Latvian and Russian-speaking press in Latvia before the EU accession referendum

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August 2012
In the 2003 Latvian citizens voted ‘Yes’ to EU accession. However, a closer look at the referendum results shows that the Russian-speaking citizens of Latvia voted predominantly against EU accession, while the Latvian-speakers predominantly voted in favour of accession. While there are various explanations put forward by other researchers to understand this difference, the aim of this work is to compare what has been published on EU accession matters in the Russian language press and the Latvian language press in Latvia before the referendum. Two largest Latvian language newspapers (Diena and Neatkariga Rita Avize Latvijai) and two largest available Russian language newspapers (Chas and Telegraf) were used in the study with a total data set of 181 articles. Quantitative and descriptive content analysis was used to analyze the data. Surprisingly, the results of the study showed that there was no large difference in the presentation of EU in the two language newspapers. While the Latvian language newspapers published mostly positive articles on EU accession, the Russian language newspapers did not publish mostly negative articles – on the contrary, neutral or positive articles were noted most frequently. Also news frames were applied in quite a similar fashion in both Latvian and Russian language newspapers. Thus, in the case of this study it has been concluded that the Russian language media most likely did not play a role in influencing the predominant no-vote by the Russian-speakers or this influence might have been minor. Thus, the cause of the predominant no-vote must be sought elsewhere; perhaps, it can be explained as a protest vote against government policies of the time or a protest vote to voice dissatisfaction with the economic difficulties in the areas densely populated by Russian-speakers. A possible explanation to the small differences between the presentations of EU in the two language newspapers could be that the clashing points between the Latvian and Russian speakers lies elsewhere – in the education, language and citizenship policies and EU accession did not affect this areas in any significant way.
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1. Introduction

The existence and the eventual fall of the Soviet Union brought various changes to the world and the countries that were for long existing on the Eastern side of the Iron Curtain. For Latvia the Soviet Union brought economic, political and societal changes. The implications of these changes did not vanish with the fall of the Soviet Union and some leave their marks on the Latvian society up to present times. The aim of this work is to explore two intertwined themes. One – the return to Europe and Latvia’s aim to join the European Union (EU) in order to reconnect with the West and secure the country’s future. The other theme – the impact of the large migration of the Soviet times and changes in the Latvian population that have left Latvia with two large groups – Latvians and Russian-speakers - divided by language, as well the response of both groups to the West-oriented path chosen by the leaders of Latvia.

On 1st of May, 2004 Latvia joined the EU in the Big Bang enlargement. However, it is interesting to look back at the referendum itself and the pre-referendum period to enquire - what was the position of the two large groups in the society towards accession. The referendum to determine, whether Latvia would join the EU, took place on the 20th of September, 2003. 72.53% of the registered voters took part in the referendum; 71.97% of the votes were valid. 66.97% of the voters voted in favor of joining the EU, while 32.36% voted against. Looking at the results closer opens an interesting picture. 57% of Latvians voted for EU accession, 18% - against, while 24% did not take part in the elections. 20% of the Russians (Russian by ethnicity, though Latvian citizens) voted for, 44% - against, while 36% did not take part in the elections. From the voters of other ethnical background 33% voted for and 25% voted against joining the EU (Klave, 2005; Šūpule, 2004). Why is there such a large difference of voting preferences between the Latvian and Russian-speaking voters?

The aim of this work is to look back to the pre-referendum period to explore one of the possible reasons for this outcome by analyzing the position of the media towards accession. The media has a powerful role in informing the public and forming the public opinion, however, issues are not necessarily presented by the media in a neutral way. As written by De Vreese (2005) “one influential way that the media may shape public opinion is by framing events and issues in a particular way”(De Vreese, 2005, p.51). In this work the theory of framing is combined with the idea that Latvia’s media environment is divided into two sub-environments – the Latvian language media environment and the Russian language media environment (see
Chapter 1.2.1. for details). Thus, this work aims to explore, whether EU accession was presented in a similar way in both media environments or could major differences be identified between the way EU was presented in the Latvian language media and the Russian language media. For if we presume that the Russian language media presented the EU and Latvia’s future prospects after accession more often from a negative perspective (in comparison to the Latvian language media) then it would be possible to conclude that media was one of the factors contributing to the predominant no vote in the EU referendum by Russian-speakers.

For the purposes of this study four Latvian newspapers – two Latvian language and two Russian language – were chosen. Newspapers were chosen over other types of media due to the existence of a variety of newspapers in both media environments and the accessibility of this data source. Articles related to the EU referendum and Latvia’s possible accession to the Union were collected in the time period of two weeks before the referendum (05.09.2003 – 19.09.2003). The total data consists of 181 articles. The data will be analyzed using quantitative content analysis and qualitative (descriptive) content analysis. A number of research questions have been put forward in this thesis in order to find out whether or not the different language newspapers presented the EU in different ways. The first set of research questions focuses on the content of the articles in terms of position towards EU accession (positive, neutral, negative) and topics discussed in relation to EU accession (for example, economy) analyzed through a quantitative content analysis study:

*Research question 1*: Did the Latvian language newspapers publish predominantly positive articles on EU accession, while the Russian language press on the contrary – predominantly negative articles on this topic?

*Research question 2*: What topics were most discussed in connection to EU accession in Latvian-language newspapers and what – in Russian language newspapers?

One of the topics that will be searched for in the EU articles is the minority status, meaning, what are the future possibilities for Latvia’s minorities with a focus on the Russian-speakers if Latvia joins the EU; what are the worries of minority groups members and related sub-topics. For if we presume that the Russian language newspapers published more articles on the future of the Russian-speakers (especially, non-citizens permanent residents) from a negative perspective this could possibly have had an impact on the predominant no vote to EU from those Russian-speakers of Latvia, who were eligible to vote. Thus, a hypothesis is put forward:
**Hypothesis:** The Russian language newspapers published more articles on the topic of minority status in relation to the EU accession than the Latvian language newspapers.

The next set of questions focuses on the usage of news frames in the chosen newspapers. This set of questions aims at exploring whether or not news frames were applied in a similar fashion in both language newspapers; what attitude towards EU accession (positive, neutral, negative) was incorporated into the news frames and was the EU presented in a similar way with the help of news frames in the four newspapers.

**Research question 3:** Which news frames were most often used in Latvian language newspapers, and which – in Russian language newspapers?

**Research question 4:** Did the Russian language newspapers use mostly news frames in a negative manner towards EU accession and the Latvian language newspaper - mostly in a positive manner towards EU accession?

The previously mentioned research questions and hypothesis focus on comparing how the EU is presented in the newspapers in two languages in order to make conclusions about the Russian language media and whether it could have had an impact on the predominant no vote by the Russian-speakers. As it will be mentioned in the sub-chapter on previous research many articles have concluded that two separate media environments exist in Latvia – Latvian language and Russian-speaking media environments. Thus, the next research question aims at finding out whether this can be reaffirmed in the case of the EU accession topic in the media:

**Research question 5:** Based on the results of the analysis can it be concluded that there are indeed two – Latvian and Russian language - media environments in Latvia?

Even though the focus of the work is the Russian-speaking newspapers and the Latvian newspapers are used for comparison some conclusions will also be made about the presentation of EU in the Latvian language newspapers. The next research question put forward in this work focuses on the Latvian language newspapers:

**Research question 6:** Was there a consensus of opinion on EU accession in the Latvian language newspapers or can a variation of opinions be noted?

The structure of the work is following. First, the definition of the two groups – Latvian and Russian-speakers will be presented and the groups will be described more thoroughly to create an understanding about the society in Latvia and its two main groups. The introduction chapter will be concluded with previous research. The second chapter will focus on explaining
the context of the study. The first sub-chapter will outline the citizenship policy adopted in Latvia after independence in order to understand what possibilities were given to those who migrated (willingly or forced) to Latvia during Soviet times. The second sub-chapter will shortly tell about Latvia’s accession to the European Union and elaborate on the influence of the EU on improving the position of minorities in Latvia. The third sub-chapter will shortly talk about the EU campaign in Latvia to create an understanding about other information available to the society about EU accession. The last sub-chapter will shortly review the position of political parties of the time towards EU accession. If political parties popular among the Russian-speakers would strongly advocate against EU accession, this could be seen as a possible reason for the predominant no vote by the Russian-speakers. If this would not prove the case, then the role of media would be more crucial.

The third chapter will explain the theoretical framework used in this work – the news framing theory. The fourth chapter of the work will explain the methodology used in this study and give the overview of the data. The fifth chapter of the work will present the empirical findings of the analysis. First the quantitative content analysis results will be presented newspaper by newspaper. Here quantitative results of the topics discussed in relation to EU accession, news frames used and general position towards EU accession of the four newspapers will be presented. The sub-chapter will be finished with general conclusions on the quantitative findings in all four newspapers. The second sub-chapter will focus on presenting the qualitative analysis on the usage of news frames. These results will be presented news frame by news frame and again concluded with general remarks on the use of all chosen news frames. The last (sixth) chapter of the work will draw general conclusions of both the quantitative and qualitative analysis, give answers to the research questions put forward in the introduction and confirm or decline the hypothesis. The bibliography and four appendixes with list of articles used for the study are positioned at the end of the work.

1.1. Definition of Latvians and Russian-speakers and the overview of the groups

Often in the media, articles and even research on the topic of society in Latvia two groups are mentioned – the “Latvians” and “Russians”. However, such a distinction is technically wrong due to various reasons. For example, a significant proportion of the Russians residing in Latvia are citizens of Latvia; there are quite a few people of other ethnicities, for example, Ukrainians,
who can be citizens or not; there are also Russians in Latvia, who are citizens of the Russian Federation, however, hold a permanent residency in Latvia. Thus, for the purpose of clarity it is important, first, to define the two groups of “Latvians” and “Russians” and the basis for belonging to a group, and, second, look deeper into the characteristics of these groups, their self-understanding and attitude towards each other.

Examples above and other similar reasons make referring to simply Latvians and Russians in the case of Latvian citizens of different ethnic background [citizens, because only they could have cast a vote in the EU accession referendum], in my opinion, is incorrect. In the course of this research a linguistic distinction will be made, following the approaches taken in research by Kļave (2005); Zepa, et al. (2005); Zepa, Šūpule and Jeruma (2003). The previously mentioned authors point out to language as the factor for differentiation and definition of Latvians and Russian-speakers. Kļave (2005) writes that considering the data that 62% of permanent residents mention Latvian as their mother-tongue, while 36% - Russian allows defining the two dominant social-linguistic communities: Latvian and Russian-speakers. Zepa, et al. (2005) also define the conflict between two groups as linguistically rooted, while no great cultural differences or vertical hierarchy in ethnical stratification can be observed. These linguistic communities have developed into two quite separate communities “with a relatively closed Russian-speaking community with their own social networks, political and economic leaders, mass communication channels that allows the existence of a separate information space, school and cultural life” (Kļave, 2005, p.95).

When distinguishing linguistically Latvians and Russian-speakers, a question arises about, how do those with other ethnical background than Latvian and Russian fit into this approach. In the course of this research, similarly as to the authors discussed above, a third group of other language speakers is not appropriate to develop. Statistics show that Latvian residents with another ethnical background than Latvian or Russian predominantly use Russian. 58% of these people consider Russian as their mother-tongue (6% consider it to be Latvian, 36% - another language), however, 82% of Latvian residents with a non-Latvian, non-Russian ethnic background use mostly Russian at home [13% - use mostly Latvian, 4% - another language](Zepa, et al.,2005). Thus, it is appropriate to conclude that majority of people of another ethnical background can be identified as Russian-speakers and the division into two groups – Latvians and Russian-speakers, is valid. Continuing this chapter a deeper insight about the two groups will be done in order to gain understanding about their structure, similarities and differences.
Zepa, et al. (2005), have conducted a wide statistical research on various social aspects, and the similarities and differences among the Latvians and Russian-speakers. In terms of religion and lifestyle no vast differences can be seen. Though most often belonging to different confessions of the Christian church, the religious practices of Latvians and Russian-speakers are similar and no religiously-based conflicts occur in Latvia. Lifestyles of both groups are acknowledged to be similar by the group members themselves. Most of the holidays are celebrated by both groups with the exception of celebrations from the Soviet era (8th of March, 1st of May and Victory day), which are predominantly celebrated by Russian-speakers (Zepa, et al., 2005).

It is interesting to note that while there are virtually no differences between the incomes of Latvians and Russian-speakers, there are some differences in residency distribution and the structure of employment. Russian-speakers mostly live in the largest cities, while the rural areas are predominantly populated by Latvians, which contributes to small employment differences: more Latvians work in fields related to agriculture, while Russians are more tended to work in building, industry and transportation (Zepa, et al., 2005). Nevertheless, Zepa, et al. (2005) concludes that people from both groups work in various positions and industries and do not point out to the non-government employment structure as a point of conflict.

However, a different situation can be observed for employment in the government structures, where according to Zepa, et al. (2005) 82% of employees are Latvians. This contributes to associating the state power with Latvians, which is discouraging for the Russian-speakers and negatively affects dissatisfaction with the government and acceptance of government policies. Some government policies have become a clashing point between the Latvian and Russian speakers. The disputed policies are those that concern education, language, citizenship and related, for example, Russian as a second official language, the future of Russian-speaking schools, citizenship and so on. This clash of viewpoints is reflected in the media content of Latvian and Russian-speaking newspapers.

Various authors (Zepa, et al., 2005; Kļave, 2005; Svece, 2003; Šulmane, 2003 and others) point out to the existence of two information environments – the Latvian and Russian-speaking. However, the parallel information spheres in Latvia being a centrally important concept in this research, it will be discussed more thoroughly in the review of previous research on topics close to this thesis. The division of the society into two main groups is also reflected in the political parties.
The existence of the two large groups divided by a linguistic factor has affected the shaping of the party system in Latvia with linguistics dividing also parties into Latvian-speaker oriented and Russian-speaker (and rights) oriented parties (Auers & Kasekamp, 2009). In regards to the party system and its linguistically driven division, it is important to establish that this division was not a driving force behind the predominant Russian-speaker vote. This topic and an overview of the party positions (of the relevant time period) on accession to EU will be discussed in a separate chapter – Political parties and EU accession (Chapter 2.4.)

It is interesting to note that some authors (for example, Gabel, 1998) write that individuals with higher skills and higher education most likely will be more supportive of the EU, while those with a lower income and lower level of education – more skeptical towards the EU. However, this approach cannot be used in the case of Latvians and Russian-speakers. As it was mentioned above no substantial differences in income can be noted, as well there is no data that points out to large differences in education levels. Thus, it is impossible to presume, that Russian-speakers voted predominantly no to the EU accession due to their less fortunate position in the society in terms of income and education.

1.2. Previous research on the topic

Previous research on the topic can be divided into two subgroups. The first concerns the division of information spheres in Latvia into the Latvian and Russian-speaking media with separate newspapers being targeted to Latvian and Russian-speakers. The second topic of research concerns the questions why Russian-speakers voted more against the EU than Latvians. In this chapter I will briefly describe previous conclusions on both mentioned topics, as well look into some general previous research on the relationship between minorities and EU.

1.2.1. Two information environments in Latvia

In the period prior to the EU accession referendum the existence of two information spheres is noted by a few authors, who also look into the content of the two information spheres and the differences in describing the opposite group and the same events in Latvian and Russian-speaking press in Latvia. An interesting metaphor to describe the situation is used by Svece (2003) who refers to the Latvian media situation as a two-room apartment of information.
Svece (2003) notes the tendency that often events are not equally depicted in the Latvian and Russian press and newspapers are not writing to achieve a common understanding between the two ethnic groups, but on the contrary the other group is portrayed in a way that does not promote solidarity. The Russian press often depicts Latvians as politicians and bureaucrats, while the non-Latvians are the commons. Thus, this leads to a situation where disagreements between the citizens and the government or dissatisfaction of the people with the government also can gain an ethnical perspective (Svece, 2003). Svece (2003) also notes the disproportion in portraying the other group. In Svece’s opinion the Russian press more often writes about the common Latvian, while the Latvian press rarely publishes articles about the common non-Latvian.

Conclusions in a similar direction are made by Šulmane (2003) after conducting an analysis of Latvian and Russian language press. Though Šulmane (2003) writes that ethnic stereotypes and racist remarks towards the other group are not often, there are strong differences in the perception and depiction of the political realm, the ideological perspective of the groups and the vision of how the country should develop. While Šulmane (2003) does not agree with Svece (2003) that there are not enough depictions of the common non-Latvian, she criticizes, that the viewpoints of the common non-Latvian on politics, home-country and their attachment to Latvia are not portrayed enough. Instead myths about non-Latvian citizens being solely pro-Russia, viewpoints on occupation and other topics of conflict are being fed, which as a reaction creates negativity in the Latvians. Instead of the two-room apartment metaphor by Svece (2003), Šulmane (2003) speaks of the two fronts of information. However, it is important that she notes that both in Latvian and Russian press there are variations in the attitude depending on the ground standing point of the newspapers and its editorial.

In an analysis of the depiction of the same events in Latvian and Russian language press Apine (2003) concludes that both Latvian and Russian language press writes on events only from one viewpoint, while emphasizing some of the details and not mentioning others. Apine (2003) writes that ethnic stereotypes prevail in both information realms, because “it is easier to mobilize ethnical emotions” (Apine, 2003). Zepa (2003) based on an analysis of a previously conducted content analysis, concludes that:

“ The existence of these two linguistic groups prevents free communication; since the diverging views on an issue (citizenship, in this case) do not exist within one media group, we can rather speak about the “Russian” and the “Latvian” opinion. [...] The content analysis of the Latvian and Russian press showed the existence of two information spaces in the
press. This confirms that the absence of dialogue does not facilitate solution of problems and does not lead to productive relations in the future.” (Zepa, 2003, p.93).

Though the content analysis summarized by Zepa (2003) was focused on picking articles that focus on the citizenship issue, conclusions made by Zepa (2003) and others mentioned in this chapter point out that it is possible to conclude that there are indeed two information spheres in Latvia. These information spheres have a difference in describing events, there is a disproportionate amount of writing on events concerning the other group in the country, and ethnic stereotypes and negative attitudes are present in the more radical wings. It is interesting to note that 8 years later Rožukalne (2011), writes that the difference between Latvian and Russian media concerning political news is about, what information is selected to be published, what is emphasized and what is not.

1.2.2. Predominant Russian-speaker no-vote

The second topic to be overviewed is previous research on what are the possible reasons, why the Russians speakers predominantly voted against the European Union. A few articles were published after the results of the referendum were known and noted the differences between Latvian and Russian-speaker voting. In general, the possible factors follow three lines of argument: economic protest vote, politically oriented protest vote and the separation of the Russian-speakers. In the line of the economic protest vote Ikstens (2003), notes the predominant no-voting by the Russian-speakers in the Latgale region, especially in its biggest cities. Latgale is a region that is most densely populated by non-Latvians (45% Latvians, 39% Russians, 7% Poles and 5% Belarusians [Latgales plānošanas reģiona attīstības programma 2010-2017, p.14] and has been experiencing a difficult economic situation. Thus, Ikstens (2003) sees the no-vote in the Latgale region as a protest vote. However, the economic difficulties cause does not apply to the case of Riga, which did not experience economic difficulties at the time, but is also densely populated by Russian-speakers. Without further elaboration Ikstens (2003) simply notes that an ethnic division is still present and politically important.

Similarly to Ikstens (2003), Smagars (2003), writes that a factor contributing to the predominant no-vote is the bad economic situation in Latgale at the time of the referendum. However, it is interesting to note that Smagars (2003) writes that the bad economic situation contributed to a no-vote not only by the Russian-speakers, but the Latvians in Latgale as well. Smagars (2003) also notes a practical argument that could contribute to the no-voting in the
Latgale region: as mentioned previously the Latgale region is neighbouring Russia and Belarus, thus becoming a part of the outer EU borders would harden crossing borders and doing commercial activity due to changes in regulations. EU accession meant not only the tightening of borders, but also an increase in the Russia visa fees, which would make it harder not only to do commercial activity, but also travel to Russia (Pridham, 2007). However, in my opinion, an assessment of statistical data on commercial activity, travelling and the changing costs would be necessary to conclude, what role could have this argument really played.

Along the line of the politically oriented protest vote Klave (2005), looks at the social and linguistic splitting in Latvia and also discusses it in the context to what she refers to as Europeanization. Klave (2005) notes an interesting development in the attitude of non-Latvians towards the EU – it was predominantly positive until 2000/2001 from where a reverse trend started, which culminated in the predominant no-vote of non-Latvians in the referendum. Klave (2005) puts forward a possible explanation for this development (though explaining the no-vote was not the purpose of Klave’s (2005) research). Klave (2005) explains the positive attitude of Russian-speakers towards the EU as a result of the pressure put by the EU on Latvia for reforms in areas that concern minority rights: language, education and citizenship. Klave (2005) quotes a few non-citizens, who during a focus group, reveal their view that the EU will pressure Latvia into applying the “zero option”, which would give citizenship to all residing in Latvia for a certain period. The EU was seen as an actor that could influence changes not only in the citizenship policy, but also education and language policies in Latvia. However, after fulfilling the political criteria for EU accession, it was becoming clearer that no more large changes will be made due to EU pressure, while negative issues – the school reforms – which affected education of Russian-speakers was becoming more salient (Klave, 2005). Thus, Klave (2005) interprets that the predominant no vote to EU accession by Russian-speakers was directed against the Latvian government.

Along the lines of the separation argument Smagars (2003) writes about language and information access challenges that “while a part of the society lives in another linguistic and information environment, it is possible that its opinion about important state issues will be different”(Smagars, 2003, p.1). Smagars (2003) sees it as a fact, that the Latvian society is divided into two information spheres. However, he develops this argument even further – that not only the local press is divided, but also a part of the society is influenced by Russian (from Russia) media that was more likely to have a negative opinion on Latvia’s accession to EU. Even though Smagars (2003) puts forward a few interesting possible factors that in terms of the topic would be close to this thesis, the author does not elaborate with his arguments by doing
research. Šūpule (2004) confirms the possibility of the political protest vote and the separation argument line by writing that the ethnically related policies carried out by the government could have affected the negative attitude of the Russian-speakers towards the government and that this attitude was acted out in a negative vote towards EU accession.

Smagars (2003) also writes about the unsatisfying EU campaign in the Latgale region, which lacked practical information about the EU that could benefit people in the future. In my opinion, this goes along the separation argument line, though, in this instance it is the separation of the Latgale region (through an unsatisfying campaign) and not particularly of the Russian-speakers. Šūpule (2004) looks at the unsatisfying EU campaign in terms of its effects on the Russian-speakers. The pro-EU campaign was mainly aimed at the Latvians as it advertised the EU as the possibility to correct history and allow Latvia to join the right side of Europe, while leaving behind Russia, Ukraine and so on. An important contributing factor to the predominant Latvian yes-vote was the fear of being under Russia’s influence and the collective interpretation of history (and its injustice). However, such a campaign did not have the same pro-EU effects on the non-Latvians and, perhaps, could have worked in the opposite direction (Šūpule, 2004). Thus, three lines of argument have been outlined in the chapter above – economic protest vote, political protest vote and separation, including the nature of the EU campaign messages. However, it must be noted that the previous argument are interpretations and statements of possible correlations between various factors and the predominant Russian-speaker no-vote to the EU. A direct and statistical research asking the Russian-speakers about their voting in the referendum has not been done, thus, in my opinion, none of the arguments can be viewed as definite.

A relevant to this thesis study has been carried out by Golubeva (2005) “EU accession debate on the Internet in the Baltic States ‘Own heterogeneous messages’?”. Golubeva (2005) carried out a comparative study on the EU accession debate using a popular Baltic state news website – Delfi and its various versions in the Baltic states (Lithuanian delfi.lt, Latvian and Russian-language versions of delfi.lv, and the Russian-language version of delfi.ee). Golubeva created 18 thematic collocations (EU and growth of home economy, EU and decline of agriculture and so on) with the “purpose of comparing the frequency with which these thematic collocations appear in the published articles and in the readers’ commentaries following the articles...to see which of these collocation seem relevant to the participants of the online debates and to compare their agenda with that of the mainstream media and with the accession agenda voiced by the politicians.” (Golubeva, 2005, p.162).
Thus, Golubeva’s (2005) study similarly to this paper sets the task to view popular themes in the EU accession debate and compare the Russian-speaking and Latvian language debate in Latvia, as well as the Russian-speaking debate in Estonia and Lithuanian debate on the Delfi website. However, otherwise Golubeva’s (2005) work focuses on the comments of readers on EU accession articles and their coherence to the themes discussed in the text. Golubeva (2005) concludes:

“A greater divergence of discourses between the texts generated by political elite and alternative uses of public debate seems to be present in the case of Russian-speaking Delfi in Estonia and Latvia, as well as in the case of Lithuanian Delfi. As can be concluded from the above description, both the Latvian and the Estonian cases of Russian-language Delfi represent more critical reception of elite discourse than the Latvian-language version of the same portal [...] Where no major organization forms for alternative discourses are in evidence – as in the case of Latvian-speaking audiences in Latvia – the acceptance of elite discourse is much greater, also in the seemingly free spaces of online Internet debates”.

(Golubeva, 2005, p.168)

The last point conclusion made by Golubeva (2005) – the lack of major alternative discourses and its effect on the acceptance of the elite discourse – is relevant also in terms of this paper. An analysis of the Latvian-language newspapers, as well as information on the EU campaign in Latvia and the results of the referendum can either approve Golubeva’s (2005) findings or reject them.

Much research has been done on the topic of public support for the European Union. What factors increase support for European integration and what – push people away from approving of the EU. Some of the research focuses on economic factors: whether the EU is seen as a benefit or disadvantage due to the socioeconomic status or living location (more in Gabel, 1998). Other studies focus on non-economic factors such as knowledge about the EU (Inglehart, 1977), national identity (for example, Carey, 2002) or perceived threat from other cultures (for example, McLaren, 2002). These are just a few of the various factors that have been explored. However, for the context of this work, it is interesting to draw up previous research that focuses on European minorities and their attitude towards the EU to compare it to the case of Latvia’s Russian-speakers.

Elias (2008) investigates the complex nature of support for the EU from minority nationalist parties. While their support might be decreasing/had decreased, nevertheless, minority nationalist parties are supportive of European integration, pan-European level governance, weakening of the state and regional development due to the potential of increasing the
position of minorities through this process. However, it is arguable, whether this approach can be directly applied to the case of Russian-speakers in Latvia due to the different circumstances than, for example, in the Basque case. Nevertheless, the EU is perceived as a positive actor creating possibilities and ensuring protection of minorities. Casey (2002) writes on the double allegiances identity: identity is perceived as sub-national and European, bypassing the national identity level. An example by Casey, which goes along with the reasoning of Elias, is the Scottish Nationalist Party, which favors the EU in hope of independence. Thus, the national-level identification is absent and identification is present with the sub-national, Scottish, and EU levels.

Ehin (2001) in a study on public support for the EU in the Baltic countries, concludes that the Baltic Russians are not more positive towards the EU than the titular population as it was expected, but on the contrary are more negative:

“While European institutions have played an important role in influencing Baltic governments to liberalize their citizenship and minority policies, our data show that, overall, the attitudes of the Baltic Russians do not differ significantly from those of the titular populations [...] In Latvia, where institutional barriers to minority political participation have been the greatest, minority respondents who believe ethnic tensions have intensified are in fact slightly less likely to support EU membership than others.” (Ehin, 2001, p.53).

Ehin (2001) also suggests that support for the EU is not high (opposing to the expected high support for the EU as a minority right promoter) as the Russian-speakers see that the local ethnic disagreement should be solved on a local level, as well as Russian-speakers might see Russia and not the EU as the solution mechanism. While the first argument is plausible, it might not be correct to generalize that Russian-speakers automatically seek their solution with Russia’s involvement. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note the incoherence between previous conclusion on minorities’ positive perception of the EU and the case of predominant negative voting on EU accession by Latvia’s Russian-speakers.
2. Context of the study

The 20th century saw great migration in and from Europe influenced by wars and rise of oppressive regimes. Some people left to find a better life in terms of economic and social opportunities; some were forced to flee due to their ethnic or religious belonging, while others left their homeland and were forced to settle elsewhere due to the pressure of the state. Immense migration took place in (and also from) the Soviet Union. The Union consisted of various regions, previously independent countries, different ethnic and linguistic groups with 109 nationalities identified in the 1959 census (Lewis, 1971). However, this previously unexampled gathering of diversity left deep and long-lasting negative consequences to its components with some of the diversity erased, left in open conflict or ethnically and linguistically challenged.

Latvia was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940 and the same year by the decision of a marionette parliament Latvia became part of the Soviet Union. Prior to that Latvia had been an independent country since the declaration of independence on the 18th of November, 1918. Even though most changes in the ethnical composition of Latvia happened already during Soviet rule, it must be noted that historically the Latvian territory had been always under foreign rule, for example, the Russian Empire, Sweden and others. Thus, other ethnicities have been present in Latvia for a long time. In year 1935 77% of the population in Latvia were Latvians, 8.8% - Russians and 14.2% - others. However, since then the percentage of Latvians had been declining for the rest of the century and gone up only after the turn of the millennium, though not reaching the previous percentage (Latvian Institute, 2010; Kļave, 2005).

In the context of the Soviet Union, Latvians compromised only 0.7% of the population in 1959 with major nationalities as Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians forming, respectively, 55%, 18% and 3.8% of the Union’s population. Thus, the migration during the Soviet rule was especially harsh for small nations like Latvia. The Soviet policies of deportation of “unfaithful ethnic groups”, which included Latvians, resulted in the deportation of hundreds of thousands of Latvians that resulted in shortage in the labor market. This shortage was compensated by bringing labor force from other Republics of the Soviet Union (about 1.5 million immigrants arrived) and effectively changed the ethnical structure of the Latvian society (Latvijas Instituts, 2006).

During a series of events happening in the Soviet Union, which lead to its fall, Latvia successfully regained full independence on August 21st, 1991. After renewing its independence
reforms were due in many spheres – political, economic and so – as the country was in chaos after the fall of the socialist order. However, the main point of interest relevant to this thesis is the country’s ethnic structure and adopted policies concerning language and citizenship. Just prior regaining independence 52% of Latvia’s inhabitants were Latvian, while 34% were Russians and the rest of other ethnical background. The next available data is for the year 2000, when 57.7% were Latvians and 29.6% - Russians (Centrālās statistikas datu bāzes, 2011). Thus, the statistics indicate that a large proportion of Latvia’s population was and remains of other ethnical background than Latvian, predominantly Russian. What policies were adapted to facilitate their residency in Latvia, gaining citizenship and so on? This question will be addressed in the next sub-chapter of the context explaining chapter.

2.1. Citizenship policy in Latvia

After the fall of the Soviet Union, the Baltic states had to decide, what kind of citizenship policies to adapt in order to deal with the large groups of Soviet-era migrants. Latvia chose a quite complicated system, which distinguished Soviet-era migrants from those, who have resided in Latvia prior; a system that eventually backfired by leaving a large amount of non-citizens and stateless people. This paragraph will explain the citizenship policy adopted in Latvia, introduce statistics on the amount of citizens and non-citizens through time and also briefly look at related policies – language and education.

The Citizenship Law, first adopted in 1995, stipulates that all those, who were citizens of Latvia before the occupation in 1940 and their descendants, would automatically gain Latvian citizenship. The same applied to descendants of one Latvian parent. Non-citizens, who were registered as permanent residents of Latvia, received non-citizen passports. Once a non-citizen had been residing in Latvia for 5 years after 4th of May, 1990, the person was able to gain a Latvian citizenship after going through the process of naturalization. The naturalization process required “basic knowledge of Latvian, constitution, and history; pledged an oath of loyalty; had a legal source of income, and renounced any former citizenship”(Citizenship Law, 1999). The naturalization process proved to be a slow one. As it can be seen from Figure 1 at the beginning of 1996 27% of Latvian residents were non-citizens (of Latvia or another country, as citizens of other countries are indicated separately). In the course of seven year this number dropped only by 7% staying above 20% at the time of the EU referendum and accession on 1st of May, 2004.
However, as it can be seen from Figure 1 and Figure 2 the number of people going through the naturalization process was not very high, considering the amount of non-citizens, until some important changes were adapted to the citizenship legislation in 1998. First, those children with non-Latvian parents, who were born after the 21st of August, 1991 in Latvia or were born in Latvia prior to that date, but have finished a general education in a Latvian speaking school, could automatically gain Latvian citizenship. The second change removed the age quota, which previous permitted certain age-groups to gain citizenship at a certain year. The first changed allowed about 18,000 children to become citizens, the second change increased the amount of applicants for a citizenship as now applicants from different age groups could apply at the time they wished. However, it also showed that some people were not interested in gaining Latvian citizenship due to various reasons, which will not be explored more in the course of this work. For example, out of the 18,000 children of non-citizens eligible for citizenship only just around 2000 gained or applied for citizenship till the year 2002 (Citizenship Law, 1999; Zepa, 2003; Human Rights in Latvia in 2002 report, 2003).
Latvian along with Estonia were the only countries out of the former Soviet Union, who have not adopted the so called “zero option”, which gives the opportunity to gain citizenship to all those, who reside in the country and wish to do so. For Latvia gaining back the position of the Latvian language and culture that was damaged during the time of occupation was a top priority. The zero option was seen as a possible road to two-group community, where the Russian-speakers would have no interest in learning Latvian as it would not be needed for gaining citizenship. This thinking was also evident in the language policies adapted and, in time, in the education policy of Latvia (Zepa, 2003).

Latvian language became the official state language in 1998, however, preceding laws stipulated the central role of Latvian in Latvia, while lessening the role of Russian and granting more rights to other languages. The 1998 Language law defined “the state language as the only language of communication with state and municipal authorities. The Law strictly defined the use of the state language in public life, while its use in private organization is regulated only to the extent that language affects the legitimate interests of society (public safety, health, and morality)” (Zepa, 2003, p.91). Thus, the situation had been reversed from the Soviet times, where the Russian language dominated the public life, while Latvia was left to the more private areas of life.

The education sphere gradually changed from offering education in two languages to a more disproportionate model, where more studies were to be done in Latvian than Russian. While primary schools were bilingual, secondary education through a set of reforms was changing to be conducted mostly in Latvian in the Russian-speaking schools. The most controversial were the reforms of 2004, which set that in minority schools had to teach 40% of the secondary school lessons in the minority language and 60% had to be taught in Latvian. This reform had created a large resistance movement with the slogan “Hands off our schools”. The reform and the resistance of the Russian-speaking community towards it is mentioned as a possible reason that could have had an effect on the Russian-speaker predominant no-vote to EU (Schmid, 2007).

However, for this work as a context it is important to understand not only, what was the position of non-Latvians in terms of citizenship, language and education, but also how was their position affected (and was it) by the process of joining the EU. Did the EU expect/demand changes in terms of, for example, citizenship policy or the minority situation in Latvia? Where any changes implemented during the accession period? Answering these and other related questions is important to understand, what could the EU bring to the Russian-speakers,
especially the non-citizens, who though, of course, have to be differentiated from the citizen Russian-speakers in terms of rights and possibilities, but, nevertheless, are predominantly tied into the Russian-speaking community in Latvia. The question of EU accession and the status of Latvian minorities will be the focus of the next chapter.

2.2. EU accession and the status of minorities in Latvia

Since re-gaining independence rejoining the West has been set as a goal for Latvia. Accession to the EU became one of the top foreign priorities for Latvia. In the years 1994/1995 Latvia began its association with the Union, submitted its application and created internal departments to work on EU accession. By December, 2002 the official accession talks were finished and the Accession Treaty was signed on the 16th of April, 2003. The EU accession referendum took place on the 20th of September, 2003 and on the 1st of May, 2004 Latvia officially became a member state of the EU (Latvija Eiropas Savienībā, 2011). The process of accession, of course, was much more complex and had many more milestones than the paragraph above, however, in the context of this study, it is important to understand, how minority rights were affected by Latvia’s decision to join the EU.

Latvia had to make a variety of changes in order to fulfill the Copenhagen criteria of respect and protection of minorities. However, the EU was not the only institution pushing for improvement of the minority status – the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe also took part in promoting minority rights in Latvia. The pressure for reforms did not come only from the EU but also other European organizations (they are often researched together (for example, Gezalis (2003); Morris (2005); Mikkel and Pridham (2004)), thus, reforms encouraged by various European actors will be presented with a larger focus on the EU).

Latvia was pressured to pursue reforms in the citizenship, language and education policies by the EU; also the Council of Europe outlined general principles, which the Baltic states should take into consideration:

“The principles relevant to the Baltic states include prohibition on discrimination on the basis of ethnicity or language, the creation of effective links between potential citizens and the state, the avoidance of the creation of statelessness, and the right of option for residents of successor states to choose their country of citizenship”(Gelazis, 2003, p.56).
Not all the principles outlined by the Council of Europe were taken into consideration by Latvia; the same is in the case of the EU – not all necessary reforms were carried out completely. However, the case of EU is more complicated as some reforms that were due to be done in Latvia, in fact, were not done in countries already member states. The EU set conditionality standards for two sets of rights – more general human rights and counter majoritarian rights, which include rights of ethnic minorities and non-citizens. The Agenda 2002 Opinion by the European Commission noted a number of violations against ethnic minorities and non-citizens such as the strict naturalization process, ethnic minority discrimination, as well as various other breaches concerning human rights. The Agenda 2002 Opinion was followed by a set of reforms enacted by the Latvian government, including the simplification of the naturalization process and granting citizenship to children of stateless parents born in Latvia (Gelazis, 2003).

While a set of Council of Europe and OSCE suggestions were not completely taken into account, there was “success of the EU enlargement process in promoting change in the Baltic states’ policies, not only towards the Russian minority but also in terms of other human rights, stemmed from an effective use of conditionality. With the promise of accession, the Baltic states sought to remedy the condition of statelessness in their territories and abandoned certain discriminatory policies.” (Gelazis, 2003, p.69). It can be concluded that by using the stick and carrot principle the EU encouraged positive changes in terms of rights and possibilities for the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia. Thus, one can assume (also considering previous research on the positive attitude of minorities towards the EU due to the possibilities and protection it provides (Chapter 1.2.2.)) that Latvia’s Russian-speakers would also be supportive of the EU. However, due to the predominant Russian-speaker no vote to EU accession, the assumption is evidently not completely true in the case of Latvia.

2.3. EU campaign

Latvia was the last country to hold the EU referendum from the candidate countries of the 2004 accession. Estonians said “Yes” to EU accession shortly before Latvia’s own referendum took place. Both circumstances were used in the Latvian campaign – to gather expertise from campaigns in other countries and to stress the need to continue the unity of the Baltic states by joining the EU along with Estonia and Lithuania (Mikkel and Pridham, 2004). Without going into details on the campaign itself, it is important to note that:
“the ‘Yes’ campaign had substantial advantages over the ‘No’ campaign of superior organization and resources and EU expertise; while the ‘No’ campaign suffered from a certain fragmentation, lacked any charismatic leader and simply failed to develop the drive [...] the considerable imbalance of efforts and resources in favor of the ‘Yes’ to EU accession campaign was the decisive factor in turning the uncertainty and vulnerability of pro-accession sympathies.” (Mikkel and Pridham, 2004, pg.731).

While Mikkel and Pridham (2004) write that the campaign materials were also translated and distributed in Russian, it is important to remember that in the Latgale region the campaign was viewed as somewhat unsatisfying (Smagars, 2004). Nevertheless, it is possible to conclude that the EU campaign in Latvia was mostly positive, thus, could not have played a decisive role in triggering the predominant no-vote of the Russian-speakers in Latvia.

### 2.4. Political parties and EU accession

In the context of this thesis it is important to discuss, whether political parties could have had a significant influence on Russian-speakers voting no to EU. As it was previously discussed the Latvian society has split into two large linguistically divided groups – Latvians and Russian-speakers, and that this divide is evident in many societal spheres, for example, culture, media and politics. As noted by Auers and Kasekamp (2009) a linguistically-based divide exists in the party system. To understand, which political parties are relevant to the analysis, first, the results of the 2002 Parliament elections will be viewed to see the most popular parties. Second, their position on the EU will be briefly discussed to determine, whether the parties popular among the Russian-speaking voters, had a strong anti-EU sentiments, which could then have had an impact on the predominant no-vote to EU accession by Russian-speakers.

Only those parties that receive more than 5% of the total vote are elected to the Latvian Parliament (Saeima), however, as it can be observed from Figure 3 two parties – Union Latvia’s Way and Latvian Socialdemocratic Worker Party were close to reaching the 5% margin, thus, are also included in the list of the parties gaining most electoral support.
A quantitative study done by Zepa, et al. (2005) shows that the Russian-speakers in Latvia support the Union of Political organizations “For Human Rights in a United Latvia” (hereafter: PCTVL; supported by 20% of Russian-speakers), while their support for “Latvian” parties such as The New Era, Peoples Party, Latvia’s First Party, Union of the Green and Farmers and Union for Fatherland and Freedom/LNNK is low (3%; 1%; 4%; 2% and 0% of support from Russian-speakers respectively). The party support trend is quite reversed, when looking at support from Latvians. Only 1% of Latvians support PCTVL, while their support for The New Era is 18%, the greens – 9% and Peoples Party – 11%. However, it is interesting to note that support for the Latvian Social democratic Worker Party is not high in both groups: 2% for Latvians and 3% for Russians (Zepa, et al., 2005, p.38).

Now that the most popular political parties of the relevant time and their main electorate has been identified, it is important to identify the positions of the most popular parties on the EU with a special focus on PCTVL, the party most widely supported by Russian-speakers. In the time period prior April, 2003 PCTVL was one the Euro-skeptical end of the spectrum, however, 5 months before the EU referendum – on the 12th of April, PCTVL approved its new platform, which supported Latvia’s membership in the Union, while “calling on the EU to change from a
union of countries into a union of peoples in which every ethnic group, including minorities, will have equal rights” (Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Newsline April 14, 2003).

Not only PCTVL became pro-EU, but also the conservative (and “Latvian”) For Fatherland and Freedom party changed its standpoint towards accession to the Union in during the period of 2002/2003, thus, “this greater consensus created a more positive outlook for the referendum” (Pridham, 2007, p.573). Thus, it would be incorrect to say, that the Russian-speaker no-vote to EU was influenced by a similar position being popularized by the main party supported by the Russian-speakers at that time. Therefore the possible factors can be searched for elsewhere, including as it will be done in the course of this work – to see, how the EU was depicted in Latvian, and how – in Russian-speaking media, and if an important difference can be identified.
3. Framing theory

3.1. What is framing

In the course of this study a mid-range theory of news framing will be used as the theoretical framework. In this chapter framing theory will be investigated from different aspects: what is news framing, the process of framing, the cultural context factor, types of news frames, effects of news frames. In the end of the chapter, categories of news frame types will be created (using previous research), which then will be used in the content analysis of the Latvian and Russian-speaking media.

In the course of this work a definition of frames by Entman (1993) will be used:

“Framing essential involves selection and salience. To frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation for the item described.”(Entman, 1993, p.52)

Thus, framing assumes that the creator of the communicating text intentionally or unintentionally can select and salience a particular point of an issue or approach the issue from a certain outlook this way making more salient one or other aspect, while, perhaps, toning down another aspect of the issue. Common elements of framing used in various works include salience of some element of the issue, organizing the issue presentation in a certain way and promoting/encouraging certain ways of thinking about a topic (for example, Reese, 2010; Vliegenthart, Schuck, Boomgaarden & De Vreese, 2008; Nisbet, 2010; De Vreese, Boomgarden & Semetko, 2010). According to Entman (1993) frames can perform four functions:

“Define problems – determine what a causal agent is doing with what costs and benefits, usually measured in terms of common cultural values; diagnose causes – identify the forces creating a problem; make moral judgements – evaluate causal agents and their effects; and suggest remedies – offer and justify treatments for problems and predict their likely effects”(Entman, 1993, p.52).

However, it does not mean that all the above functions will be performed in a frame. A text may have none of the frame functions above or contain all four at the same time. After defining, what the frame itself is, it is important to add the context: the process of framing and the (cultural) contextual factor.

Entman (1993) defines the process of framing into three stages: the communicator, the text itself and the receiver, as well as the cultural/contextual factor, where frames or common discourses of thinking in groups are formed. The first three elements speak for themselves
about their essence. The communicator is the creator of the text that intentionally or unintentionally may frame it in a certain perspective that corresponds to the person’s belief system (or, perhaps, the belief system enforced by the editorial of the paper, the government or others). The text is the article that contains frames. The receiver is the reader of the news item that may or may not be influenced into thinking a certain way about the topic that is enforced by the frame in the text. The three elements will be viewed more in the course of this chapter. However, at this point it is interesting to present De Vreese (2005) scheme of three stages of framing (Figure 4), which more or less corresponds to Entman’s (1993) approach. The first stage is “framing in the newsroom”, when the communicator as in Entman’s (1993) case creates the publications, which can be framed in a certain way. This can dependent both on internal and external factors. This process of frame-building then continues into the second stage of “frames in the news”, when frames can be identified already in the news. The second stage then continues into the third stage of “framing effects”, when frames in the news may or may have not have effects on the reader. Thus, De Vreese’s (2005) scheme illustrates the whole process of framing – from its origins in the newspaper offices to the possible attitudinal or behavioural effects a frame may produce.

![Diagram of framing process]

Figure 1. An integrated process model of framing

Figure 4. De Vreese’s stages of framing (De Vreese, 2005, p.52).

In the course of this paper, the research will be limited to second stage – frames in the news – or the text as in the case of Entman’s (1993) distinction. The focus of this paper is the frames present in the news articles of the select Latvian and Russian-speaking newspapers. However, indirectly and less obviously the other stages of framing will be evident in different parts of the work. Framing effects: the outcome of the study might suggest the effects of framing (though only indirectly as no direct study is done), for example, if in the course of study it is discovered that the Russian-speaking newspapers constantly published negatively framed news articles on EU accession, it would be possible to conclude that this might have contributed to the predominant no-vote of the Russian-speakers to EU accession.
Framing in the newsroom, frame-building or the communicator part of framing will be present in the choice of the newspapers to be analyzed. What newspapers have been chosen for the study and what is their general orientation and values? This will be discussed in the study data overview. What are the contextual factors (e.g., minority history in Latvia, do EU policies affect the minority situation in Latvia)? This topic has been elaborated in the contextual part of the study.

It is clear that news frames are not simply creations of the fantasy of the communicator. Frames are connected to the “web of culture”. In order for frames to be relevant, they must be connected to the outside world and be relevant to the receivers. As put by Nisbet (2010) (based on previous research by Price and Tewksbury, 1997):

“..a message frame is only effective if it is relevant – or “applicable” – to a specific existing interpretive schema acquired through socialization processes or other types of social learning. Put another way, frames appearing in the media or as part of communication campaigns are most influential when they resonate with an audience’s strongly held “perceptual lenses”, which typically mean strong feelings about another issue suddenly made relevant, or with value constructs such as religious beliefs, political partisanship, or ideology.” (Nisbet, 2010, p.47)

While frames that are relevant to the reader may produce an effect on the person, frames that are not successfully connected and made relevant for a particular audience can be unnoticed, have no effect on the reader or be rejected (Nisbet, 2010). Thus, even though this paper will focus only on the frames in the news articles, it must be assumed that they are connected to the relevant web of culture, which, deriving from the contextual part of the paper, can be divided into the Latvian and Russian-speaking environments.

Regarding the process of framing, another distinction made by Reese (2010) which goes in line with Entman and De Vreese, must be made. Reese (2010) makes a distinction between the “what” and the “how” of news framing analysis. The “how” research focuses on the outcome of frames, their effects and is process-centric. The focus of this study will be the “what” of the frame – research that puts the frame itself in the centre, where the frame (and not its effects) is examined. Such an approach encourages understanding the context (Reese, 2005). Considering the approach of the study, it is important to investigate the typology of frames. This will be the topic of the next sub-chapter.
3.2. Frame typology

This chapter will look at the various types of frames deriving from previous research. Also the relevant frames that will be used in the content analysis will be chosen at the end of this chapter, based on previous research in news frames analysis. As well topics discussed in relation to EU (for example, economy), which will be counted in the content analysis, will be determined based on research on Latvia’s accession to the EU. The first distinction that can be made about various news frame types is that news frames emphasize a certain aspect (salience) of a topic in a neutral, positive or negative way. This direction of emphasis can have different effects on the reader; however, this will be discussed more in the chapter on news frame effects (De Vreese, Boomgaarden, Semetko, 2010).

The second distinction can be made between issue-specific and general frames. As the name suggests issue-specific frames can only be applied to a certain issue and may not be able to make sense, when trying to apply to another topic. On the contrary, general frames can be applied to different topics, as well as in different times and different cultural contexts. The specificity of issue-specific frames is also seen as it’s weakness. Issue-specific frames can be hard to use in other studies, which may lead to the creation of frames, which can be used only for the purpose of one study. This seriously damages the possibility of generalizing the results of the study (De Vreese, 2005). Though, an issue-specific will be used in the study, because Latvia’s accession to EU and the Russian-speaking minority issue is specific in itself, a larger focus will be put on general frames to be able to adopt frames from previous studies and avoid creating an too unique selection of frames, which cannot be used further.

Studying the effects of frames and reader’s ability to recall, Valkenburg, Semetko and de Vreese (1999) make a distinction between four news frames:

“The conflict frame – emphasizes conflict between individuals, groups or institutions [...] the human interest frame brings an individual’s story or an emotional angle to the presentation of an event, issue, or problem. Personalizing an issue contributes to the narrative character of news [...] the responsibility frame presents an issue or problem in such a way as to attribute responsibility for causing or solving a problem to the government or to an individual or to a group [...] the economic consequences frame presents an event, problem, or issue in terms of the economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution, region or country.” (Valkenburg, Semetko, de Vreese, 1999, pp.550-551)
The above news frames are general in their nature and can be applied in different studies [one or more has been used in various studies, for example, De Vreese (2004), Semetko & Valkenburg (2000)]. Neuman, et al. (1992) (in De Vreese, 2005) identifies 5 news frames through their study of current affairs coverage and its discussion in the audience. These frames are human impact, powerlessness, economics, moral values and conflicts. The human impact, economics and conflict frames are similar to the human interest, economic consequences and conflict frame as in the case of Valkenburg, Semetko and de Vreese. The powerlessness frame focuses on the existence of weak groups under the influence of dominant groups (or individuals), while the moral values frame focuses on morality and social prescriptions (De Vreese, 2005). Another possible news frame is when issues are presented as bringing benefits or disadvantages, for example, whether EU accession is a benefit or disadvantage. While there are a large quantity of various different, yet still general news frames (a well typology and examples are presented in De Vreese, 2005), it is important to develop a set of frames that would be appropriate for the topic of this paper.

In the course of this work 4 general news frames that can be found in various previous researches will be used: human interest, responsibility, conflict and benefit/disadvantage. The human interest frame aims to build the story from a perspective of an individual or a group or focuses on how a particular event, in this case Latvia’s accession to the EU, will affect an individual or group. In my opinion, this can facilitate a connection (or creation of an opinion) between the event and the reader, especially, if the group/individual portrayed is relatable to the reader. The responsibility frame attempts to attach responsibility for certain changes, problems and so on to an individual/group or, perhaps, the EU. It is anticipated, that such a frame can appear during the analysis either blaming the EU for certain negative consequences (for example, due to EU accession Latvia will have to face such and such reforms) or portraying the EU as the institution responsible for solving the issue (De Vreese, 2005).

The conflict frame attempts to portray an event as a conflict between various parties. Perhaps, in the case of this work, the EU accession can be portrayed as a causal factor for a certain conflict between the EU itself and an individual/group/institution. Or, vice versa, EU accession can be portrayed as a solution to conflict between certain parties. In the context of this work, the benefit/disadvantage frame may be used to portray the benefits or disadvantages of EU accession for Latvia. The benefits or disadvantages may be of various natures, for example, economic benefits, changes in jurisdiction, laws, border control and so on (De Vreese, 2005).
These general, yet popular news frames have been chosen to ensure that this work can be compared to other analyses, redone in the same or other context, as well as the results to be general, opposing to the limited issue-specific news frames. Also using news frames that have been already studied before allows drawing up conclusion on their previously observed effects – showing the effects of news frames underlines, why it is appropriate and important to analyze news paper articles on the EU to determine, whether newspapers could have had an effect on the voting outcomes of the EU referendum in Latvia.

However, as noted in the introduction in addition to news frames another aspect that will be observed in this research is the topics appearing in Latvian and Russian-speaking newspapers in the context of the EU accession. Such topics can be the economic changes with EU accession or the future of minorities in the EU and are interesting to observe and account for in order to understand what have the newspapers seen as the most noteworthy to discuss. Continuing this chapter, I will sum up the topics/arguments that can possibly be present in the news articles on EU accession.

Mikkel and Pridham (2004) in their study of the EU accession period and referendums in Latvia and Estonia, point out some arguments that have been featured in the accession debate. Three arguments – national sovereignty/independence, security and historical, while slightly different in their angle, more or less, stem from the Soviet past of Latvia. Joining the EU would mean giving up some of the sovereignty to the European institutions, however, this would mean “returning to Europe” and cutting away from the Soviet past. While some argue that joining EU is similar to the Soviet Union due to loss of sovereignty, others pointed out that the forced incorporation into the Soviet Union is not comparable to joining (voluntarily) the EU – a Union not based on military strength. For many joining the EU not only meant return to Europe and European values, which (supposedly) dominated in Latvia pre-occupation, but also “safety” from Russia. EU, together with NATO, would provide military and political protection from the neighbor feared by many.

Another set of arguments focus on the economic gains and losses that would come with the EU. EU funds, more foreign investment and growth along-side other EU countries were positive economic arguments put forward. On the other hand (and as noted in the previous research chapter) joining the EU would increase border control between Latvia and non-EU countries, such as Russia, thus possibly creating a negative effect on the trade with Russia. Mikkel and Pridham (2004) show both positive and negative effects of joining the EU for the Russian-speaking minorities. On one side, the EU was seen as a guarantee to improve and
control the implementation of minority rights. On the other side, a full exercise of the rights being part of the EU would not be possible for the non-citizens, permanent residents (Alien passport holders) of Latvia, for example, travelling in the EU would still require a visa. Thus, using Mikkel and Pridham’s (2004) study three possible topics can be outlined – sovereignty, economic consequences and minority questions.

As mentioned in the chapter on previous research, in a topic similar to this paper, Golubeva (2005) makes 18 thematic collocations (Figure 5). However, Golubeva (2005) separates negative and positive collocations on the same subject; as well some of the topics can be seen as sub-topics from others (for example, agriculture and economy). Nevertheless, Golubeva’s (2005) list is quite extensive and useful for the current paper. Many of the categories created by Golubeva (2005) go along with the arguments presented by Mikkel and Pridham (2004).

![Figure 5. Thematic allocations of the content analysis (Golubeva, 2005, p.162)](image)

Both the research of Golubeva, and Mikkel and Pridham focus on the same general topic of EU accession, thus, the arguments or thematic collocations will be adapted for the purpose of this work by creating general topics found in both of the works, as well as adding a topic focusing on minorities due to the specific focus on the Russian-speakers in this work. For the purpose of the analysis in this work 5 topic categories will be used: economy, internal changes, sovereignty, ethnic culture/immigration and minority status.
3.3. News frame effects

This sub-chapter of the paper will focus on presenting some previous research on the effects of news frames. It is important to understand, whether news frames can have an effect on the readers’ perception of a topic. If news frames do not have any effect on readers, then it would also be wrong to assume that differences between Latvian and Russian-speaking newspapers (if such are detected) could have influenced the differences in voting on EU accession in Latvia. De Vreese, Boomgaarden and Semetko (2010) based on an analysis of previous research on framing effects conclude that news frames can have both direct and indirect effects:

“Framing can operate through multiple routes, including both an indirect route of affecting belief importance and a direct route of offering new considerations and links between consideration that did not exist in advance [...] frames do indeed not only affect the importance of beliefs but they can also affect attitudes directly.” (De Vreese, Boomgaarden, Semetko, 2010, pp. 182-183).

Applying the above to the current paper a few scenarios can be put as an example: focusing on the EU as the political “safety net” from Russia (for example, EU as responsible for securing Latvia’s return to Europe and independence), can then have a reinforcing effect on a reader, who believes in the EU as a return to Europe or a “correction” of the past. Or on the opposite, focusing on the EU and the tightening of borders with non-EU neighbours, Russia, Belarus, and the disadvantages of this could negatively affect (by creating a new consideration) for a reader, who has not thought much about the EU in economic terms.

In the previous chapter it was noted that news frames can be written in a negative, neutral or positive manner. Previous research has shown that negative and positive frames affect readers differently – in an asymmetrical way. Negative frames have a stronger impact on the reader than positive frames (De Vreese, Boomgaarden, Semetko, 2010). Soroka (2006), in his study of the asymmetric effect of economic content information concludes that “public responses to negative economic information are much greater than are public responses to positive economic information [...] media coverage [...] does serve to enhance the effect of negative information” (Soroka, 2006, p.381).

Valkenburg, Semetko and De Vreese (1999) conclude that a story framed in one of the four frames examined in their study (human interest, responsibility, conflict and economic consequences) had an effect on the way the reader thinks about the issue, meaning, the reader interpreted the issue from the position that the issue was presented. Similar conclusion were reached by De Vreese (2004) in his study of television news: certain news frames provoked a certain perspective on the topic by the viewer: “the study showed that frames in
television news have the ability to direct viewers’ thoughts when conceiving of a contemporary political issue” (De Vreese, 2004, p. 45).

Vliegenthart, Schuck, Boomgaarden and De Vreese (2008) in their study of support for European integration found that news framed in terms of benefits of EU increased the amount of people that though of EU’s membership for their country as beneficial. EU news framed in terms of conflict had quite opposite effect:

“[…]the share of EU news framed in terms of conflict to caused a decrease in EU support and benefit perception since conflict news accentuates disagreement and the potential inability of the EU to operate efficiently” (Vliegenthart, Schuck, Boomgaarden, De Vreese, 2008, p.434)

Figure 6. Predicted levels of EU support depending on the news frame – benefit or conflict. (Vliegenthart, Schuck, Boomgaarden, De Vreese, 2008, p.432).
Figure 6 shows the general EU support and perceived benefits according to exposure to various levels of conflict and benefit framing. It can be expected that conflict news frames would also be negative towards the EU – the EU membership as a conflict with another issue. However, there could be also an opposite positive, when an article on EU membership is framed in terms of conflict, however, the EU could be seen as a remedy or solution to the conflict, which means that the article was framed positively from the perspective of the EU (opposing to another actor/issue). Understanding of possible news frames effects illustrates, why studying frames in Latvian and Russian-speaking newspapers and comparing the two is relevant to the subject of the EU referendum and the predominant Russian-speaker no vote to EU accession.

4. Methodology

Similarly to studies of other nature in social sciences, an analysis of news frames can start from two different points, which determine the course of the study: a study can be inductive or deductive in its design. Both types of studies can be observed separately or in combination in news frames research. Van Gorp (2010) suggests a study made out of two phases. First is the inductive phase, which is the data-driven phase, when news frames are derived after an analysis of the texts without previously set frames in mind. The second phase is the deductive phase, which “is based on the principles of doing quantitative content analysis which deals with measuring the extent to which inductively reconstructed frame packages are actually applied in a representative sample of texts” (Van Gorp, 2010, p.99).

In this study, the inductive phase of the work as defined by Van Gorp, 2010, will not be present – news frames and topics of interest were derived based on previous research (Table 1). The current study will be deductive – applying already existing and previously selected news frames to the data set. The study will use content analysis – both from a quantitative and qualitative approach. The first step of the study will use the content analysis for “objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication” (Berelson, 1954, p.489). This step involves working with the data to organize it into already predetermined categories – the data will be looked upon from several angles.

The points of interest/categories that will be searched for in the data are summarized in Table 1. I will note five topics (economy, sovereignty, internal changes, ethnic culture/immigration and minority status: the possible content of the topics is elaborated upon in Table 1 in the sub-topic column based on previous research (Chapter 3.2.,)) featured in the article and whether or
not one of the four news frames chosen for this work (benefit/disadvantage, human interest, conflict and responsibility frames) can be noted in the article. As well the general position towards EU accession, which derives from the article (positive, neutral or negative towards accession) will be noted. In addition to the general attitude depicted in the article towards the EU accession the news frames will also be noted as positive, neutral or negative towards EU accession (for example, the EU may be held responsible for positive or negative changes, or a human interest frame may be depicting EU accession in a neutral way and so on). The news frames will identified considering the knowledge gained while reading previous research that included the same news frames and based on the description provided in the theoretical chapter on the four news frames (how does the certain news frame typically present the issue; is it listing/presenting benefits and disadvantages of the EU; is it presenting the issue from a more personal angle and other similar questions will be guiding the coding process, which will be done by one coder).

The system of enumeration will be following: for each article it will be simple binary coding to “indicate whether or not the category appears in the document” (Bailey, 1987, p.306). Thus, if the article will feature information about the economy twice with information about the minority status in between, this will mean ‘yes/present’ for economy and ‘yes/present’ for minority status (opposing to two times yes or present for economy). This is done in order to ensure consistency. However, in relation to the whole set of articles from one newspaper the enumeration will rely upon frequency. Meaning, how many articles featured a certain category.
Table 1. Points of analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Possible sub-topics included</th>
<th>Frames</th>
<th>General attitude in article towards EU accession</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>economy</td>
<td>joining EU vs. not joining in terms of the economic consequences it will have on an individual, group, institution, region or country (as in Volkenburg, Semetko, de Vreese, 1999) EU and growth/decline of home economy, including specific topic (as in Golubeva, 2005) EU and decline/growth of agriculture (as in Golubeva, 2005) EU funds</td>
<td>human interest (positive, neutral or negative towards EU accession); responsibility (positive, neutral or negative towards EU accession); conflict (positive, neutral or negative towards EU accession); benefit/disadvantage (positive, neutral or negative towards EU accession)</td>
<td>positive; neutral; negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sovereignty</td>
<td>loss of sovereignty/control to the EU return to Europe; EU and security from Russia (as in Golubeva, 2005); not joining the EU and increased influence from Russia (adapted from Golubeva, 2005)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internal changes</td>
<td>EU and decrease/increase in crime (as in Golubeva, 2005); EU and social safety/insecurity (as in Golubeva, 2005); EU and increased control over instability (economic, political and so on) (as in Golubeva, 2005); increase/decrease of bureaucracy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ethnic culture/immigration</td>
<td>EU and protection/deterioration of ethnic culture (as in Golubeva, 2005); EU and immigration (as in Golubeva, 2005)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minority status</td>
<td>protection of minority rights (in)ability to exercise full rights within EU; possibility to gain citizenship after accession minority language/education/culture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results will help to create a general picture about the data – to determine what general position the newspaper holds towards EU accession, what are the most popular topics discussed in connection with EU accession, and how often and what frames are used in the chosen newspapers. The results of this analysis will be presented newspaper by newspaper, meaning, that general and quantitative information categorized in the first phase will be presented for each newspaper in a separate sub-chapter.

It is important to note that pleas are not analyzed for topics and news frames, as they are not articles produced by the newspaper’s journalists, featuring factual information and, perhaps, a frame. A plea simply asks to vote for or against the EU, however, it is still interesting to note such publications to analyze the choices (pleas for or against joining the EU) the newspapers have made. Factual publications are not analyzed in the course of this work too as they are purely factual and do not feature the standpoint of the newspaper. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note how many factual articles were published as a general indicator of the newspapers interest in the EU referendum.

The second phase of the study will be focused on the qualitative analysis of the data – focusing on the news frames that were noted in the first phase of the study. In this phase a more broad definition of content analysis is used rather than the strict quantitative approach used in the
first phase of the study (more on qualitative content analysis – Mayring, 2000 available in Kohlbacher, 2005). This phase will focus on interpreting and comparing, as well as summarizing, how the same frames were used in the chosen newspapers. The analysis will be structured frame by frame, meaning, that each news frame will be discussed in a separate sub-chapter. The results of the quantitative analysis and news frame analysis will be presented newspaper by newspaper and frame by frame respectively, and general conclusion will be summarized at the end of each part of the analysis. However, some referring to the quantitative results may be done during the qualitative outlook on the news frames usage. Conclusion on the summary of the results from both parts of the work will be made at the end of the work in Chapter 6.

4.1. Data

Four national daily newspapers were selected for the research – Diena, Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze (NRA), Chas (originally, in Russian: час) and Telegraf (originally, in Russian: телegraф). The first two are Latvian language, while the latter two – Russian language newspapers in Latvia. The data was collected in the period of two weeks before the EU accession referendum (05.09.2003 – 19.09.2003). In total 181 articles were collected: 62 from Diena, 44 from NRA, 41 from Chas and 34 from Telegraf. The editorial of the newspapers were not selected as the manner and frequency of editorials differed from one paper to another. Only articles from the main body of the newspaper were selected, thus, excluding possible articles from separate add-ons such as business or culture, as the existence, number of various add-ons and frequency of publishing varied in the selected newspapers.

Diena and NRA are the two largest national daily newspapers in Latvia [in 2002: 305,000 and 147,000 average auditorium; total population in 2003: 2,3 million (Centralas statistikas datu bazes, 2011). Chas is the second largest Russian-language newspaper in Latvia (in 2002: 122,000 average auditorium). Telegraf is the fourth most read newspaper in Latvia in 2004 (though a smaller average auditorium of 36,000 in 2002). Elaborating on the choice of Russian-language newspapers. The largest Russian-language newspaper Vesti Segodnia [originally, in Russian: Вести Сегодня] was not chosen due to the unavailability of September 2003 issues in the current circumstances. The third largest Russian-language newspaper Biznes & Baltija was not chosen due to the predominantly economic focus of the newspaper.

1 Even though newspaper articles were initially collected for a longer time period the two week period was chosen in order to limit the amount of articles to a number that can be examined thoroughly by one person, on one hand, but, on the other hand, is appropriate for a Master’s thesis and can point out to at least general trends.

2 Elaborating on the choice of Russian-language newspapers. The largest Russian-language newspaper Vesti Segodnia [originally, in Russian: Вести Сегодня] was not chosen due to the unavailability of September 2003 issues in the current circumstances. The third largest Russian-language newspaper Biznes & Baltija was not chosen due to the predominantly economic focus of the newspaper.
country-side dwellers; it is more popular among older people. The education level of the readers is similar as with Diena. It is interesting that some 14% of Diena’s readers and 10% of NRA’s readers are non-Latvians. Telegraf is oriented towards the younger, more educated Russian-speakers with 55% of the reader’s being Latvian citizens, as well as 22% - Latvian-speakers; 65% of the readers live in Riga. Telegraf is regarded as to being quite neutral and versatile, however, due to its mainly Russian-speaking auditorium dedicates more space towards relations with Russia, bilingual education and related topics. Chas is considered a more radical newspaper, in favour of the pro-Russian-speaker PCTVL party. 85% of Chas’ readers are non-Latvians; 55% of the readers are non-citizens. 55% of the readers live in Riga (Kruks, Šulmane (2002)).
5. Empirical findings

The chapter focusing on the empirical findings of the study will be structured in the following way. First, the quantitative results will be presented newspaper by newspaper. After that some general conclusion on the findings will be summarized. Next, the usage of news frames will be analyzed in more detail structuring the presentation frame by frame, which will be followed by concluding remarks on the usage of all the selected news frames. The chapter will be concluded with a sub-chapter with a particular focus on the articles that feature the minority status topic.

5.1. Quantitative results

5.1.1. Diena

In the two week period between the 5th of September, 2003 till the 19th of September, 2003 the Latvian language newspaper Diena had 62 publications connected to Latvia’s accession to the EU. 11 of these were purely factual articles mentioning the proceedings, time and space of the referendum, polling results or other information connected to the EU referendum without revealing the standpoint of the newspaper on the information. For example, 19.09.2003 Diena published an informational article “Where and how to vote in the referendum”, which in detail tells where is it possible to vote, what is needed to be eligible to vote and how the voting proceeds. On the same date Diena published only factual information on poll results – “EU supporters – over half”. In a similar fashion Diena published two factual articles on the proceeding and results of the student test EU referendum (Grinuma, I. Students are voting. 09.09.2003; Grinuma, I. Students are shy to participate in their referendum. 10.09.2003).

During the two week period Diena published 13 pleas to vote for the EU and none to vote against the EU. Two of the pleas were written by state officials – one was signed by the former Prime Ministers of Latvia (Pelane, A. Former Prime Ministers ask to vote for. 19.09.2003) and the other - by the Latvian president of the time Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga (Freiberga, V.V. Plea of the president Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga. 18.09.2003). Both of these pleas stress on the importance to continue the path Latvia started after independence and move towards closer integration with Western Europe. The other 11 pleas were written by various interest groups or representatives of a certain area. For example, the IT and communications industry, group of economists, artists, the Lutheran church, pensioners association and other groups. A common theme in the pleas was return to Europe and securing a good future for the next generations, as well as pointing out benefits of EU accession to the particular groups.
As indicated in Figure 7 the great majority of articles published by Diena were positive towards the EU (27 positive, seven neutral and none negative). It is interesting to note that in two week period Diena did not publish any articles that were critical towards the EU. The positive position of Diena towards EU accession is reinforced by the large amount of pleas to vote for the EU that were published (as mentioned – 13), as well as the large amount of publications on the EU accession topic in general.

Figure 7: Diena publications on Latvia’s accession to EU [N=62].
The economy was the most frequent topic discussed in relation to EU accession in the Diena (featured 19 times, Figure 8). The topic of sovereignty was featured 14 times, while internal changes just slightly less – 13 times. Ethnic culture/immigration and EU accession was discussed six times, while minority status was the least frequent topic discussed in Diena (featured three times). The articles that feature the topic of the minority status after EU accession will be discussed in a separate chapter (Chapter 5.3.).

![Frequency of news frames in Diena](image)

**Figure 9**: Number of articles each news frame was noted in: Diena newspaper [N=48].

![Manner of framing in Diena](image)

**Figure 10**: Manner of framing in Diena.

The most frequently used news frame was the benefit/disadvantage frame (Figure 9 and Figure 10), which was used 22 times in total – 19 times in a positive manner towards the EU.
and three times in a neutral manner. The disadvantages of the EU did not prevail over benefits in any of the cases, when the benefit/disadvantage frame was applied - the frame was not used in a negative manner towards the EU. The human interest frame is the second in frequency appearing in 14 articles. In nine of these human interest was framed positive towards the EU and four times in a neutral manner. Only once the human perspective on EU accession was highlighted in the negative way towards EU accession – this being the only time that any of the chosen news frames was noted with a negative perspective on EU in the selected Diena articles.

The responsibility frame was noted 11 times and all of the frames were positive towards EU accession. The conflict frame was the least frequently used frame in Diena articles. It was noted once – with a positive approach towards the EU (accession being a possibility to resolve a conflict). The news frames will be discussed in detail with examples of framing itself in separate sub-chapters for each frame alongside the same news frames from the other chosen newspapers. However, the quantitative outlook on articles published in Diena in the period of 05.09.2003 – 19.09.2003 show that Diena had taken a large interest in the EU and Latvia’s possibility to join the Union by publishing the largest amount of articles on the topic in the selected time period. Diena had taken a clear positive stance on EU accession by publishing only positive or neutral articles, and using predominantly positive frames, while refraining from a critical approach to EU accession.

5.1.2. Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai

In the selected two week period (05.09.2003 – 19.05.2003) the second selected Latvian language newspaper Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai (NRA) published 44 articles connected to Latvia’s accession to the EU. Out of the total 44 – seven were purely factual. For example, on the 19.09.2003 NRA published an article “Less undecided people before the referendum”, which shows the results of an opinion poll on EU accession, however, does not make any conclusions or show the attitude of the author or NRA towards this development. Similarly to Diena, NRA published only factual information on the results of an unofficial student voting on EU accession (Olsteins, K. Student referendum: 58,3% or Latvia’s accession to EU. 11.09.2003) and a school pupil voting on the same matter (Anonymous. If school kids could vote, Latvia would join the EU. 13.09.2003). Except for the case of the title “If school kids could vote, Latvia would join the EU”, which seems more positive than neutral, all other six articles have informative neither negative, nor positive titles. However, it seems interesting to remark, that
one of the titles states “Half thousand choir singer will sing about the EU”, while in the text it is stated that half a hundred choir singers will participate.

In the two week period three of the articles were a plea to vote for the EU (Lulle, A.–Intelligentsia plead to vote for EU. 05.09.2003; Anonymous. Let’s think about the future. 12.09.2003; Anonymous. We are asking to do the right choice. 19.09.2003) and no direct pleas against. Intelligentsia’s plead to vote for the EU talks of a recent event, when prominent people of various occupations, asked to vote for the EU. The article again asks the people to vote for the EU and lists the individuals, who encourage pro voting. These are politicians, famous and admired writers, University professors and individuals of other occupations. Golubeva (2005) in an analysis of an article on the internet site delfi.lv depicting the same event writes that intelligentsia in this case is “broadly representative and inclusive […]” (Golubeva, 2005, p.160). Some of the mentioned are the same people, who were the faces of Latvia’s fight for independence after the fall of the Soviet Union. The second plea was published right before the referendum 19.09.2003 - “We are asking to do the right choice” and is signed mainly by people from the Latvian Press Association and directors of newspapers. The plea strongly asks to continue what has been achieved with Latvian independence and to continue the path to Europe, whose values Latvia shares and must continue to reinforce. The EU is also portrayed as Latvia chance for welfare and security; this chance might not come again in case Latvian citizens vote no. While not mentioned overtly in the first plead, the common determinant in both pleas seems to be the idea of “return to Europe” and continuation of the work that has been done in order for Latvia to regain independence.

The third plead to vote for the EU “Let’s think about the future” is different from the two above. It is not signed by any prominent people; instead, it is a plea from a common Latvian – a teacher. The teacher asks to vote for the EU, scolds some Latvian politicians that have not been doing enough in the field of education, and brings up the question of Russian-speaking teachers, who do not know Latvian, thus, refuse to teach in Latvian. The Latvian teacher asks the government “to encourage returning to Russia inhabitants, who feel bad here, are being suppressed and cannot get education in their own language” (Anonymous. Let’s think about the future. Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai, 12.09.2003, p. n/a). This is the only publication in NRA during the chosen time period where the Russian-speakers are mentioned: the approach here is that, while Latvia should join the EU, those Russian-speakers unable to fit into the society should leave to Russia. Thus, the choice of publication seems interesting and, perhaps, shows a small insight into the standpoint of the editorial.
Figure 11: NRA publications on Latvia’s accession to EU [N=44].

Figure 11 indicates that in the examined two week period NRA published predominantly positive articles about EU accession (19 –positive, ten – neutral, five – negative). Thus, it can be observed that NRA held a mostly positive position on EU accession with only five negative articles published two week before the referendum.

Figure 12: Topic frequency in NRA articles [N=45].

The most popular topic in NRA articles on the EU was the economy: this included effects of EU accession on the Latvian economy in general, as well as particular aspects of the economy such as food prices, wages, distribution of EU funds, effects of accession on various sectors as
banking, industry and other sub-topics. 19 articles were published on the topic of economy, 12 on sovereignty and internal changes, and two on ethnic culture/immigration. Only one article mentioned the minority status and EU accession (Figure 12).

![Frequency of news frames in NRA](figure13.png)

**Figure 13**: Number of articles each news frame was noted in: NRA newspaper [N=30].

The most commonly found frame in NRA (noted in 16 articles, Figure 13) was the benefit/disadvantage frame illustrating the benefits and disadvantages of joining the EU. As it can be seen from Figure 14 mainly those were benefits of EU accession rather than disadvantages that were brought forward (benefits/disadvantages were framed positively 11 times, neutrally – four and negatively only once). The human interest frame was noted seven times – four times in a positive way, twice in a negative way and once in a neutral manner. The responsibility frame was also noted seven times – four times in a positive manner and three times in negative manner towards EU accession.
From the quantitative overview of the articles published in NRA in the two week period it can be concluded that the newspaper had a positive attitude towards Latvia’s accession to the EU. The newspaper published mostly positive articles towards the EU and used news frames most often to point out the benefits or positive sides of EU accession.

5.1.3. Telegraf

In the two week period between the 5th of September, 2003 till the 19th of September, 2003 the Russian language newspaper Telegraf published 34 articles connected to Latvia’s accession to the EU. Ten of these articles were purely factual elaborating on the date, time and procedures of the referendum or presenting statistics on polling results without adding an analysis or interpretation on the behalf of the newspaper. For example, on the 19.09.2003 Telegraf published lengthy information on the proceeding of the referendum “Note to the voter: procedure of the referendum”. A number of times polling results on the question of EU accession were published without any remarks on the behalf of the newspapers (for example, Anonymous. Growing EU support. 19.09.2003). Similarly to the two previous newspapers, Telegraf published the results of the student referendum on EU without expressing the standpoint of the newspaper (Dembovskaja, D. Youth chooses Europe. 11.09.2003).

In the selected time period one publication was a plea to vote for the EU and there were no pleas to vote against EU accession. Two days before the referendum Telegraf published the plea to vote for the EU by the President of the time Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga. In the plea the former president in a personal manner addresses the Latvian society to vote for the EU,
elaborating on the reasons, why the president herself will vote for EU accession (Vike-Freiberga, V. Time to say goodbye to dullness and doubt. Telegraf, 18.09.2003). Setting aside the 11 factual/plea publications, 23 articles were published on EU accession during the selected time period in Telegraf. The frequency of different approaches to EU accession is almost even in terms of positive, neutral and negative articles (eight positive towards EU accession, eight – neutral and seven negative; Figure 15).

![Telegraf publications on EU accession](image)

**Figure 15:** Telegraf publications on Latvia’s accession to EU [N=34].

![Frequency of topics in Telegraf](image)

**Figure 16:** Topic frequency in Telegraf articles [N=36].

The most common topics found in publications on EU accession in Telegraf were economy and internal changes, which were featured in 14 and 13 articles, respectively (Figure 16). The topic
of sovereignty was discussed six times; ethnic culture/immigration – twice. It is interesting to note that the minority status was mentioned only in one publication during the selected time period, which is curious considering that the newspaper is oriented towards Russian-speakers in Latvia, who are more likely to be interested in the implications of EU accession for the minority – the Russian-speakers and the non-citizens.

The most commonly noted news frame in the Telegraf articles was the benefit/disadvantage frame (noted in 17 articles, Figure 17). Out of that it was framed in a positive manner towards the EU seven times, neutral – five times and negative also five times (Figure 18). The human interest frame was noted in five articles: twice in a neutral manner, three times in a negative manner (Figure 7 and Figure 8). The EU was not viewed positively from a human interest perspective in the selected time frame. The responsibility frame was used four times – three times it attached negative responsibility to the EU, once the EU was held positively responsible for a change. The neutral manner of the responsibility frame was not noted in the Telegraf during the selected time period (Figure 7 and Figure 8).

Figure 17: Number of articles each news frame was noted in: Telegraf newspaper [N=26].

The most commonly noted news frame in the Telegraf articles was the benefit/disadvantage frame (noted in 17 articles, Figure 17). Out of that it was framed in a positive manner towards the EU seven times, neutral – five times and negative also five times (Figure 18). The human interest frame was noted in five articles: twice in a neutral manner, three times in a negative manner (Figure 7 and Figure 8). The EU was not viewed positively from a human interest perspective in the selected time frame. The responsibility frame was used four times – three times it attached negative responsibility to the EU, once the EU was held positively responsible for a change. The neutral manner of the responsibility frame was not noted in the Telegraf during the selected time period (Figure 7 and Figure 8).
From the quantitative overview of the articles published in Telegraf in the two week period before the referendum it can be concluded that all in all the newspaper was quite neutral towards the EU as almost an equal amount of positive, neutral and negative articles were published. I find that the frames featured in Telegraf on the general level can be regarded as neutral: while there were slightly more positive benefit/disadvantage frame this can be outweighed by a slightly higher amount of negative rather than positive or neutral human interest and responsibility frames. However, a closer look at the used frames and comparison to the framing in other newspapers will help to understand the attitude towards EU of the Telegraf newspaper.

5.1.4. Chas

In the selected two week period before the referendum the Russian-language newspaper Chas had 41 publications on the topic of Latvia and EU accession. Seven of these were purely factual publications. In a similar fashion like the other three selected newspapers Chas published technical details on the referendum (for example, Radionov, V. Electoral commission played a referendum. 16.09.2003), the student referendum (Radionov, V. Student referendum. 09.09.2003; Radionov, V. Students choose EU. With reservations. 11.09.2003) or other information connected to EU accession without expressing the view of the newspaper on the issue. There were no publications pleading to vote for or against EU accession in Chas in the selected time period.
In the two week period Chas published mostly positive and neutral articles towards EU accession (14 and 12, respectively), while only four articles had a negative perspective on EU accession (Figure 19). Similarly to the other newspapers, the most popular topic noted in Chas articles was the economy and EU accession (featured in 18 articles). The minority status was the second most frequently featured topic in Chas articles (featured in ten articles). The topic of internal changes and EU accession was featured in 9 articles. Sovereignty and EU accession was featured in six articles. The future of ethnic culture/immigration and the EU was discussed in one article (Figure 20).
The most frequently noted frame in Chas articles was the benefit/disadvantage frame – featured in 18 articles (Figure 21). The benefit/disadvantage frame nine times had a positive perspective on EU accession, seven times – a neutral perspective and twice a negative view on EU accession (Figure 22). The responsibility frame was noted in eight articles: five times in a positive way towards EU, three times in a negative and none in a neutral manner (Figure 21 and Figure 22). The human interest frame was noted in 7 Chas articles: four times with a positive perspective on EU accession, once – neutral and twice – negative (Figure 21 and Figure 22).
The conflict frame was featured in three articles: once from a positive perspective and twice from a negative perspective on EU accession (Figure 21 and Figure 22).

**Figure 22: Manner of news frames in Chas.**

### 5.1.5. Concluding remarks on the quantitative results

In the selected two week period before the EU referendum in Latvia Diena published the largest number of articles (62 analytical articles, factual articles and pleas) connected to Latvia’s accession to EU. Telegraf had the least number of articles (34). NRA and Chas were in the middle of this spectrum with 44 and 41 articles respectively. However, from these results a general tendency can be seen – the Latvian language newspapers Diena and NRA showed a greater interest in the question of EU accession than the Russian language newspapers Chas and Telegraf. Out of the total number of articles Diena published 11 factual articles, Telegraf – ten, and NRA and Chas each published seven. The factual articles were somewhat similar in the content in the selected newspapers. They contained general information on the proceedings of the referendum. Also the newspapers took similar interest in the unofficial student referendum taking place in Latvian universities. However, mostly the results were presented in a factual manner without showing the standpoint of the paper.

Another point of interest in this study was the publishing of pleas in the newspapers. It is interesting to conclude that mostly the Latvian language newspapers were active in publishing pleas. Diena published 11 pleas to vote for EU and NRA – three. Common to both newspapers
the pleas were authored/signed by prominent and known people – state representatives, artists, writers, as well as various interest groups. The common theme in the pleas was asking to vote for EU accession in order to return to Europe and secure a better future for the next generations. More specific interest groups also outlined positive reasons to join EU from the standpoint of their group.

From the two Russian language newspapers only Telegraf published one positive plea publication. The plea was authored by President Vaira Vike Freiberga (in detail – Chapter 5.1.3.). Chas did not publish positive or negative pleas connected to the EU referendum. I think that the previous information on plea publications indicates a more positive attitude towards EU accession of the Latvian speaking newspapers in comparison to the Russian language counterparts. While the effects of the pleas have not been studied such publications carry a very positive and strong message which is backed up by influential people of Latvia. In my opinion, this shows the determination of the Latvian language media to carry out a positive message about the EU and persuade their readers to cast a positive vote – especially in the case of Diena.

The next point of interest in the quantitative analysis was the general standpoint of the analytical articles towards EU accession (positive, neutral, negative). This was determined subjectively by the author based on the wording, remarks and general picture portrayed in each article. Based on the analysis Diena had published predominantly positive articles on EU accession; none of the analyzed articles viewed accession in a negative way in general (this, however, does not imply that no negative details were mentioned in the articles). NRA also created a predominantly positive picture about accession, however, featured also some negative articles. Nevertheless, it lies on the positive side of the spectrum towards EU accession. The analysis of Chas articles showed that the newspaper was also mostly positive towards EU accession with few negative articles; however, more neutral articles were published than in NRA. Telegraf published diverse articles on the topic of EU accession – the amount of positive, neutral and negative articles was almost the same. Thus, with no clear preference Telegraf could be placed as neutral towards EU accession.

Another point of interest in the quantitative study was the topics (economy, sovereignty, internal changes, ethnic culture/immigration and minority status) that were discussed in connection to Latvia’s accession to EU. The topic noted in the most number of articles in all four newspapers was the economy. It is not surprising that this has been the most discussed topic in relation to EU accession as this is precisely the area where the EU would bring a vast
amount of changes (that also worry the people as to how will it affect their financial situation). A very frequent economic sub-topic was price growth after accession, as well as the impact of accession in various industries and agriculture. The second most popular topic in all newspapers except Chas was internal changes after EU accession. This included, for example, changes in laws and regulations (and the impact of these changes on everyday life), border control and other sub-topics. The third most discussed topic in relation to EU accession was sovereignty. It is interesting to note that sovereignty was discussed twice more often in Latvian language newspapers than in the Telegraf and Chas.

It is interesting to note that ethnic culture and immigration was only the fourth most discussed topic out of the five chosen categories. The future of the Latvian language and culture in the European melting pot and possible immigration to Latvia seems to have been more marginal prior to accession. The least discussed topic (except for the case of Chas) was the minority status. Diena and NRA had published very little information about the future of the Russian-speaking minority (also other minorities, for example, sexual minorities would be accounted for in this topic) with only three and one article, respectively, featuring this topic. The two Russian language newspapers have shown mixed results. In Chas the minority status was the second most frequently discussed topic after the minority status, which goes in line in what has been anticipated before the analysis. However, Telegraf featured this topic in only one article. The articles that feature the minority status topic will be discussed in further detail in a separate chapter (Chapter 5.3.), as it has been selected as a specific point of interest in this study.

The last point of interest in the quantitative analysis was the usage of news frames. Here four news frames were noted – human interest, responsibility, conflict and benefit/disadvantage, as well whether the frames were applied in a positive, neutral or negative way towards EU accession. In line with the previous quantitative results in Diena news frames were predominantly noted in a positive manner towards accession. In the case of NRA news frames were mostly positive, though with more neutral and negative frames noted than in the case of Diena. Similar results were found in Chas. While the majority of the news frames were used in a positive manner, neutral and negative news frames were noted relatively frequently. In line with previous quantitative results Telegraf portrayed a different picture than in the case of the three other rather positively inclined newspapers. With the exception of the benefit/disadvantage frame (where more positive frames were noted than neutral or negative)
human interest and responsibility news frames were more often negative rather than positive towards EU accession.

To sum up the quantitative results of the study it can be concluded that while the Latvian language newspapers published a larger amount of articles on EU accession and displayed a more positive attitude towards accession than the Russian language newspapers it cannot be concluded that the latter were negative towards accession. NRA and Chas showed similar results in terms of amount of publications and their manner and both can be described as rather positive towards accession. The differences can be seen in publications of the other two newspapers. Diena had chosen to promote a strong positive attitude towards accession – the amount of publications was comparatively large, the publications were predominantly positive, and a comparatively large amount of pleas was published. Telegraf, on the other hand, published the least amount of articles, which were balanced in terms of their attitude towards accession, though, a large part of the news frames noted in Telegraf were negative. Nevertheless, it cannot be concluded that Telegraf was consistently negative towards EU accession – rather the newspaper could be regarded as neutral – not necessarily in the direct meaning, but in terms of the balance between negative, neutral and positive publications and various news frames. The next part of the analysis will look more in depth at the news frames noted in all newspapers.
5.2. Use of news frames

The following chapter will focus on presenting and comparing, how the four selected news frames were used in the different newspapers. The analysis will presented frame-by-frame starting with the human interest frame.

5.2.1. Human interest frame

As it was noted in the theoretical section of the work the human interest frame approaches an issue from a personal angle, whether it is from a perspective of an individual or a group. The frame can have a larger impact, if the reader can identify himself/herself with the individual or group in the story. The human interest frame was noted in all three manners – positive, negative and neutral – in all newspapers except Telegraf in which no positive human interest frames were noted. Diena and Chas had predominantly used the human interest frame from a positive angle. In the case of Telegraf the human interest frame was most often used from a negative perspective. Continuing this sub-chapter, examples of the human interest frame will be presented.

From a neutral manner opinions of individuals or groups have been presented in all newspapers in such a way that they neither urge to vote for nor against EU accession, but discuss the issue from multiple perspectives. Telegraf presented the opinion of the Evangelic-Lutheran church from a neutral perspective (Ignatev, O. Priests talk about EU. Telegraf, 10.09.2003). Diena approached the EU accession question from the perspective of teachers. Diena discussed future possibilities for this group in a neutral manner showing both positive aspects (for example, higher wages for teachers) and negative aspects such as the uncertain future of the Latvian identity. The same group – teachers – was used in NRA. However, here the teacher is addressing the readers himself and discussing different aspects of accession without expressing a strong preference (Stabins, A. The people need help. Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai, 05.09.2003). Chas uses a neutral human interest frame to present the position on EU accession in a more unconventional way by discussing the future of prostitutes and brothel owners in the EU (Lubich, J. Eurostandarts for Riga’s prostitutes: knowledge of languages required. Chas, 13.09.2003).

From a negative perspective the human interest frame emphasized the negative consequences of EU accession for individuals or a group. The size and the concreteness of the groups varied from one frame to another. An article published in NRA chose the poor as a human interest group. The poor where defined as all those who are impoverished and survive without proper
food, medication and other necessities. The author then asks whether EU funds would really help this group as the previous occasions, when Latvia received some kind of loans or funding, have not improved the situation for the very poor (Freimanis, U. Referendum chaos. Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai, 19.09.2003). Telegraf and Chas both have chosen the Russian-speakers as the focus of the human interest with a negative outlook on EU accession. Though, the two newspapers approached the subject from different angles.

In Telegraf the readers are addressed with the question of language: what is the purpose of changing the main language in Russian-speaking schools from Russian to Latvian, if it is English that will be required everywhere after EU accession? In this article the focus group – Russian-speakers – are dissatisfied with the reality of having to learn not only Latvian, but also English due to EU accession (Anonymous. State language - English. Telegraf, 09.09.2003). Chas picked another angle to present the group and focused the human interest frame on those Russian-speakers in Latvia, who reside here permanently but are non-citizens and cannot vote. First the author paints the hard reality of her life as a Russian-speaker, as well as the hard future for her, if prices do rise after EU accession, however, the main anti-EU point is emphasized at the end of the article: “I ask my friends and relatives, who have been stripped of their right to vote even in this important referendum, how would they vote? And I hear the answer ‘no’. That is way I will vote against (EU accession) for myself and ‘that guy – non-citizen’”( Semjonova, V. To Europe with a 75 Lat salary. Chas, 05.09.2003, pg.8).

Thus, in accordance with their mostly Russian-speaking readership the newspapers chose human interest groups that can reflect the interests of their readers. However, it is interesting to note that both newspapers chose a negative perspective on EU accession. One of the most popular references groups – students – were used both in Chas and Telegraf as a group or individual out of this group with a negative outlook on EU accession. Some of the students were worried about rising prices and smaller salaries with EU accession (Radionov, V. Students make their choice. Chas, 10.09.2003), while others pointed out that it is possible to study across Europe even without joining the EU (Ignatev, O. Scandinavian sagas. Telegraf, 05.09.2003), perhaps, as an anti-argument against the widely used argument that Latvia’s accession to EU will create great possibilities for students. A smaller reference group is used in one of Telegraf’s articles (Kirilov, P. Cutlet “Brussels style”. Telegraf, 19.09.2003), which explores the possible future for small cafeterias after EU accession. While the author and owners of cafeterias predict that prices will rise, the future for them is not entirely clear:”Maybe that is why Igor [owner of a cafeteria] is against the EU – he is used to rely on his own strength and dislikes uncertainty. However, Igor admits, if salaries will rise after EU
accession his business will grow. But what if the salaries do not rise?” (Kirilov, P. Cutlet "Brussels style". Telegraf, 19.09.2003, p.n/a).

In the only article with a negative human interest frame on EU accession (from the selected articles) Diena focused on retired people. The retired people view EU accession negatively due to various reasons. Some are afraid about the future of the Latvian economy, because “We are lagging behind and we won’t be able to compete with other EU countries – our economy will be crushed and beaten in the mud” (Zalite, Z. Pensioners are for because of children and safety. Diena, 16.09.2003, pg.3). Others are afraid of the deterioration of the Latvian culture and quick rise of prices vis-à-vis the slow growth of pensions (Zalite, Z. Pensioners are for because of children and safety. Diena, 16.09.2003). However, it is interesting to note that, while the article draws a quite negative picture on EU accession from the perspective of pensioners, the title of the article suggests that retired people are supportive of EU accession. Perhaps, this again underlines the predominantly positive approach of Diena towards EU accession.

Just like in the case of negative human interest framing students were a popular reference group in positive human interest frames. Both Diena and Telegraf (Grinuma, I. Students can give a serious message about EU vote. Diena, 08.09.2003; Reznikov-Martov, K. General Repetition. Telegraf, 10.09.2003) viewed EU accession through the perspective of students and mentioned the same benefits – possibilities to study and work abroad with fewer restrictions.

It is interesting to note that the study and work abroad argument has been featured frequently throughout the debate. It has been mentioned not only in the cases described above but also in other news frames such as the benefit/disadvantage frame.

Another popular topic before EU accession was the future of Latvian agriculture. Diena ended an article on the future of agriculture with very positive opinions from farmers, who thought that the only salvation from the strong competition brought by Lithuanian farmers would be EU accession (Ercmane, E. Eurocalculator for farmers. Diena, 06.09.2003). Presenting decisive personal pro or anti-EU opinions at the end of the article or on its sidelines has been noted quite frequently in all the newspapers, which may indicate to the effectiveness of relating issues in articles to readers by presenting personal opinions.

In of its articles Chas has again chosen to view EU accession in a more unconventional way comparing to the other newspapers by looking at what changes will EU accession bring to grey and black market businessmen. The article is ended with positive conclusions for this group of people:“In general the view of the dark experts on the future prospects is positive. Those who are afraid of rising prices forget on important factor of our economy. The advantage is grey
with a large contraband sector.” (Lubich, J. Black market trade Europe-style: cigarettes to London, roe to Paris. Chas, 16.09.2003, pg.9). With the newspapers comparatively high interest in the future of the minority status Chas has also chosen to present EU accession from the perspective of the leader of the group fighting for the rights of Russian-speaking schools in Latvia. The leader viewed EU accession as a way to secure the rights of Russian-speaking schools in Latvia and to “help Latvia to get rid of the national narrow mindedness, self-esteem and insularity typical to the Latvian government” (Radionov, V. Supporting EU. Chas, 16.09.2003, pg. 6).

Based on human interest frame examples it could be concluded that this frame offers various angles to approach an issue. An issue can be viewed neutrally from the perspective of a person or group, but if needed the human interest frame presents the possibility to show strong positive or negative opinions. The usage of a reference group (or individual) allows the authors to attach an emotional perspective to the article. While many of the reference groups were similar in the chosen newspapers, for example, students, teachers, the Russian-language newspapers also chose groups especially relevant to their readership – Russian-speaking citizens and non-citizens, permanent residents of Latvia. More general conclusions on the human interest frame usage and also the use of the other chosen news frames will be presented after examples from all the frames have been described.

5.2.2. Responsibility frame

As described in the theoretical section of the work the responsibility frame attaches the responsibility for certain problems or changes to an actor which in the context of this work would be the EU. In this work a positive responsibility frame would be one, which places positive responsibility on the EU while negative responsibility frame would hold the EU responsible for some sort of negative changes attributed to Latvia’s accession to EU. In the course of the analysis it became clear that the responsibility frame was only used either in a positive or negative manner in the selected data. While I find it is possible to be responsible in a neutral manner, meaning, that the changes that one has brought are neither good nor bad, for example, if the author of an article would describe legislation that has been enacted due to EU regulations, but would not emphasize whether the changes have positive or negative consequences. However, it seems that the authors of the articles have chosen un-neutral responsibility in order to make their articles more attractive and exciting for the reader.
In a positive manner the EU was most frequently associated with responsibility for economic changes that would occur (at least were predicted to occur) with Latvia’s accession to EU. The frame was also applied in a reversed manner, meaning, if Latvian citizens would choose to stay out of the EU this would affect the economy in a negative way. Positive changes were attributed predominantly to EU accession, thus, in my opinion, placing the responsibility on EU. This approach was especially popular in Diena articles which published a whole series of articles under the title “If we stay outside of EU”, which viewed how non-membership would affect various spheres such as the markets, agriculture, education, infrastructure and others. For example, Latvia would lose a potential market, have limited access to EU markets and lose positive triggers for business (Hartmanis, M. Risks to lose important markets. Diena, 15.09.2003) or in the sphere of agriculture “in case of non-accession they [farmers] would sink, because their only chance is the EU – bigger support payments, implementation of development projects” (Anonymous. A no will affect farmers the most. Diena, 17.09.2003, pg.3)

Without the reversed logic approach the responsibility frame emphasized the positive changes for the enforcement of which the EU is responsible. Chas noted the favorable environment for receiving financing for business and the possibilities to gain economic strength in the environment upheld by the EU (Knjazeva, O. Do you want European money? Take it! Chas, 18.09.2003). In a similar fashion NRA applied the responsibility frame to highlight how EU enforced market liberalization requirements will limit the (hidden) support to chosen enterprises (Lidere, E. EU norms discourage hidden help to state enterprises. Neatkarīgā Rita Avīze Latvijai, 17.09.2003). Telegraf noted the more favorable car insurance conditions with larger damage compensations brought by EU enforced rules (Kosmachev, K. Car citizen according to euro standard. Telegraf, 15.09.2003). However, not all the cases of positive responsibility frames were focused on economic topics.

Chas published a lengthy article authored by the minister of integration of the time, who discussed what an important role the EU plays in securing the rights of non-citizens and minority members in Latvia. In the article the EU has been attributed responsibility of guaranteeing social and economic rights to non-citizens in the EU, being active in securing a better position for minorities in Latvia, as well as being heavily involved in financing culture, education and language programs for minorities (Muiznieks, N. EU, integration and national minorities. Chas, 19.09.2003). Diena portrayed the future of the Latvian language through the responsibility prism. With EU accession Latvian will become one of the official EU languages which would secure series of rights for the language. EU accession was portrayed as a way of
securing the position of Latvian (thus, the positive responsibility of EU for this guarantee),
while non-membership would create threats to the language by leaving it unprotected
(Kimenis, A. Latvia in the EU: national aspect. Diena, 13.09.2003). In a somewhat similar way
one of NRA’s articles portrayed the EU as more solid guarantee of freedom and democracy for
Latvia (than Latvia on its own)(Hermanis, V. Latvians abroad wait for the referendum.
It is interesting to note that NRA also published an article which portrayed the EU in the
exactly opposite fashion than in the article described above. Here the author of the article
placed negative responsibility on the EU for stripping Latvia of its economic and political
freedom (in case of accession). Also responsibility is placed not only on the EU, but the process
of globalization for diminishing the Latvian language and ethnic culture (Austrina, M. The great
will determine our future. Neatkarīgā Rita Avīze Latvijai, 15.09.2003). The same interesting
paradox can be noted in the case of Chas. While the article described above attributed positive
responsibility to the EU in terms of minority rights, another article published by Chas accused
EU of being responsible of not noticing or not wishing to notice the violation of minority rights
in Latvia and not taking into account the opinion of non-citizens of Latvia (Krasilnikov, A. Non-
citizens - let’s make up our minds! Chas, 12.09.2003).
Similarly to the positive approach of the responsibility frame the negative responsibility frame
predominantly focused on the economy and internal changes. Perhaps, this can be explained
by the nature of the EU membership itself – the large amount of regulations and changes in
economic and related fields (which in this work often would be included under internal
changes) and smaller interference in other fields. Very few responsibility frames were used to
explain the minority status or ethnic culture changes and the examples have been described in
the paragraph above. In one of its articles featuring a negative responsibility frame NRA places
negative responsibility on the EU for various predicted accession consequences such as general
rise in prices, as well rise in electricity prices, no improvement in infrastructure and industry
and other negative consequences (Lulle, A. Economic sovereignty - outside of EU. Neatkarīgā
Rīta Avīze Latvijai, 08.09.2003). In another article published in NRA the author writes about
seven negative economic consequences which are predicted according to the author and the
author’s sources after EU accession (Lulle, A. EU might not save Latvia’s agriculture. Neatkarīgā
Rīta Avīze Latvijai, 08.09.2003).
In a similar way various predicted negative economic changes have been described also in the
other newspapers (for example, Dembovskaja, D. Validol in law. Telegraf, 17.09.2003; Elksne,
P. Another 1,8 million in favour of EU. Telegraf, 09.09.2003; Whitecocks, J. Margaret
Thatcher’s skeptical view on EU. Chas, 16.09.2003) except for Diena where no negative responsibility articles were noted. A common determinant for the negative use of this frame was the wording chosen by the authors, who often featured expression such as “due to EU enforced regulations”, “changes attributed to EU accession”, “due to the price level in the EU member states” and other similar wording. The wording used in the frames has proved to be an important determinant to separate the responsibility frame from the benefit/disadvantage frame.

5.2.3. Conflict frame

The conflict frame was noted only in two of the selected newspapers – Diena and Chas. Diena featured the conflict frame once in a positive manner; Chas featured the conflict frame three times – once in a positive and twice in a negative manner towards Latvia’s accession to EU. From a positive perspective EU accession was seen as means to resolve a conflict. In Chas the EU was portrayed as a resolving force to the conflict or tension between Ireland and Britain, and helping improve the relations between the two countries. A parallel between this example and the Latvian-Russian relations was drawn, meaning, the EU as a possible conflict resolute or a force helping improve the relations between the two countries (Dick Roush: "EU is beneficial for small countries". Chas, 17.09.2003).

A similar logic is applied in the article by Diena “’No´ will break the security circle” - EU accession is portrayed as guarantee to the economic and political security of Latvia. Not joining the EU, on the other hand, would cause a conflict – though not a direct military, nevertheless, a conflict resulting in Latvia’s surrender under the pressure coming from Eastern neighbors and return to the less developed Eastern bloc (Arāja, D. ’No´ will break the security circle. Diena, 19.09.2003). The topic around which the conflict frame was built in both of the articles was sovereignty.

From a negative perspective the conflict frame was applied with topics of sovereignty and economy. One of the articles sees a conflict between EU accession and the criminal law of Latvia prior to 1998, according to which public calls to endanger the state’s sovereignty can be punished. The author asks whether this has been changed to fit the political realities, otherwise, all pro-EU activists could be persecuted (Mihailova, M. & Marahovskij, V. Latvia will be independent for about ten more days. chas, 09.09.2003). The second conflict frame negative towards EU accession is built around an economic conflict. Chas (Knjazeva, O. We do not need the overseas Euro. Chas, 16.09.2003) writes that, while only 35% of the Latvian
society would like the Euro to replace the Lat, this choice will not be given to the people and the Euro will be forced upon Latvia, whether supported or not.

The conflict frame has not been noted in a neutral manner in the selected data. Perhaps, this can be explained with the quite radical build of the frame. The conflict frame cannot be applied freely by changing the wording or presenting a development as beneficial or bringing disadvantage – a conflict must be first sought to be presented. As it has been demonstrated in the sub-chapter on news frame effects the conflict frame reduces support for the issue in question, while none of the selected newspapers were systematically and predominantly against the EU, which could explain the small frequency of a negative conflict frame. A possible explanation for the rare usage of a positive conflict frame could be the same reason of the complexity of the frame. As observed from the data the main issue, where EU could potentially resolve a conflict, are the Latvian-Russian relations.

5.2.4. Benefit/disadvantage frame

The benefit/disadvantage frame was overwhelmingly the most frequently noted frame in all the four chosen newspapers. The benefit/disadvantage frame was noted as neutral in the case when both benefits and disadvantages were presented in an equal manner. For example, NRA published a short article about the construction of an industrial site. On one hand, the construction was sponsored by EU funds and as noted by the author being an example of opportunities that the EU will give (benefit). On the other hand, the construction has been very slow due to EU bureaucracy, which has caused disappointment in the local authorities (disadvantage) (Veide, L. In spite of EU bureaucracy - two projects are being built in Ventspils. Neatkarīgā Rita Avize Latvijai, 12.09.2003). The benefit/disadvantage frame was used also in Diena in a similar fashion to deliver a similar message: while European structural funds will create improve the situation in the regions and the whole economy, EU bureaucracy will have various negative effects (Purina, E. With the EU a fishing rod, not fish must be bought. Diena, 08.09.2003).

Similarly the economy, EU funds and prices after EU accession are discussed from the prism of the benefit/disadvantage frame in other articles (for example, Ignatev, O. Promised Latvia. Telegraf, 11.09.2003). Even though the topics of an economic character have seemed to be the optimal to use with a benefit/disadvantage frame, the neutral frame has been noted also in articles with other topics. For example, Diena discussed the future of doctors and nurses after EU accession. While EU accession was associated with some benefits such as “growth of
medical care quality and better working conditions due to EU standards, as well opportunities to work and study in other EU countries“ (Zalite, Z. Doctors hope for work and education in EU. Diena, 13.09.2003, pg.4), disadvantages such as lack of doctors due to work abroad possibilities were featured to create a versatile picture (Zalite, Z. Doctors hope for work and education in EU. Diena, 13.09.2003). The same frame was noted in Telegraf were the benefits and disadvantages of EU accession for non-citizens of Latvia were discussed featuring both positive and negative changes (Pankova, A. What will the non-citizens do in Europe? Chas, 09.09.2003).

From a positive perspective the benefit/disadvantage frames featured only benefits of EU accession. Most often this frame was used with the economy and internal changes topic, however, in a number of cases also other topics were framed from the benefit perspective. The most commonly mentioned economic benefits of EU accession were access to the European common market, larger amounts of foreign investment, more stable macroeconomic environment, as well as various areas, which will gain from European Social Funds (for example, Stobova, I. Europe - possibility to build prosperity together. Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai, 12.09.2003; Lujans, J. I want to join the EU! Telegraf, 15.09.2003; Raudseps, P.; Ozolins, A. No would be the end of the process. Diena, 06.09.2003).

The economic benefits of EU accession have also been discussed from the perspective of a certain sector. For example, Chas discussed the future of the banking sector after EU accession. Chas lists a series of benefits, which could be summed up as “everything will be good: interest rates will go down, new markets will be open, and Latvia will have access to European funds.” (Anonymous. Banks on the EU: everything will be good. Chas, 12.09.2003, pg.8). It is interesting to note that as in the case of the responsibility frame the benefit/disadvantage frame was applied in a reversed manner in a number of articles. For example, Diena quoted the Prime Minister of the time, who asked not to consider frustrations with the government in the EU vote and listed disadvantages of not joining, which in short were – “If we say no a long time will pass, before we can correct the negative impact of this vote” (Araja, D.; Egle, I. Repse sure about Latvia's decision. Diena, 09.09.2003, pg.3).

However, as it was mentioned above the benefit frame was not used only with the economy topic. Both Diena and Chas discussed the future of Latvia as a small country in the EU decision-making. In both articles the benefit frame was used to point out the benefits of the EU decision-making process that will permit Latvia to have an equal voice as other countries (Anonymous. Pat Cox concerned with the situation of Latvian country-side. Chas, 10.09.2003; Jemberga, S. Finns hope for a Latvian yes. Diena, 16.09.2003). Another article by Diena focused
on sovereignty related benefits of EU accession – return to Europe through a conscious decision, while in the case of non-accession Latvia will be “in the grey zone with countries that we do not have anything in common with – not in terms of culture or history, only geographic proximity” (Jemberga, S. Estonian PM asks to finish the Baltic way. Diena, 17.09.2003, pg.4). The last article published in Diena again underlined the strong pro-European stance of the newspaper, which is reaffirmed by the finding that no disadvantage news frames were noted in the selected articles from Diena.

The disadvantage frame was predominantly noted together with the topic of economy. Opposite to the benefit frame the disadvantage frame was focused on bringing the negative economic outcomes of EU accession for Latvia. Telegraf published a lengthy article in which arguments for EU accession where debated by placing counter-arguments, which emphasized the disadvantages of accession. The counter-arguments talked of the economy, as well as sovereignty. To sum the economic disadvantages the frames emphasized that EU accession will not be a panacea for the Latvian economy as Latvia will have to face various disadvantages. In regards to sovereignty the author noted that “everything here is being completely sold and there are no protection mechanisms, thus, the state’s economy will become the economy of foreign investors in this territory. And this kind of territory cannot be called the state of Latvia” (Bartul, S. EU will turn Latvia into a work camp. Telegraf, 10.09.2003, page n/a).

In an article already discussed previously (in the sub-chapter on the responsibility frame) NRA noted number of disadvantages and economic losses which await Latvia in the case of accession (Lulle, A. Economic sovereignty - outside of EU. Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai, 08.09.2003). The case of this article underlines also a theoretical problem – the thin line between the responsibility frame and the benefit/disadvantage frame. I think in some cases the text can be interpreted as both of the frames because the EU may be responsible for a certain change, but at the same time these changes are also the benefits and disadvantages of joining. While in some cases the responsibility phrasing was evident enough to note the responsibility frame, in others certain uncertainty was present.

To conclude the sub-chapter on the usage of the benefit/disadvantage frame two main points should be noted. On one hand, in the course of analysis the benefit/disadvantage frame proved to be a quite simple and easy to apply frame as it did not require a more complex approach to the issue (opposite to the conflict frame) merely review of the benefits and disadvantages of EU accession. From the selected data it can be concluded that the frame was especially useful in order to structure the economic benefits/disadvantages of EU accession in an understandable fashion for the reader. On the other hand, as it was discussed in the
previous paragraph in some cases only a thin line lies between the benefit/disadvantage frame and the responsibility frame, and the choice between on or the other may lie in the hands of the coder.

5.2.5. Conclusions on frame usage

This sub-chapter will draw general conclusions about news frame usage in the selected newspapers. Similarly to the conclusion on the quantitative results of the study no major differences were found between the usages of frames in the selected newspapers. In the case of the human interest frame two main differences can be noted on how the frame was used. First, while in many cases the reference groups used were similar, for example, students, teachers, the less wealthy; the Russian language newspapers did use the Russian-speakers as their reference group (Chas – a couple of times, Telegraf – once). On the contrary, from the Latvian language newspapers only Diena presented the opinion of a Russian-speaking student on EU accession once. Second, the same differences that were noted in the conclusion on quantitative findings can be reaffirmed. Diena used the human interest frame to promote positive opinion, NRA and Chas mostly positive, and Telegraf – more often to create a negative picture on EU accession from the human interest perspective.

The same general conclusion can be applied to the case of the responsibility frame. All the newspapers have used the responsibility frame most often together with the economy and internal changes topics. Together with other topics the frame was applied more in accordance with the newspaper’s readership. The Latvian language newspapers placed positive responsibility on EU in terms of securing the future for the Latvian language, Latvia’s freedom and democracy. Chas used the responsibility frame both from a positive and negative aspect by placing responsibility for securing or ignoring the rights and position of the Russian-speakers in Latvia. After the conduct of the study also a theoretical remark can be made about the responsibility frame. The frame was not noted in a neutral perspective, thus, pointing out that responsibility and consequences – positive and negative – must be presented together, perhaps, in order to make the material more interesting for the reader.

It is interesting to conclude that the conflict frame was noted in only two of the four selected newspapers. In the case of Diena the use of positive (towards the EU) conflict frame could underline the newspapers devotion to supporting EU accession. In the case of Chas I find it would be incorrect to make a conclusion that the newspaper is more negative (rather than
positive) towards EU accession because a negative conflict frame was used twice. First, the conflict frame appeared once also with a positive perspective on EU and, second, the total amount of articles (three) in which the frame was noted is too low to make certain conclusions.

Also in the course of the analysis it has become evident that Chas favors non-conventional topics and the conflict frame could, perhaps, be seen as shocking or reader attracting way to present an issue.

The benefit/disadvantage frame has been the most frequently noted frame in all four newspapers. However, in terms of topics and presentation of the frame the newspapers have shown similar results. The economy topic was by far the most frequently framed from the perspective of benefits and disadvantages. Perhaps, this is the easiest topic to put in this perspective and vice versa the benefit/disadvantage frame could be one of the most efficient ways of how to present economic changes, when there is a large amount of such cases as it was in the case of EU accession. In the case of the other three frames often the difference between one newspaper and other, or a positive and negative manner of the frame was only in one or a few more additional articles.

With small differences in frame usage no definite conclusions were made except for more general trends. The frequency of the benefit/disadvantage frame could, perhaps, allow making more definite conclusion on the position of the newspapers towards accession. These conclusions go in line with the conclusion on other quantitative results besides news frame use – Diena has proved to be almost exclusively positive towards EU accession when using the benefit/disadvantage frame, NRA and Chas share a more moderate, yet still mostly positive benefit perspective on EU accession and Telegraf published only slightly more often benefits of accession rather than a neutral frame or disadvantages. The final conclusions considering all the empirical findings, presenting the results of the research and answering the research questions put forward in this work will be done in the conclusions chapter (Chapter 6.) while the next sub-chapter focuses on the analysis of articles that featured the minority status topic, which has been noted as one of the particular points of interest of this work.

5.3. Minority status articles

One of the points of interest of this work was to pay closer attention to articles that feature the minority status topic. In the Latvian language newspapers this topic was the least frequently noted topic from the selected five. Diena talked about the future of minorities in
Latvia after EU accession in three articles and NRA – in one. The analysis of the Russian language newspapers has produced mixed results. On one hand, in Chas the minority status topic was the second most frequently noted topic (featured in ten articles). On the other hand, there was only one article featuring this topic in Telegraf. Continuing this chapter those articles will be presented and analyzed.

The first article from Diena featuring the topic of minority status asks the interviewee, whether after joining the EU Latvia might be forced to change some regulations in the field of language and citizenship by giving the Russian language a state language status or easing the naturalization process. The interviewee shortly answers that such changes due to their political content cannot be pressed to Latvia by the EU (Raudseps, P.; Ozolins, A. No would be the end of the process. Diena, 06.09.2003). The wording of the question seems interesting as the focus is shifted from what will happen to the minorities after Latvia joins the EU to will the EU allow to force Latvia to expand minority rights and change the position of Russian-speakers versus Latvians in Latvia.

The second article from Diena featuring the minority status gives the opinion of a student, whose parents are not Latvian citizens. The student is displeased with the situation that many of the people, who live permanently in Latvia, will not be able to decide in this crucial question as they are not citizens. The student also shows worry about the future of the minorities after EU accession. However, Diena does not show its own standpoint leaving the concern of the student without reply (Grinuma, I. Students can give a serious message about EU vote. Diena, 08.09.2003). The third article that features the minority status briefly mentions that 25% of non-citizens of Latvia support EU accession. The interviewee suggests that the rest must fear of growing independence from Russian in case of EU accession (Anonymous. What eurosceptics say and what experts answer. Diena, 19.09.2003). As mentioned previously the minority status was featured in only one article in NRA. However, the article talks about the possible positive change of attitude towards disabled people with EU accession. Even though it does not concern the Russian-speaking minority, the article does feature a minority and its possibilities in the EU, thus, I find it appropriate to note this topic under the minority status. However, the NRA did not publish any information about, what can the future in EU mean for Russian-speakers in Latvia.

The most number of publications featuring the minority status were found in Chas. Chas publications featuring the minority status can be roughly divided into three types of publications. The first group of articles (Anonymous. We need Latvia as a bridge to Russia.
Chas, 12.09.2003; Pankova, A. What will the non-citizens do in Europe? Chas, 09.09.2003; Anonymous. Russians in the Baltic states will be a problem for Brussels. Chas, 18.09.2003; Anonymous. EU in questions and answers. Chas, 19.09.2003) discuss the future realities for non-citizens, permanent residents of Latvia in EU while maintaining a neutral stance towards the Union itself. The newspaper informs on what will be the travelling, working and other rights after accession, and how these might change in the future. The second group of articles (Anonymous. Worried about the Russian-speakers in EU. Chas, 09.09.2003; Radionov, V. Supporting EU. Chas, 16.09.2003; Vatolin, I. Mayors come to Riga. Chas, 12.09.2003; Muižnieks, N. EU, integration and national minorities. Chas, 19.09.2003) are positive about the prospects of the Russian-speaking minority in EU. The articles demonstrate that the EU is worried about the minority situation in Latvia and EU accession will influence in a positive way the minority status by pushing improvements in minority education, language and naturalization policies. The most extensive article in this group is authored by the Minister of Integration of the time Nils Muižnieks, who encouraged people to vote for the EU as it has been a very important contributor to improving minority rights in Latvia. The Minister stressed that joining the EU is a way to continue the path of improvement, as well as getting financing for minority-related projects from the EU (Muižnieks, N. EU, integration and national minorities. Chas, 19.09.2003).

The third group of articles (Semjonova, V. To Europe with a 75 Lat salary. Chas, 05.09.2003; Krasilnikov, A. Non-citizens, let’s make up our minds! Chas, 12.09.2003) takes a more negative approach towards EU accession. Both articles point out and criticize the fact that non-citizens, who permanently live in Latvia and pay taxes like others, are cut off from the possibility to decide on such an important question as EU accession. One of the articles encourages non-citizens to voice their opinion about Latvia and EU, as well as criticizes the EU for not noticing or not wanting to notice discrimination of Russian-speakers in Latvia (Krasilnikov, A. Non-citizens, let’s make up our minds! Chas, 12.09.2003). Thus, Chas has shown great interest and various approaches to this topic, which goes along with the predominantly Russian-speaking readership of the paper.

While the analysis of Chas produced somewhat expected results the case of Telegraf is puzzling. Telegraf published one article connected to the minority status in which a Russian-speaker discussed the future difficulties connected to the EU expansion he (and the group) is facing – the need to learn not only Latvian, but also English in order to gain employment (Anonymous. State language - English. Telegraf, 09.09.2003). It is hard to determine why Telegraf had published only one article connected to the future of the Russian-speakers as a
minority group in Latvia considering the newspapers predominantly Russian-speaking readership. Perhaps, it may have been a coincidence with no such articles being published in the selected time period or the newspaper might presume that its young and city-dwelling readership may already have information on this topic.

To conclude this chapter it could be noted that all newspapers with the exception of Telegraf have published articles on the minority status in accordance to their readership. With 14% of its readers being (information on newspapers Chapter 4.1) non-Latvians Diena has not left this question out completely. However, while the second article shortly looks into to the fears and disappointment of the Russian-speakers in Latvia, the first article views this topic entirely from the perspective of ethnic Latvians fearing for the position of their language and culture in Latvia. With no articles published in NRA on the future of the Russian-speakers it seems that the Latvian newspapers (with their low interest in this question concerning a large proportion of Latvia´s residents) focus on the possible interests of their readership. However, I do not find it enough to confirm the existence of two separate media environments and the division in the society itself, at least in the issue of EU accession.
6. Conclusions

The interest of this work was centered on finding out, whether the media could have influenced the predominant no vote to EU accession by the Russian-speaking citizens of Latvia. The interest in this topic was sparked up after noticing the predominant no vote to EU accession by Russian-speakers of Latvia in comparison to the predominant yes-vote of the Latvians. As the definition and overview of the two groups – Latvian and Russian-speakers – showed there is no major difference between the groups in terms of income, education, religious practices and other aspects of life. However, there is some discontent in the Russian-speakers towards the government due to its mainly Latvian composition and criticism towards policies in education, language and citizenship.

As the chapter on the citizenship policy in Latvia illustrated the process of gaining Latvian citizenship has been lengthy and quite complicated, thus while many have indeed been successful in becoming citizens, a large group of non-citizens (but permanent residents with the so called Alien passport) still remained (and remains now) living in Latvia at the time of the referendum. While the EU did indeed pressure Latvia into positive reforms in the field of minority rights, EU membership did not promise the possibility that Alien passport holders would acquire some easier way of gaining citizenship. Thus, it would be interesting to further investigate (possibly through interviews or focus groups), whether solidarity between Russian-speaking Latvian citizens and same mother-tongue non-citizens could have played a role in the no vote to the EU, whether as a protest vote to the government or as a protest vote to EU and its lack of action in defending the rights of non-citizens and the securing the position of the Russian language and education possibilities in Latvia.

While the possible reasons above and others discussed in the previous research chapter bring up various factors that could have influenced such an outcome in the vote of the Russian-speakers, the focus of this work was comparing the presentation of the EU in Latvian and Russian language media in Latvia in a two week period prior the referendum. 181 articles were examined from four newspapers – two Latvian language (Diena and Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze Latvijai (NRA)) and two Russian language (Chas and Telegraf). The first research question is aimed at determining the general attitude towards EU accession evident from the articles: Research question 1: Did the Latvian language newspapers publish predominantly positive articles on EU accession, while the Russian language press on the contrary – predominantly negative articles on this topic?
The answer to the first part of the question, which asks about the Latvian language press, is affirmative – the Latvian language newspapers published predominantly positive articles on EU accession. Diena published almost exclusively positive articles on the EU topic (almost exclusively because a few of the articles were neutral on this topic). NRA did publish a few negative articles on EU accession; however, the majority of the articles were positive regarding accession. However, the second part of the research question focusing on the Russian language media cannot be answered in an affirmative way. The ratio between positive, neutral and negative articles in Chas was similar as in NRA – the majority of articles were positive towards accession, also a large amount of neutral articles, however, only a few negative articles. In the case of Telegraf the division between positive, neutral and negative articles was almost the same. Thus, the Russian language media did not publish predominantly negative articles on EU accession in the selected time period as it was presumed at the start of this thesis. However, the slightly more critical stance on EU accession displayed in the Russian language media goes along with the findings of Ehin (2001), who concluded that the Russian-speakers in the Baltic countries are more negative towards the EU than the titular population in contrary to what could be expected based on previous research of the attitudes of other minorities towards the EU. The findings go along also with Golubeva’s (2004) study results, where she concluded that the Russian language debate on EU accession was more critical of the elite’s (positive) discourse.

The second research question was focused on topics that were most discussed in the selected newspapers in connection to EU accession: (Research question 2) what topics were most discussed in connection to EU accession in Latvian-language newspapers and what – in Russian language newspapers? In the case of all newspapers the most frequently discussed topic in connection to the accession was the economy (various economic consequences of EU accession). This result points out to the area were EU accession would affect Latvia the most and, perhaps, the strong perception of the EU as foremost an economic opportunity. In the cases of Diena, NRA and Telegraf the second most discussed topic was internal changes followed by sovereignty. In the case of Chas the second most discussed topic was the minority status. I think the frequency of the appearance of this topic reflects the readership of the paper – Telegraf is read more by citizen Russian-speakers and is more neutral in its nature, while Chas is read more by non-citizens and is more defensive of Russian-speaker’s rights. While Diena and NRA are read predominantly by Latvian speakers, it is interesting that so little attention was devoted to discussing the future of a large group of the Latvian society – the non-citizens.
Thus, in the light of the answer above the hypothesis put forward in this work - the Russian language newspapers published more articles on the topic of minority status (in relation to the EU accession) than the Latvian language newspapers – can be affirmed. For NRA and Telegraf the percentage that the Russian-speaking minority (minority status topic, but not other minorities as in NRA) was discussed in relation to the general frequency of other topics is 0% and 2.7%, respectively. In the case of Diena 5.5% of the topics discussed was the minority status; in Chas this was 22.7%, which in total sums up that the Russian language newspapers did indeed publish more articles on the topic of minority status. While the previous research questions focused on the frequency of topics and general attitude towards EU accession, the next research questions focuses on the use of news frames in the selected newspapers.

Research question 3 asked: which news frames were most often used in Latvian language newspapers, and which – in Russian language newspapers? The answer to this question is the same in the cases of both Latvian language newspapers and Russian language newspapers - the most frequently used news frame was the benefit/disadvantage frame, which was quite straightforward in its design and easily combinable with the most popular topic discussed in relation to EU accession – economy. Research question 4 asked: did the Russian language newspapers use mostly news frames in a negative manner towards EU accession and the Latvian language newspaper - mostly in a positive manner towards EU accession?

When it comes to the Latvian language newspapers – then indeed news frames positive towards EU accession were most frequently noted. In Diena almost exclusively positive news frames were noted, while in NRA also some negative news frames were present though positive framing remained dominant. As for the Russian language newspapers the results are mixed. While Chas used news frames in a similar fashion as NRA – mostly positive, but also some negative news frames were present, Telegraf showed different results. In the responsibility and human interest frames – the negative framing was more frequent, but in the benefit/disadvantage frame – the division between positive, neutral and negative is almost the same with slightly more benefits. Thus, it cannot be concluded that Russian language newspapers used predominantly negative news frames as the result varies between the two selected newspapers. The answers to all the research questions above lead to the next research question which asked - based on the results of the analysis can it be concluded that there are indeed two – Latvian and Russian-language - media environments in Latvia?

I think in the case of EU accession and its presentation in the media it is not possible to definitely conclude that the division into two media environments was indeed present. The
most frequently discussed topics and news frames used were similar in both the Latvian and Russian language media. A difference can be noted at the angle (positive, neutral, negative), how the EU accession was presented in the newspapers. While Diena was almost exclusively positive in its general attitude and used news frames, Telegraf approached the subject from various sides publishing positive, neutral and negative articles equally, but at the same time incorporating negative news frames frequently. While the two cases above could perhaps suggest that there indeed are two media environments, the other two newspapers selected in the study do not support the argument. Both NRA and Chas presented the EU in a somewhat similar fashion – mostly positive articles were published and positive news frames were used more frequently than negative and neutral.

The difference between the newspapers is that Chas (unlike all other newspapers) published quite a lot of articles on the minority status and EU accession. However, I do not necessarily think that this points out to the existence of two media environments due to two reasons. First, Telegraf – the other Russian language newspaper – published only one article mentioning the future of minorities after EU accession. Second, this could merely be an adaption by Chas to its readership – Russian-speakers and many non-citizens – and its interests. These results go in line with previous research by Šulmane (2003), who noted that there are variations in attitude depending on the newspapers, but I think this variation of opinion is not enough to state that there are two separated media environments in the case of EU accession.

One of the possible reasons for this could be the issue – EU accession – itself. As it was noted in the description of the two groups – Latvian and Russian-speakers – the differences between these groups are not as large as it may seem and mostly are evident in questions of citizenship, language and education system. While the EU did have influence in these matters, perhaps, the influence was not recognized enough or was perceived as being only small. Perhaps, the Latvian media is not as strictly divided into two sub-environments as it is presented by some authors. The articles analyzed in this study show that on the more general level Latvian and Russian language media had similar preferred future scenarios for Latvia – economic growth through EU membership and the possibilities this opens (larger market, EU funds and other possibilities). I think that a study of articles on other topics would show that the clashing points between the Latvian and Russian language media, Latvian speakers and Russian speakers are around three policies – language, education and citizenship. Thus, perhaps, the active correction of the Soviet past (and the Russian language that is connected to it) and revival of
the Latvian language and culture has left negative consequences to the majority-minority relations.

The above leads into thinking that, perhaps, media or the newspapers selected in this study could not have had an influence on the predominant no-vote to EU accession by the Latvian Russian-speakers. In my opinion, the differences between the Latvian and Russian language newspapers and articles published on the EU were not large enough to onset such an outstanding vote by the Russian-speakers comparing to the Latvian-speakers. Thus, the reason for this must lie elsewhere, whether it was indeed a protest vote against the government and the education reforms pursued at the time, or the impact of the economic hardship in the Latgale region. Perhaps, even a wider study of not only national but also local newspapers could bring different results. However, the concluding research question put forward in this thesis was focused on the Latvian language media environment.

Research question 6 asked: was there a consensus of opinion on EU accession in the Latvian language newspapers or can a variation of opinions be noted? I think based on all the analysis done in this work it could be concluded that some variation in opinion did indeed exist. As it has been mentioned a number of times, while one of the Latvian language newspapers – Diena – was predominantly positive, the other newspaper – NRA – published articles viewing the EU from positive, neutral and negative perspectives, thus presenting some variation on the issue.
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Appendix A - list of articles from Telegraf


Appendix B – list of articles from Neatkarīgā Rita Avīze Latvijai

Appendix C – list of articles from Diena

3. Anonymous. It is time to conquer the last stage of the road started during "Atmoda". Diena, 18.09.2003, p.2
4. Freiberga, V.V. Plea of the President Vaira Vike-Freiberga. Diena, 18.09.2003, p.2
6. Anonymous. Latvian Pensioner’s Association: we all need a large sense of stability and safety. Diena, 17.09.2003, p.2
10. Anonymous. We are for a better future for Latvia. Diena, 13.09.2003, p.2
13. Anonymous. 20th of September - a chance to correct history. Diena, 05.09.2003, p.2
15. Araja, D. "No" will break the security circle. Diena, 19.09.2003, pp.1;3
19. Anonymous. President will vote in the Congress house, the PM will be in the Livu square. Diena, 19.09.2003, p.3
20. Zalite, Z. EU campaign will culminate with a play. Diena, 18.09.2003, p.1;4
23. Jemberga, S. The government does not have a plan in case of a 'No'. Diena, 18.09.2003, p.4
25. Jemberga, S. President asks again to vote for EU accession. Diena, 18.09.2003, pp.1;4
27. Anonymous. A no will affect farmers the most. Diena, 17.09.2003, p.3
28. Jemberga, S. Estonian PM asks to finish the Baltic way. Diena, 17.09.2003, pp.1;4
29. Jemberga, S. Number of EU supporter is growing slowly in Latvia. Diena, 17.09.2003, pp.1;4
30. Jemberga, S. Finns hope for a Latvian yes. Diena, 16.09.2003, pp.1;4
32. Kalnins, V. It will be harder for Latvian corruption in Europe. Diena, 16.09.2003, p.2
33. Grinuma, I. Teachers: two hopes in EU. Diena, 15.09.2003, p.4
34. Hartmanis, M. Risks to lose important markets. Diena, 15.09.2003, p.5
35. Zalite, Z. Doctors hope for work and education in EU. Diena, 13.09.2003, p.4
37. Sizova, J. If we stay outside EU, entrepreneurs will lose the impulse to develop. Diena, 13.09.2003, p.1
38. Araja, D. Without good roads, money and education. Diena, 12.09.2003, p.3
40. Klekere, E.; Purina, E. Window to the opportunities of capital cities. Diena, 12.09.2003, p.6
42. Hartmanis, M. Joining EU will lower the credit rating. *Diena*, 12.09.2003, p. 7
43. Pelane, A. Latvia will be able to spend EU money from 1st of January. *Diena*, 11.09.2003, p.5
45. Hartmanis, M. Entrepreneurs and economists plead to vote for EU. *Diena*, 11.09.2003, p.1;8
46. Zalite, Z. In the social sphere EU affect flourishing of families. *Diena*, 11.09.2003, p.4
47. Grinuma, I. Students shy to participate in their EU referendum. *Diena*, 10.09.2003, pp.1;4
49. Grinuma, I. Students are voting. *Diena*, 09.09.2003, p.4
52. Purina, E. With the EU a fishing rod, not fish must be bought. *Diena*, 08.09.2003, p.5
53. Grinuma, I. Students can give a serious message about EU vote. *Diena*, 08.09.2003, pp.1;4
54. Raudseps, P.; Ozolins, A. No would be the end of the process. *Diena*, 06.09.2003, p.2
56. Jemberga, S. Famous people ask to vote for EU. *Diena*, 05.09.2003, pp.1;4
57. Martina, I. Industry surrenders to services. *Diena*, 05.09.2003, p.8
Appendix D – list of articles from Chas

1. Knjazeva, O. We do not need the overseas Euro. Chas, 16.09.2003, p.1
2. Mihailova, M.; Marahovskij, V. Latvia will be independent for about 10 more days. Chas, 09.09.2003, p.3
3. Pavlov, S. Dick Roush: "EU is beneficial for small countries". Chas, 17.09.2003, p.3
5. Krasilnikov, A. Non-citizens - let's make up our minds! Chas, 12.09.2003, p.8
6. Semjonova, V. To Europe with a 75 Lat salary. Chas, 05.09.2003, p.8
7. Mesherjakova, N. Aren't we hurrying? Chas, 05.09.2003, p.3
8. Anonymous. Worried about the Russian-speakers in the EU. Chas, 09.09.2003, pp.1;2
9. Radionov, V. Supporting EU. Chas, 16.09.2003, p.6
10. Vatolin, I. Mayors come to Riga. Chas, 12.09.2003, p.3
13. Pankova, A. What will the non-citizens do in Europe? Chas, 09.09.2003, p.2
14. Anonymous. We need Latvia as a bridge to Russia. Chas, 12.09.2003, p.4
15. Whitecocks, J. Margaret Thatcher’s skeptical view on EU. Chas, 16.09.2003, p.6
16. Pavlov, S. Joining the EU is painful, but necessary. Chas, 06.09.2003, p.2
17. Radionov, V. Student referendum. Chas, 09.09.2003, p.1
18. Pavlov, S. Big business: we do not have another choice. Chas, 09.09.2003, p.4
19. Anonymous. Pat Cox concerned with the situation of Latvian country-side. Chas, 10.09.2003, p.2
20. Knjazeva, O. Oh, prices - do not bite me. Chas, 10.09.2003, p.4
21. Osinskaja, I. Million down the drain. Chas, 06.09.2003, p.2
22. Ranks, K. Finns in EU - marriage of convenience. Chas, 10.09.2003, p.5
23. Radionov, V. Students make their choice. Chas, 10.09.2003, p.1
24. Radionov, V. Students choose EU. With reservations. Chas, 11.09.2003, p.4
25. Radionov, V. Voting sites are open, but it is too early to vote! Chas, 11.09.2003, p.4
26. Lebedeva, N. Pat Cox: You will not get money, if you vote against. Chas, 11.09.2003, p.4
27. Anonymous. Banks on the EU: everything will be good. Chas, 12.09.2003, p.8
30. Radionov, V. Electoral commission played a referendum. Chas, 16.09.2003, p.6
31. Anonymous. Minister of economy: "Europe is good!" Chas, 16.09.2003, p.16
32. Radionov, V. President of Finland: "Together we will not drown" Chas, 16.09.2003, p.1
33. Kamenev, A. Why scare the people? Chas, 17.09.2003, p.4
34. Knjazeva, O. Do you want European money? Take it! Chas, 18.09.2003, p.3
35. Stepanov, V. EU - is like a kick: painful, but boosts acceleration. Chas, 18.09.2003, p.4
36. Vetkin, I. "Equality" also for EU accession. Chas, 18.09.2003, p.2
37. Radionov, V. Mystery of love. To EU. Chas, 19.09.2003, p.1