportion of young people choosing to acquire a specialty in this sector has also risen.

The IT sector has experienced rapid growth and popularity. Between 1998 and 2001 the number of students in professional computer science programmes increased 5.4 times.

The relative decline of Latvia's agricultural sector and the low income of people employed in it have reduced the demand for professional education in this sector. The number of students attending agricultural programmes decreased 1.7 times between academic years 2000/2001 and 2002/2003. During the same period, the number of students enrolled at engineering, technical and industrial vocational training schools increased by 6.2%, following a decline that had lasted several years.

The comparatively large number of dropouts in Latvia is disconcerting. During the 2001/2002 academic year, 14% of students dropped out of vocational schools. Nearly half (48%) were first-year students, which repeats a similar pattern seen in previous years. The main causes have been non-attendance and unsatisfactory grades resulting from an insufficient knowledge level at the time of enrolment.

The graduates of vocational schools encounter difficulties in the labour market more frequently than others. At the end of 2001, 41.8% of the unemployed had a secondary professional education. According to the Labour Force Survey, only 30% of vocational school graduates worked in their profession between 1990 and 2001. This means that greater attention should be paid to ensuring contemporary professional education curricula that meet the demands of the market, as well as to the general education of students, so that they learn not only one specific trade, but are also able to change their profession if necessary.

One of the cornerstones of a quality of education lies in adequate funding. Although State allocations for education have been increasing annually during the last decade (from 4.5% of the GDP in 1990 to 6.9% of the GDP in 2001), they are still not sufficient for the proper remuneration of teachers or for the

maintenance of Latvia's school infrastructure. The OECD report entitled *National Education System – Latvia (2000)* indicates that the country's system of education managed to survive at the beginning of the 1990s only thanks to the commitment of its educators, and that serious problems remain. Teaching staff are not adequately prepared for change, are not properly remunerated and are not effectively used.

The opportunities for acquiring a quality education in the cities are greater than in Latvia's rural areas, and the choice in educational programmes also varies among the country's regions.

A serious problem lies in the age structure of the teaching staff at institutions of tertiary education. The number of professors aged over 60 is rapidly increasing. Nearly one-third (33%) of professors are older than 60, and the average age of newly appointed professors is 55. In addition, professional teaching staff are assuming posts in other sectors of the economy, resulting in a "brain drain" from the education sector.

## Summary

The reforms implemented in Latvia since the country regained its independence have created a favourable environment for change in the coming years. Between 1996 and 2002, Latvia's GDP increased by 48.1%, or at an average annual rate of 5.8%. This growth was twice as fast as the EU average.

The difference between Latvia's GDP and the average EU GDP per capita according to the parity standards of purchasing power is gradually decreasing, from 28% of the EU average level in 1998 to 33% in 2001. State budget allocations are gradually increasing in almost all positions. The increase of consumer prices in Latvia during the last few years has been close to the inflation rate in other developed countries and is among the lowest in the Central and Eastern European countries.

According to Human Development Report 2003, Latvia's human development index places it in 50<sup>th</sup> position among 175 countries.

## Human development index: Latvia

	1999	2000	2001	2002
Life expectancy at birth, years	70.4	70.7	70.7	71.1
Adult literacy rate, %	99.8	99.8	-	-
Proportion of people attending educational institutions of all levels	84.4	87.8	89.5	90.5
Real GDP per capita, PPP\$ <sup>1</sup>	6616	7269	-	-
Life expectancy index	0.76	0.76	-	-
Education index	0.95	0.96	-	-
Gross Domestic Product (GDP) index	0.70	0.72	-	-
Human Development Index	0.803	0.813	-	-

<sup>1</sup> Calculated on the basis of OECD information.

## Human development

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Life expectancy at birth, years	66.7	69.3	70.0	69.9	70.4	70.7	70.7	71.1
Maternal mortality per 100,000 live births (number of cases)	37	40(8)	42(8)	43(8)	41(8)	25(5)	25(5)	5(1)
Number of inhabitants per physician	294	283	288	301	296	291	303	294
Enrolment at all level educational institutions, % of inhabitants, aged 7-23	70.8	75.9	78.8	81.5	84.4	87.8	89.5	90.5
Enrolment at tertiary educational institutions, % of inhabitants aged 19-23								
Total	26.6	37.8	43.3	50.7	56.2	63.2	67.0	69.7
Women	-	45.5	51.7	63.5	72.7	79.6	84.0	87.8
Real GDP per capita, in European currency units, according to standards of purchasing power parity <sup>1</sup>	4300 <sup>1</sup>	4700 <sup>2</sup>	5200 <sup>2</sup>	5720 <sup>3</sup>	6070 <sup>3</sup>	6970 <sup>3</sup>	7840 <sup>3</sup>	8460 <sup>3</sup>
GDP per capita in USD	1775	2073	2313	2526	2781	3024	3254	3594

<sup>1</sup> *Statistics in Focus, Economy and Finance Theme 2-XX/1999, National Accounts.*

*Gross Domestic Product First Results for 1998, Eurostat.*

<sup>2</sup> *Statistics in Focus, Economy and Finance Theme 41/2002, National Accounts, Eurostat.*

<sup>3</sup> *Statistics in Focus, Economy and Finance Theme 2-20/2003, Eurostat.*



## Human distress

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Unemployment rate (% of economically active inhabitants)	6.6	7.2	7.0	9.2	9.1	7.8	7.7	8.5
Adults aged 15 and older with incomplete secondary education, %	39.6 <sup>1</sup>	39.6 <sup>1</sup>	39.6 <sup>1</sup>	39.6 <sup>1</sup>	39.6 <sup>1</sup>	34.9 <sup>2</sup>	34.9 <sup>2</sup>	-
Income ratio between the richest 20% and the poorest 20% of inhabitants	-	5.0	4.8	5.4	5.1	5.5	-	5.5
Annual inflation rate compared to the previous year, %	125.0	117.6	108.4	104.7	102.4	102.6	102.5	101.9
Number of deaths in traffic accidents per 100,000 inhabitants	25	22	22	26	25	25	22	22
Divorces, % of consummated marriages	70.6	62.8	63.0	64.4	63.9	66.6	62.0	61.1
Children born to unmarried mothers, %	29.9	33.1	34.8	37.1	39.1	40.3	42.1	43.1
Number of suicides per 100,000 inhabitants	Men	72.0	65.3	62.8	61.0	53.9	56.5	52.2
	Women	14.9	13.4	13.9	12.5	13.3	11.9	11.2
Sulphur and nitrogen emissions from stationary sources, kg of NO <sub>2</sub> and SO <sub>2</sub> per capita	18.5	21.8	17.8	17.0	13.2	8.6	7.5	-

<sup>1</sup> Latvian population census of 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Latvian population census of 2000.

## Gender differences: Ratio of women to men (%)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Life expectancy at birth	120.3	118.3	118.2	117.9	117.4	117.0	117.6	117.4
Number of inhabitants (at year's end)	116.9	117.0	117.0	117.0	117.1	117.1	117.2	117.3
Secondary education enrolment	108.0	103.5	101.8	101.0	99.7	98.1	98.0	97.1
Secondary education graduates	120.1	-	132.1	124.1	122.3	100.3	113.8	111.7
Tertiary education enrolment (students aged 19-23)	155.2	149.7	145.1	146.4	157.4	152.5	142.1	138.8
Employed <sup>1</sup>	-	92.0	94.8	92.7	92.6	96.2	97.8	96.0
Unemployed	109.7	120.8	146.2	141.1	134.6	136.1	134.6	142.2
Overall salaries in the country	78.3	78.5	79.7	79.3	80.0	78.6	80.2	81.5

<sup>1</sup> Labour Force Survey. Persons aged 15 and older 1996-2001, or aged 15-74 from 2002 onward.

## Status of women

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Life expectancy at birth, years	73.1	75.6	75.9	75.5	76.2	76.0	76.6	76.8
Average age at first marriage	22.8	23.2	23.6	24.0	24.2	24.4	24.4	24.9
Maternal mortality rate per 100,000 live births (number of cases)	37	40(8)	42(8)	43(8)	41(8)	25(5)	25(5)	5(1)
Secondary education enrolment, % of females aged 11-18	-	84.3	85.9	85.8	86.9	88.2	89.0	88.9
Secondary education graduates, % of females aged 18	-	-	85.4	86.4	91.4	87.6	96.1	98.5
Tertiary education enrolment, % of females aged 19-23	-	45.5	51.7	63.5	72.7	79.6	84.0	87.8
Proportion of women among the employed, % <sup>1</sup>	-	47.9	48.7	48.1	48.1	49.0	49.4	49.0
Proportion of women among managers and specialists, % <sup>1</sup>	-	60.5	60.5	59.1	58.4	57.7	59.1	57.6
Proportion of women among deputies of the Saeima, %	8 <sup>2</sup>	8 <sup>2</sup>	8 <sup>2</sup>	17 <sup>3</sup>	17 <sup>3</sup>	17 <sup>3</sup>	17 <sup>3</sup>	18 <sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Labour Force Survey. Persons aged 15 and older 1996-2001, or aged 15-74 from 2002 onward.

<sup>2</sup> Results of the Saeima elections of September 30, 1995.

<sup>3</sup> Results of the Saeima elections of October 3, 1998.

<sup>4</sup> Results of the Saeima elections of October 5, 2002.

## Demographic profile

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Number of inhabitants, in millions (at year's end)	2.5	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.3	2.3
Annual population growth rate	-1.2	-1.0	-1.0	-0.9	-0.7	-0.7	-0.8	-0.5
Total fertility rate	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2
Proportion of dependants, %	43.1	42.3	42.2	41.0	40.6	41.1	39.7	-
Proportion of inhabitants aged 60 and over, % (at year's end)	19.3	19.7	20.1	20.5	21.0	21.5	21.9	22.1
Life expectancy at age 60 (additional years)								
Men	14.2	14.8	14.2	14.3	14.1	14.8	15.4	15.1
Women	19.3	21.2	21.3	20.9	21.5	21.3	21.5	21.8

## Health

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Death from circulatory system diseases, % of all deaths	55.8	55.5	55.5	55.5	55.2	55.5	55.9	56.0
Death from malignant tumours % of all deaths	14.1	16.0	16.3	16.4	17.1	17.3	17.4	17.4
Registered alcohol consumption, litres per adult <sup>1</sup>	9.1	8.4	8.4	8.9	8.8	8.4	7.8	8.5
Adults who smoke, % <sup>2</sup>	Men	-	-	-	54	-	-	-
	Women	-	-	-	19	-	-	-
Number of inhabitants per physician	294	283	288	301	296	291	303	294
State expenditures on health, % of total State expenditures	9.7	9.9	9.9	9.4	9.1	8.9	9.1	-
State expenditures on health, % of GDP	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.1	3.6	3.4	3.6

<sup>1</sup> Estimate.

<sup>2</sup> Study of Living Conditions in 1999.

## Education

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Enrolment at all level educational institutions, %, of inhabitants aged 7-23	70.8	75.9	78.8	81.5	84.4	87.8	89.5	90.5
Enrolment at primary schools, % of inhabitants aged 7-15	89.3	91.4	92.2	92.4	93.3	96.5	99.4	101.0
Enrolment at secondary schools, % of inhabitants aged 16-18	82.6	86.3	91.5	94.6	100.4	100.0	97.0	96.1
Enrolment at tertiary educational institutions, % of all inhabitants aged 19-23	26.6	37.8	43.3	50.7	56.2	63.2	67.0	69.7
Expenditures on tertiary education, % of all education expenditures	12.0	12.3	16.1	14.3	16.7	16.3	21.6	-
State expenditures per tertiary student (LVL)	-	-	-	475	449	403	600	-
State expenditures on education, % of total State expenditures	17.0	14.6	14.6	15.7	15.1	16.9	18.3	18.5
Total State expenditures on education, % of GDP	6.9	5.8	5.7	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.9	7.1

## Human capital formation

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Scientists and technicians per 1000 inhabitants	2.1	1.9	1.8	1.8	1.8	2.3	2.3	2.3
Total expenditures on research and development, % of GDP	0.52	0.46	0.43	0.45	0.40	0.48	0.44	0.46
Secondary education graduates, % of inhabitants aged 18	74.9	71.6	73.6	76.4	81.2	85.6	88.7	92.2
Tertiary education graduates, % of inhabitants aged 23	21.7	28.2	30.9	32.2	33.2	47.9	64.2	58.9
Science graduates, % of all graduates	-	-	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.3

## Employment

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Employed, % of inhabitants <sup>1</sup>	-	48.3	50.6	50.5	49.6	48.2	49.2	54.4
Percentage of employed working in <sup>1</sup>	Agriculture	-	17	22	19	17	14	15
	Industry	-	27	26	27	26	26	26
	Services	-	56	53	54	57	59	59
Income growth among employed inhabitants, %	25	10	22	11	6	6	7	9
Proportion of unionized labour among the employed <sup>2</sup>	-	-	-	-	19.0	18.9	17.8	-
Length of work week, hours <sup>1</sup>	-	40.1	41.2	41.0	41.2	41.4	41.3	40.1
Expenditures on labour force market programs, in thousands of lats	11,856.6	14,860.2	17,434.2	18,801.6	38,154.8	41,899.0	40,726.2	-

<sup>1</sup> Labour Force Survey. Persons aged 15 and older 1996-2001, or aged 15-74 from 2002 onward.

<sup>2</sup> Association of Free Trade Unions.

## Unemployment (end of year)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Number of unemployed, in thousands	83.2	90.8	84.9	111.4	109.5	93.3	91.6	89.7
Unemployment rate, %	Total	6.6	7.2	7.0	9.2	9.1	7.8	7.7
	Women	7.0	8.1	8.5	11.0	10.7	9.2	9.0
Unemployed youth aged 15-24, % of total unemployed persons	20.2	20.0	18.1	16.4	14.8	14.8	14.6	13.9
Payment of unemployment benefits, % of total State expenditures	1.7	1.1	1.1	1.6	1.6	-	-	-
Percentage of long-term unemployed (more than 12 months)	25.5	31.2	38.1	26.3	31.1	29.0	26.6	26.4

## Defence expenditures

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Expenditures on defence, % of GDP	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.0	1.0	0.9	1.0	1.3
Expenditures on defence, % of total expenditures on education and health	9.1	7.7	7.4	9.4	8.9	9.1	9.6	12.1

## Natural resources

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Area, thousands of sq. km	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.6	64.6
Population density, inhabitants per sq. km. (end of year)	38.2	37.9	37.5	37.1	36.9	36.6	36.3	36.1
Arable land, % of total area	39.3	39.0	39.0	38.7	38.5	38.5	38.5	38.4
Forests, % of total area	44.6	44.3	44.9	44.2	44.2	44.2	44.4	44.5
Reclaimed land, % of arable land	-	62.0	62.0	62.8	62.9	62.9	62.9	-
Internal renewable water resources per capita, in thousands of cubic metres per year	8.0	5.3	8.1	10.9	9.6	7.7	8.6	-
Annual water consumption per capita, in cubic metres	183.3	174.4	166.1	161.9	143.2	126.2	126.3	127.6

## National income indicators

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Gross Domestic Product (GDP), in millions of lats	2329.4	2807.3	3269.5	3592.2	3889.7	4348.3	4812.6	5194.7
Agricultural production, % of GDP	10	8	6	4	4	5	5	5
Industrial production, % of GDP	34	32	32	30	27	25	25	25
Services, % of GDP	56	60	62	65	69	70	70	71
Private consumption, % of GDP	63.1	67.8	66.7	64.5	62.9	61.9	62.1	62.7
Domestic investments, % of GDP	15.1	18.3	18.8	27.3	25.2	26.5	27.0	26.4
Tax revenues, % of GDP	33.2	31.2	33.1	36.3	34.3	31.6	30.2	30.8
State expenditures, % of GDP	22.4	21.8	18.7	21.4	20.5	19.7	19.3	19.4
Exports, % of GDP	47.3	51.3	51.1	51.3	43.9	45.6	44.4	45.5
Imports, % of GDP	49.7	59.4	59.6	64.8	54.2	54.3	55.6	56.1

## Economic development trends

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Annual GDP growth rate <sup>1</sup>	-0.9	3.7	8.4	4.8	2.8	6.8	7.9	6.1
Annual GDP growth rate per capita <sup>1</sup>	0.5	4.9	9.5	5.8	3.7	7.6	8.8	6.8
Annual inflation rate, % compared to previous year	125.0	117.6	108.4	104.7	102.4	102.6	102.5	101.9
Annual export growth rate, % of GDP (in actual prices)	6.5	12.1	7.0	4.8	-3.4	6.3	3.2	4.3
Budget surplus or deficit, % of GDP (in actual prices)	-3.1	-1.4	1.2	0.1	-4.0	-2.8	-2.1	-2.5

<sup>1</sup> In comparative prices of 2000



## Violence and crime

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Prison inmates per 100,000 inhabitants	255.2	253.7	256.4	242.7	216.4	209.4	201.7	198.7
Juveniles, % of convicted criminals	10.8	11.9	13.1	13.0	14.0	14.2	13.8	14.2
Reported number of rapes per 100,000 inhabitants	6.4	5.3	4.9	3.4	4.2	5.6	5.1	4.5
Drug-related crimes per 100,000 inhabitants	10.9	14.7	17.6	16.1	21.4	27.6	35.2	26.1
Premeditated homicides* by men per 100,000 males	18.2	18.4	15.6	16.7	14.5	12.0	15.6	13.4
Reported number of rapes per 100,000 females	11.8	9.8	9.1	6.4	7.8	10.5	9.5	8.7

\* Including attempted homicides

## Prosperity, poverty and social expenditures

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Real GDP per capita, in European currency units, according to standards of purchasing power parity <sup>1</sup>	4300 <sup>1</sup>	4700 <sup>2</sup>	5200 <sup>2</sup>	5720 <sup>3</sup>	6070 <sup>3</sup>	6970 <sup>3</sup>	7840 <sup>3</sup>	8460 <sup>3</sup>
Industrial production, % of GDP	34	32	32	30	27	25	25	25
Income ratio between the richest 20% and the poorest 20% of inhabitants	-	5.0	4.8	5.4	5.1	5.5	-	5.5
State expenditures on social security, % of GDP	15.1	14.8	14.0	15.0	16.1	14.2	12.8	12.4
State expenditures on education, % of GDP	6.9	5.8	5.7	6.9	6.8	6.8	6.8	7.1
State expenditures on health, % of GDP	4.0	3.9	3.8	4.1	4.1	3.6	3.4	3.6

<sup>1</sup> *Statistics in Focus, Economy and Finance Theme 2-XX/1999, National Accounts. Gross Domestic Product First Results for 1998, Eurostat.*

<sup>2</sup> *Statistics in Focus, Economy and Finance Theme 41/2002, National Accounts, Eurostat.*

<sup>3</sup> *Statistics in Focus, Economy and Finance Theme 2-20/2003, Eurostat.*

## Communications

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Annual cinema attendances per capita	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5
Annual museum attendances per capita	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7
Daily newspaper copies per 100 inhabitants	12.4	9.2	13.2	12.6	12.4	8.3	9.0	7.8
Book titles published per 100,000 inhabitants	79.2	80.0	95.4	107.7	110.9	107.3	107.4	99.5
Number of letters posted, per capita	6	9	11	11	11	19	19	21
Telephones per 100 inhabitants	29.1	29.9	30.6	30.9	30.7	31.1	30.8	30.1
Mobile telecommunications network connections per 100 inhabitants	0.6	1.2	3.1	7.0	11.7	17.0	26.7	-
Automobiles per 100 inhabitants	13.4	15.5	17.8	20.1	22.1	23.5	25.0	26.6

## Urbanization

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Urban inhabitants, % of total population (at year's end)	68.6	68.6	68.6	68.5	68.1	68.0	67.9	67.8
Annual urban population growth rate	-1.4	-1.0	-1.0	-1.0	-1.3	-0.9	-0.9	-0.7
Population in largest city (Riga), % of urban inhabitants (at year's end)	72.7	72.5	72.4	72.2	72.4	72.4	72.3	72.2
Population in cities with more than 40,000 inhabitants, % of urban inhabitants (at year's end)	72.7	72.5	72.4	72.2	72.4	72.4	72.3	72.2
Population in cities with more than 40,000 inhabitants, % of total population (at year's end)	49.9	49.7	49.6	49.5	49.3	49.2	49.1	49.0

Calculated on the basis of OECD information

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## Appendix: Review of Latvia's Main Human Development Indicators

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