Politicization of Ethnicity: a recipe of minority marginalization

A comparison of ethnopolitics and minority representation in Latvia and Estonia

Master Thesis – Master Political Science: Conflict and Cooperation

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Contents

List of Abbreviations

Latvian Parties

DPS: Democratic Party Saimnieks;

JL: New Era;

KDS: Latvian Christian Democratic Union;

LC: Latvian Way;

LNNK: Latvian National Independence Party;

LNRP: Latvian National Reform Party;

LPP: Latvia's First Party (JP: New Party from 1998);

LSDP: Latvian Social Democratic Party;

LZP: Latvian Green Party;

LZS: Latvian Farmers Union;

PCTVL: For Human Rights in a United Latvia:

SC: Harmony Centre;

SL: Harmony for Latvia;

TB/LNNK: For Fatherland and Freedom;

TKL: Peoples' Movement;

TP: People's Party

Estonian parties

EK: Communist Party;

ENIP: National Independence Party

ERL (EME): People's Union of Estonia;

EURP: Estonian United People's Party;

IL+ ERSP: Pro Patria and Res Publica Union (later IRL)

K: Estonian Centre Party;

KE: Coalition Party;

MKOE: Our Home is Estonia!

RE: Reform Party;

RP: Res Publica;

SDE: Social Democratic Party;

VEE: Russian Party of Estonia

Introduction

Political representation is one of most important aspects of contemporary democracy. In a perfect democracy all citizens have a voice in the policy-making process, and elected representatives reflect and represent the different interests of all different groups in society (Dahl, 1989; Huntington, 1991; Schumpeter, 1975). In practice however, political representation of all groups in society can prove challenging, especially in divided societies which are highly heterogeneous. The focus of this thesis is on representation of ethnic minorities in ethnically divided societies.

Representation of these minorities is crucial because marginalization of the ethnic minority can have significant consequences for the stability of a society as a whole. If political parties, ethnic or non-ethnic, fail to represent the interests of an ethnic group this can motivate groups to find other ways to influence politics such as through protest or violence (Lijphart, 1999).

A way to describe the effectiveness of the ethnic minority representation is by the concept of *substantive representation.* Substantive minority representation is 'acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them' (Pitkin, 1967: 209). There is a good reason for focusing on the integration of ethnic parties in the policy making process. According to Iris Marion Young 'the normative legitimacy of a democratic decision depends on the degree to which those affected by it have been included in the decision-making processes and have had the opportunity to influence the outcomes' (Young, 2000:5-6).

At first glance, one would expect that the politicization of ethnic minorities is beneficiary to substantive minority representation. However, the consequences of the politicization of ethnicity have been subject to discussion. In the literature a debate can be found about the effects of the politicization of ethnicity and the emergence of ethnic parties on the consolidation of democracy. The debate can be divided between advocates of consociationalism and advocates of the ethnic outbidding theory.

Supporters of the first have argued that political instability is inevitable in divided societies. Therefore, democratic systems can only survive through cooperation and consensus seeking. Cooperation should be institutionalized with power-sharing institutions. This will improve equal representation of the various groups in society (Lijphart, 1969). According to this view, the emergence of parties with an ethnic foundation would lead to an increased representation of ethnical minorities.

Others, however, contend that ethnic parties inevitably lead to marginalization of the ethnic minority. This is due to the principle of *ethnic outbidding*. This holds that ethnic parties emphasize their ethnic credentials to win votes. In their competition with other ethnic majority parties or with non-ethnic parties, they radicalize their positions to win the votes of the ethnic minority. As a consequence, this form of party competition will lead to an increased exclusion of the ethnic minority by the non-ethnic parties. In the end this will destabilize the democratic system and lead to ethnic conflict (Horrowitz, 1985).

This thesis will contribute to this debate by testing the effect of the politicization of ethnicity on the substantive representation of ethnic minorities. Following the debate on ethnic minority parties there are two possible, conflicting effects. On the one hand the presence of ethnic minorities parties would contribute to substantive minority representation – provided there are power-sharing institutions in place and consensus can be reached. On the other hand it has been argued that a system with ethnic parties would result in minority marginalization as a consequence of ethnic outbidding.

This thesis tests the effects of the politicization of ethnicity in two cases: Estonia and Latvia. Former republics of the Soviet Union are highly suitable to analyze the politicization of ethnicity. Most of these countries have an multiethnic society and institutionalization of the ethnic cleavage. For this research the cases of Estonia and Latvia will be explored in more depth. These two countries share the same historical background but the ethnopolitical situation differs.

Both countries experience ethnic tensions due to the Russian minority that has been living in these countries since the Soviet occupation. Estonia and Latvia were incorporated by Russia in 1940 and regained independence after fifty years under Soviet Rule. The tensions developed when Estonia and Latvia became independent and wanted to restore their nation state. The tensions came from a negative sentiments against their former oppressor and were rooted in a long history of repression by the Germans and Russians since the 13th century.

When Estonia and Latvia became independent, 35%[1] of the Estonian population were Russian speakers[2] and almost 39%[3] of the Latvian population. Most of these Russian speakers had moved to Estonia and Latvia during Soviet Occupation. The Soviets wanted to sustain their political presence in these countries and in the 1950s Moscow encouraged large-scale immigration to Estonia and Latvia from other parts of the Soviet Union (SU) and deported many

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[1] Plakans, A. (1998). Democratization and political participation in postcommunist societies: the case of Latvia. In: Dawisha, K. and Parrot, B. eds. *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 249.

[2] In Estonia the Russian-speaking population existed from Russians, Belorussians and Ukrainians. In Latvia also Poles belonged to this group. In this thesis there will be referred to this group as the Russian-speaking population or the Russian minority.

[3] Raun, T.U. (1998). Democratization and political development in Estonia, 1987-96. In: Dawisha, K. and Parrot, B. eds. *The Consolidation of Democracy in East-Central Europe.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. p. 336.

Estonians and Latvians to Siberia (Hallik 2002, 21). After independence Estonia and Latvia wanted these Russian speakers to move back and therefore installed citizenship laws that granted citizenship only to those who had been citizens of the inter-war republics[4] of Estonia and Latvia. Their descendants without citizenship created a new category of permanent residents in the two countries: the non-citizens. In both Estonia and Latvia the non-citizens have restricted rights in comparison to citizens, including restricted political rights (Roots, 2012).

The history and demographical composition of Estonia and Latvia is very similar and so was the ethnopolitical situation in the two countries right after independence. Estonian and Latvian politics was dominated by nationalist politicians that promoted strict citizenship and language legislation to encourage the Russian-speaking population to immigrate. However, during the 1990s the situation in the two countries started to differ. Estonia adopted more liberal citizenship and language policies in comparison to Latvia and became more accommodative towards the Russian minority.

The historical, demographical and political similarities of these two cases on the one hand and the difference in policy outcomes on the other hand makes these two cases very suitable for testing the effect of politicization of ethnicity on the substantive representation of the Russian minorities living in Estonia and Latvia. To test this effect the focus will be on the decision-making process of the citizenship and language legislation in both countries. By using the method of process tracing it will become clear which actors were involved in the decision-making process and what their influence was. The comparison of the two cases will show whether the politicization of ethnicity results in more substantive representation of the ethnic minority (more liberal citizenship and language legislation) or whether it results in ethnic outbidding and, ultimately, in marginalization of the ethnic minority.

This thesis consist of two main parts: a theoretical part and the emperical analysis. The outline of the thesis is as follows: the first chapter will provide an overview of the theoretical insights and debates in the literature on ethnic minority representation. The focus will be on the debate between Lijphart and Horrowitz on the effects of ethnic minority parties. Then the methodology of the thesis will be presented, followed by the main empirical part: the analysis. The analysis consists of three chapters. The first part of the analysis (chapter 3) will provide background information on the two cases, the second part of the analyses (chapter 4) describes the electoral systems and the party systems of Estonia and Latvia. The last chapter of the analysis (chapter 5) describes the decision-making process on the citizenship and language legislation, the changes that have been made to this legislation over time and the actors that were involved. The

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[4] Estonia and Latvia became independent 1918 after German occupation. In 1940, at the beginning of World War II both countries were occupied again, this time by Soviet Union.

final part of the thesis discusses the results of the analysis and the implications these have for the theory of ethnic minority representation.

1. The Study of Ethnic Minority Representation

1.1 Literature Review

Parties are the most important channels of political representation. Two types of parties exist as options for ethnic minorities: ethnic minority parties and non-ethnic parties (Birnir, 2007). Ethnic minorities often favor ethnic parties, because ethnic identity is a crucial factor in deciding what party to vote for. Ethnicity is regarded as an informational shortcut that provides voters of an ethnic group with information on the favorability of the ethnic party. Ethnic identity helps voters to organize political information, and guides them in their choice to vote for a party with ethnic credentials and is considered supportive of their ethnic group (Downs, 1957).

The theoretical debate on ethnic parties can be found in the literature on ethnic politics and party politics. The scholars in the field of ethnic politics have been interested in the question whether ethnic parties should be encouraged, and whether the design of political institutions is an important tool for this encouragement. According to Varshney (2007: 289), the field of institutionalism has been shaped by the debate between the ideas presented in the works of Lijphart on the one hand, and Horowitz on the other. These two views disagree on the desirability of ethnic parties representing the interests of the ethnic minorities.

On the one hand, there are supporters of consociationalism. This theory is developed by Lijphart and focuses on power-sharing arrangements. In societies where social groups are heterogenous political instability is inevitable (Lijphart, 1969: 208-9). However, Lijphart stressed that deeply divided societies can have democratic systems when elites cooperate. This cooperation can be institutionalized by power-sharing mechanism such as proportional representation and multi-party parliaments (Norris, 2008: 24). According to Lijphart, power-sharing mechanisms could lead to a stable political system based on consensus: consociational democracy (Lijphart, 1969: 216). On the other hand, there are scholars who support the theory of ethnic outbidding (Rabushka and Shepsle, 1972; Horrowitz, 1985). According to this school of thought ethnic parties undermine democratic stability (Horrowitz, 1985; Norris, 2004). Ethnic parties use their ethnic credentials to win the ethnic vote, they radicalize their attitudes to avoid losing votes to competing parties. This makes ethnic cleavages more prominent and can even lead to the marginalization and exclusion of a cultural minority by the mainstream parties (Becher and Basedau, 2008: 8).

In the research on party competition in party systems, ethnic parties are treated differently than other types of parties. While most parties try to mobilize voters in general, ethnic parties specifically target voters of their own ethnic group. The main goal of ethnic parties is to gain 'material' and 'political benefits for the ethnic group (Ishiyama and Breuning, 2011: 225). Because ethnic parties do not mobilize voters outside their ethnic group, their continued existence rests on ethnicity (Horrowitz, 1985: 294-7). Gunther and Diamond (2003) note that because ethnic parties accentuate their ethnic foundation to mobilize voters, they can lead to polarization. Ethnic parties are often seen as hampering the decision-making process. The polarization of the political system makes it harder to reach compromises on issues, thus making minority-friendly policies less likely (Cianetti, 2014, 89).

A substantial amount of the research on ethnic parties has been conducted in Central and Eastern Europe. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the former autocratic states transformed in democratic systems in which the different ethnic groups could have a voice. In some of the young democracies, such as the Balkans, this resulted in tensions and ethnic conflict (Gurr, 2000; Caspersen, 2008). During the Soviet occupation, the nation states became heterogeneous because of the Sovietization: the forced migration of Russians to the satellite states, the incorporation of Soviet institutions, and laws. After the break down of the Soviet Union these demographic shifts resulted in the politicization of ethnicity and the emergence of ethnic parties (Moser, 2005: 109). In most countries several ethnic parties emerged on the national and local level. Because the democratic systems of the former Soviet states are relatively new, voter dissatisfaction can be ruled out as a explaining factor in the success of ethnic parties. This makes these democracies suitable for analyzing the behavior of ethnic parties (Bernauer and Bochsler, 2011: 738).

Several studies have focused on the electoral success of ethnic parties and explained the fragmentation of party systems that include ethnic parties (Bernauer and Bochsler, 2011; Stroschein, 2011). Some of these studies find that the emergence of ethnic parties and descriptive representation have had a positive effect on minority representation. Ethnic minority parties gave ethnic minorities a voice and incorporated them in politics. The incorporation of minorities in the decision-making process can lead to more policies in the interests of the minority (Bieber, 2008). Other studies point to the fact that seats in the legislature do not necessary have to lead to more influence. When the executive dominates the policy-making process, or when the demands of the ethnic group are too radical, a larger number of seats in parliament will not lead to better minority representation. Ethnic groups should moderate their demands and act as a unitary actor to have influence (Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino, 2007). When ethnic parties fail to moderate their demands, they radicalize increasingly, and become more and more extremist. This is when a

process of ethnic outbidding takes place (Horrowitz, 1985; Rubshka and Shepsle, 1972; Brubaker & Laitin, 1998: 434). Ethnic outbidding can have several consequences: it can harm the integration of ethnic minorities, but it can also lead to ethnic violence and civil war.

The literature on ethnic parties and party competition in ethnically divided societies is divided on the issue whether ethnic parties improve the situation of ethnic minorities or make their situation worse and even lead to ethnic conflict. There seems to be more evidence for the negative effects of ethnic parties, as ethnic outbidding is often seen as inevitable. This thesis will add to the literature by studying the direct effects of ethnic parties on the substantive representation of the ethnic minorities[5]. This will make it possible to study the causal link between ethnic parties and ethnic outbidding in the policy making process. The next section will explain the theoretical insights that will be used to explain the effect of the politicization of ethnicity on minority representation.

1.2 Theoretical framework

As has become clear from the literature review, heterogeneity in society and the importance of ethnic cleavages in politics can have either negative or positive effects on the integration of ethnic minorities and the rise of ethnic conflict. To analyze the integrative effect of the politicization of ethnicity in Estonia and Latvia, both Lijphart's theory of power sharing and Horrowitz' critique on this theory will be used. However, in order to analyze the effect of the politicization of ethnicity on substantive representation, first the concept of ethnic minority parties must be discussed in more depth.

1.2.1 Ethnic parties

Ethnic minorities can be represented through mainstream parties or through ethnic minority parties. When ethnicity is important to voters, ethnic minority parties are often the preferred option because these parties offer a policy agenda that fits with the interests of this ethnic group. Moreover, ethnic parties only mobilize voters of their own ethnic groups and exclusively represent the interests of that ethnic group (Horrowitz, 1985).

There is a debate on how to define the concept of ethnic parties. On the one hand there has been argued that the membership of the party determines whether it is an ethnic party. In this

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[5] This thesis focuses on internal, institutional factors that influence the representation of the ethnic minority studies that focus on the external pressure from the international community to improve the representation of the ethnic minority have been left out of the literature review. Both Latvia and Estonia were pressured by the European Union (EU) and the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to make their citizenship policies less strict and protect the rights of their Russian-speaking minority (Gelazis, 2004; Sasse, 2008). Although these studies are not included in the literature review, it is important to keep the influence of the external pressure in mind during the collection of the data.

definition that is followed by Horrowitz, ethnic parties get support from a specific ethnic group. This does not mean that the ethnic group is represented by one ethnic party. The existence of several ethnic parties that represent a specific group or segments of this group is a result of the groups cohesion and division (Ishiyama and Breuning, 2011: 225). The opposing view is that ethnic parties should be defined in terms of the way they present themselves. Chandra follows this definition and defines ethnic parties as parties that present themselves as the main representative of the interests of an ethnic group and want to exclude a common ethnic enemy (Chandra, 2011: 155). This goal also determines the parties policy program, 'it's raison d'être' (de Oger, 2006: 4).

Chandra defines three key aspects of ethnic parties: 'particularity, centrality, and temporality of the interests its champions' (Chandra, 2011: 155). With particularity Chandra points to the idea that ethnic parties always exclude other groups in society. Centrality indicates the idea that the party puts the interests of a particular ethnic group central and, with temporality Chandra means that the group that is represented can change over time (Chandra, 2011: 155).

Moreover, according to Chandra there are several indicators that show whether a party is an ethnic party. According to Chandra (2011) these indicators are party name, explicit appeals to ethnicity, issue positions, activation of ethnic identity, ethnic leadership, ethnic arena of contestation (that is when a party only compete for votes of a certain ethnic group) and party support. As we have seen, this last indicator is the most important according to the definition of Horrowitz. However, according to Chandra this definition is limited. Support is just one of the many indicators.

This thesis will define ethnic parties as a combination of the definitions of Horrowitz (1985) and Chandra (2011). So according to the definition of this thesis ethnic parties exclusively rest on the support of a particular ethnic group. Members and leaders of ethnic parties feel connected to this ethnic group. Moreover, the main goal of ethnic parties is to promote the ethnic culture of a specific group and there will be no effort to represent interests of other ethnic groups (Chandra, 2004; Diamond and Gunther, 2001). According to this definition, ethnic parties have a 'programmatic component' and a 'membership component'. Therefore, a party will be classified as an ethnic party when it fulfills both components: 'an ethnic political party tries to establish policies that are of interest to the ethnic target group (it represents the group substantively) and includes in its party lists a high number of co-ethnic candidates (it represents the group descriptively)' (Hansen, 2009: 52-3).

Following from the definition of ethnic parties, other parties in party systems can be defined as mutlti-ethnic parties, parties that represent more than one ethnic group, or as non-

ethnic parties, parties that do not put the interests of any ethnic party first. However, because the focus of this thesis is on representation of ethnic minority groups, two other categories will be used that correspond with the labels multi-ethnic and non-ethnic. This thesis will classify other parties in the party system as inclusive parties and non-inclusive parties.

Inclusive parties represent, just as ethnic parties, the interests of a certain ethnic (minority) group, but to a more limited extent than ethnic parties because they also represent other groups in society. The interests of the majority are the main focus of these parties and both the substantive representation as well as the descriptive representation of the ethnic minority will be less than by ethnic parties. However, inclusive parties do include minority interest in their program and minority candidates on their party list (Hansen, 2009: 53).

Non-inclusive parties are parties that not include ethnic interests in their party programs and not represent the ethnic minority descriptively. Often these are nationalist or even ultranationalist parties. These parties are mass-based parties that speak to the nationalist feelings of the electorate and often focus on the promotion of social characteristics such as language or culture (Diamond and Gunther, 2001: 20-1; Hansen, 2009: 53).

As already mentioned, the consequences of the politicization of ethnicity have been subject to discussion. In the literature a debate can be found about the effects of the politicization of ethnicity and the emergence of ethnic parties on the consolidation of democracy. The next section will explain in more depth the consociational side of the debate and shows how power sharing institutions can contribute to a better representation of ethnic minority groups.

1.2.2 Power Sharing

Lijphart proposed his theory as a solution for 'plural societies' – 'societies that are sharply divided along religious, ideological, linguistic, cultural, ethnic, or racial lines' (Lijphart, 1999: 32). These societies lack the flexibility necessary in a majoritarian democracy, a democracy that is based on the principle of majority rule. Under these conditions majoritarian democracy can even be considered undemocratic, because minorities can be structurally excluded from power. According to Lijphart, divided societies need democratic regimes that emphasize consensus instead of opposition. Inclusion must be the core value of the regime and it should try to maximize the ruling majority (Lijphart, 1999: 32-3).

Lijphart explains consociational democracy by describing its four principal characteristics. He starts with stressing the importance of power sharing. All political leaders should cooperate in a grand coalition to govern the country. Cabinets with a broad political base stimulate moderation of demands and compromise (Lijphart, 1977: 25-31). The grand coalition is complemented by three additional characteristics; mutual veto, proportionality and segmental autonomy. Mutual

veto represents 'negative minority rule' (Lijphart, 1977: 36). This means that if a minority participates in a grand coalition, the majority can outvote it. If this results in underrepresentation of the needs of the minority and that may harm the inclusive principle of consociational democracy. Therefore, a minority veto must be added to protect the vital interests of the minority (Lijphart, 1977: 36-7). The third characteristic is the principle of proportionality. Proportionality means that all groups can influence the decision-making process 'in proportion to their numerical strength' (Lijphart, 1977: 39). This adds to the concept of the grand coalition that not only all groups in society should be represented in decision-making institutions but that this representation must also be proportional (Lijphart, 1977: 39). The final characteristic of consociational democracy is segmental autonomy. This means that rule-making and rule-application power should be delegated to the segments. Representative organizations of society follow the segments, which means that if a specific subject is of exclusive interest to a single minority, that subject can be decided on by minority (Lijphart, 1977: 41).

Lijphart's mechanism rests on the assumption that parliamentary representation always gives the minority influence over the decision-making process. However, this is not always the case. When a minority party wins seats in parliament but the executive dominates the policy-making process, these seats are not of great use. In this case, the minority will only have influence when it is in the government. Whether a party can have influence from the opposition partly also depends on the 'constitutional definition' of the system (Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino, 2007: 5). Presidential systems have a clear separation between the parliament and the executive. At first glance, this seems to be a better option for minority parties as this allows the parliament to make legislation that goes against the president's will. However, in many cases the president has the power to initiate and veto legislation, this means that the parliament and executive are not clearly separated. In some cases the President has taken over the legislative powers of the parliament. Therefore, parliamentary systems are seen as more effective institutional arrangements for minority representation (Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino, 2007: 5).

Furthermore, electoral legislation has a great impact on the ability of ethnic minority parties to access parliament. Some electoral laws have a positive influence on the success of ethnic minority parties where other electoral laws even keep minority parties from running. As explained above, the consociational school advocates 'permissive' electoral institutions such as proportional representation (PR) instead of majority rule to provide room for representation of all different groups in society. However, besides PR and majority rule, there are more electoral rules that influence the electoral system and make it more permissive or restrictive for ethnic minority parties (Boschler, 2007).

First the restrictive electoral rules will be discussed. A very restrictive electoral rule is the ban on ethnic parties. This does not even give them the chance of running and is applied in systems that are afraid of ethnic conflict or that want to exclude the ethnic minority. Also the electoral threshold is important. The electoral threshold is the minimal share of votes that a party needs to win to get elected. Higher thresholds reduce the likelihood that ethnic parties are elected. The electoral threshold in Eastern European countries is in general set at 5%. Because of the size of most of the minorities in the Central and Eastern European region this often forms an obstacle for ethnic parties to get elected (Boschler, 2007).

Permissive electoral rules are rules that positively discriminate the ethnic minority. This can be called affirmative action for minority parties. Sometimes, the threshold for ethnic minority parties is lower than for other parties; this is the case in Lithuania. There can also be set ethnic quotas, and sometimes seats in parliament are guaranteed to representatives of the ethnic minority as is the case in Kosovo and Romania (Boschler, 2007).

Both permissive and restrictive electoral rules have been criticized. On the one hand, limiting minority representation by banning parties is undemocratic but on the other hand giving minority parties additional rights hurts the principle of equality. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to focus on the impact of electoral arrangements on minority representation, but to analyze the effect of ethnic minority parties on the substantive representation ethnic minorities it is necessary to research whether minority groups have access to the legislature.

1.2.3 Ethnic outbidding

Next to the consociational school there has been argued that the politicization of ethnicity and the emergence of ethnic parties has negative effects on minority representation and thus on consolidation of democracy. Several scholars have formulated critiques on Lijphart's theory. The most influential of these critiques comes from Horrowitz (1985). According to Horrowitz, when ethnicity is a crucial dimension in society, ethnic parties will emerge. Proportional representation and the lower vote threshold that is part of the proportional systems facilitate the emergence of ethnic parties. Proportional representation makes it unnecessary for these parties to mobilize voters from other ethnic groups than the one they represent. To keep possible competitors away, parties become more radical in their goals. Leaders may emphasize ethnic characteristics to gain support and engage in ethnic outbidding (Norris, 2008: 28).

The first model of ethnic outbidding was proposed by Rabushka and Shepsle in 1972, a second model was proposed by Horowitz in 1985. Both models start from a point where there is no competition between the ethnic parties. This means that when every ethnic party would

represent its ethnic group perfectly, the elections would result in an ethnic census (Horrowitz, 1985: 326). When multiple ethnic parties emerge, these parties will start to compete for the votes within their own ethnic group, leading to inter-ethnical competition. This means that they have to outbid each other to win the votes of the ethnic-minority. They prefer this competition over mobilizing votes from a different ethnic group. Once the outbidding has started, parties will move more and more to the extremes of the issue axis, destabilizing the democratic system (Chandra, 2005: 237).

To explain this mechanism in more depth we must focus on party competition. The situation in a non-ethnic system differs from the situation in an ethnic-system in the way competition takes place. In non-ethnic systems parties compete for voters who are undecided and are positioned in between the two parties. This results in moderation of the parties, the parties move toward the center to win these undecided votes. This form of party competition is called 'centripetal' competition (Horrowitz, 1985: 347).

In an ethnic party system it can be difficult for parties to cross this ethnic line. Every party wants to represent a certain ethnic group and competition for voters from other ethnic groups is not desirable. When voters vote ethnically party competition becomes limited to the own ethnic group because vote transferability between parties becomes unlikely. This means that there is no reason for ethnic parties to moderate the ethnic issue, and they even stress their ethnic credentials to win the ethnic vote. Parties move to more extreme positions and constantly emphasize ethnic demands: party competition is 'centrifugal' (Horrowitz, 1985: 346).

Non-ethnic parties will also take part in this centrifugal competition to secure their own support. When a non-ethnic party is not dependent on the votes of the minority it will clearly demonstrate rejection of the demands of the minority (Horrowitz, 1985: 347). This will improve its position along its own supporters or as Kelley (2004) describes it: 'politicians gain political capital from staunch positions against accommodating ethnic minority' (Kelley, 2010: 36).

This centrifugal competition and the lack of moderation of demands results not only in conflict but also in unstable party systems. The main reason for this is that the amount of parties can increase. Most of the time every ethnic group is represented by one ethnic party. However, when social divisions are present within the ethnic group, when the ethnic group can afford another ethnic party without weakening its position, or when there is disagreement about conflict relations in the party system, new ethnic party emerge or existing parties split. New ethnic parties tend to take a more extreme position than already existing ethnic parties to win votes. The existing ethnic party has to choose to take a more moderate position or to 'outbid' its

competition again. This centrifugal competition may in the end result in violent ethnic conflict or secession (Horrowitz, 1985: 357-8).

Ethnic outbidding can hinder minority representation in two ways. First, intra-ethnic outbidding can have undesirable outcomes. When a minority group is represented by two (or more) minority parties, it is more likely that elections do not reflect the demographic composition (as would be the case when minority groups are represented by one ethnic party) and minorities are underrepresented. Moreover, when ethnicity becomes the most important cleavage in society non-ethnic parties will become less willing to represent the ethnic minority because taking stance against the demands of the ethnic minority will secure their position with their own electorate. Supporting minority-friendly policies will lose them electoral support. Therefore, non-ethnic mainstream parties will only commit themselves to the ethnic minority if there are not many moderate competitors and the ethnic cleavage is not the defining cleavage in the party system (Nakai, 2014: 64).

Finally, there must be noted that so far ethnic outbidding has been discussed on one dimension (voters only identify themselves with one ethnic group). Chandra has brought some nuance in the theory about ethnic outbidding and explains that ethnic outbidding does not necessarily leads to destabilization of democracy, this will only be the case when ethnic politics is restricted to one dimension. When in a party system with ethnic parties the cleavage structure is multipolar and when there are crosscutting cleavages present, centripetal competition is also possible. These crosscutting cleavages will prevent the emergence of a permanent majority and minorities have to cooperate. Moreover, Chandra encourages the institutionalization of multiple dimensions of cleavages with affirmative action policies, language policy for minority languages and recognition of statehood because this can result in politicization of these cleavages. This ensures variation in the categories of ethnic identification. Politicization of cleavages make it easier to 'activate' them in politics and new political parties with new identities can emerge along these cleavages (Chandra, 2005).

1.2.4 Expectations
Power-sharing theory

Following from this theoretical perspective it can be expected that if the decision-making process in Estonia and Latvia rests on power-sharing institutions and the electoral rules are permissive, the minority should be able to have a voice in politics. As the composition of the legislature determines its activities and policy outcomes (Pitkin, 1967: 63), the presence of ethnic parties

should result in better substantive representation of the ethnic minority, meaning that it should be possible to make policies that are in the interest of the ethnic minority.

Ethnic outbidding theory

However, when the presence of ethnic parties results in ethnic outbidding the substantive minority representation of ethnic minorities will be harmed. This will only happened when party competition takes place on one dimension. When there are more categories of ethnic identification (these can be institutionalized), centripetal party competition can take place and inter-party cooperation will be possible. However, in case ethnic outbidding takes place on one dimension the system becomes polarized. This should be indicated by the fact that there are no inclusive parties in the system present, only parties that represent the ethnic minority and parties that are non-inclusive. Because of the polarization of the party system it will be almost impossible for ethnic parties to enter the governing coalition and from the opposition it will be difficult as well to influence the decision-making process of the legislature. Proposals of ethnic minority parties will be blocked by parties of the ethnic majority. Non-ethnic parties will not be willing to cooperate with the ethnic parties because distancing themselves from the demands of the ethnic minority secures their support among their own electorate.

2. Methodology

2.1 Method and Variables

To answer the research question a double-case study of the decision-making process of the citizenship and language policies in Estonia and Latvia was conducted. Case-studies offer a strong method for controlling for the impact of the independent variable, *politicization of ethnicity*. The method that has been used to analyse the effect of politicization of ethnicity on substantive representation is *process-tracing*. In process-tracing the investigator explores a chain of events or the decision-making process. This way the cause-effect link can be unwrapped and divided into smaller steps. It becomes clear which actors were involved and what their role was in the decision-making process. This is exactly the information that is important for this thesis.

The process-trace of a single case can offer a strong test of the theory. However, the investigator will still be unsure what antecedent conditions the theory may require to operate. To discover these conditions it can be useful to explore other cases (Van Evera, 1997: 64-7). Therefore, this thesis will explore two cases that were selected following the M*ethod of Differences*. In the Method of Differences, cases are selected with similar general characteristics and different values on the study variable, the independent variable (Van Evera, 1997: 57). Latvia and Estonia are characterized by similar historical backgrounds, a similar geopolitical situation, and a similar demographical situation, but the development of the ethnopolitical situation in the two countries was different.

This method has been chosen because it provides strong evidence for causal mechanisms. This thesis answers the question what the effect of the politicization of ethnicity is on the substantive representation of ethnic minorities. The causal mechanism that will be tested is the relationship between 1) the politicization of ethnicity; and 2) the substantive minority representation. This means that the major outcome of interest is the level of *substantive minority representation*. According to Pitkin, substantive representation is "acting in the interests of the represented in a manner responsive to them" (Pitkin, 1967: 209). According to this view substantive representation is policy responsiveness, the act of shaping policies according to the interests of the group that is represented. The group that is represented is the Russian minority in Estonia and Latvia. It is in their interest that the restrictive citizenship and language legislation is liberalized because these policies have a direct impact on their democratic inclusion. Therefore, substantive minority representation will be operationalized as the change in citizenship and language legislation.

There has been chosen to analyse the citizenship policies and the language policies because these policies have the most impact on the democratic rights of the Russian minority: citizenship and the use of its own language. Moreover, these policies cannot be analyzed separately because they are both related to the naturalization procedure. Other policies that affect the Russian minority are education policy, integration policy and media policies. Analysis of these policies goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

Politicization of ethnicity, the independent variable, can be operationalized as party-positioning on ethno-cultural issues (Alonso and Ruiz-Rufino, 2007; Chandra, 2005; Coakley, 2008). As has become clear from the theory, when ethnicity is politicized this means that ethnicity is the main political cleavage in the party system and all parties will take a position on this cleavage. In the theoretical part of this thesis it has already been discussed that parties can be either ethnic or they can take an inclusive or non-inclusive stance towards the ethnic minority population. This thesis will classify the Estonian and the Latvian parties along these three categories: ethnic parties, inclusive and non-inclusive parties.

The Comparative Manifestos Project (CMP) will be used to classify the Estonian and Latvian parties along this typology. The CMP estimates party-positions with the method of content analyses of party programs (Budge et al., 2001; Hansen, 2009; Klingemann et al., 2006; Protsyk and Garaz, 2013). The classification of parties will be conducted by looking at the party-positions on the citizenship issue, party attitudes against Russia or the USSR and party attitudes on ethnic minorities in general[6]. Finally, also the number of ethnic candidates on the party lists will be defined.

First, we will look at the party systems and the electoral success of ethnic parties. We will analyze whether there are power-sharing institutions and permissive electoral rules in place. This indicator will be operationalized as the nature of the electoral system: proportional representation, majority rule, or a mixed system. Permissive electoral rules are rules lower thresholds for minority parties or other of affirmative action. Power sharing institutions and permissive electoral rules are important indicators for successful substantive minority representation.

Second, the party systems will be analyzed and parties will be classified as ethnic, inclusive or non-inclusive parties. Moreover, the electoral success of the parties and the composition of the Estonian and Latvian governments will be analyzed as well (chapter 4). This will provide insight in the level of politicization of ethnicity and the polarization of the party system. A high amount

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[6] In cases where the data was incomplete party programs were analyzed in more depth. To determine whether the parties had ethnic candidates on their party-lists, Hansen collected data from Central Electoral Commission of the Republic of Latvia (www.cvk.lv) and the Estonian National Electoral Committee (www.vvk.ee) (Hansen, 2009: 56).

of ethnic and non-inclusive parties points to politicization of ethnicity and polarization of the party system. These are indicators of the intervening variable: *ethnic outbidding.*

When there is established whether or not ethnic outbidding takes place in the party systems of Estonia and Latvia, the effect of this presence or absence of outbidding on the policy changes in the citizenship and language legislation can be monitored (chapter 5). There are other factors that must be taken into account because these could also have led to policy change. The most important of these factors is external pressure from the international community to improve the representation of the ethnic minority. Both Latvia and Estonia were pressured by the European Union (EU), the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and also by Russia to make their citizenship policies less strict and protect the rights of the Russian-speaking minority (Gelazis, 2004; Sasse, 2008). The use of process tracing as research method makes it possible to clearly distinguish the effects of the international pressure from pressure from domestic actors for policy change.

2.2 Data and Time Frame

The research for this thesis rests for a large part on the existing academic literature on the democratic transition of the former Soviet states. Estonia and Latvia received a significant amount of attention because of the difficulties these countries experienced with the integration of the Russian speaking minority. Both countries have also received attention from international NGOs such as Human Rights Watch, local human rights organizations and the European Commission. These NGOs have written regular reports on this topic in the first years after independence and in the preamble of EU membership of both countries.

To be more specific, the research of the power sharing institutions and the electoral rules of Estonia and Latvia is mainly based on academic literature. The classification of the party system is based on data of the Comparative Manifesto Project complemented with country reports of local independent research institutions. The analysis of the changes in the citizenship and language legislation is built on earlier research that used media publications to map party attitudes, earlier academic research and on reports of the European commission.

To complement this data, interviews have been conducted with five relevant actors: an expert of the minority politics in Estonia, a journalist and four members of parliament from Estonia and Latvia. The author realizes that information obtained from these interviews can be colored by the nationality of the respondents and by the party membership of the respondents. To overcome this bias respondents with different ethnical and political backgrounds were interviewed. Two of the respondents were members of the Russian-speaking population, one respondent was member of a Russian ethnic party, one respondent was member of inclusive

party and one respondent was member of a non-inclusive ethnic party. The expert can be considered neutral.

Finally, the time frame of the research will be the period between 1991 until the elections of 2003. This timeframe has been chosen because it is useful to look at the activities of political parties between the year of independence and also the year in which the party systems began to take shape, through a period of consolidation of the party system and a period with change of liberalization in the preamble of EU-membership (Morris, 2004: 543). This timeframe should be long enough to research how the party system developed and which role the politicization of ethnicity played in this development. Moreover, the period should also be sufficient to research changes that have been made to the citizenship and language legislation. The elections of 2003 are chosen as endpoint for the timeframe because EU membership and the obligations that come with this will bring an additional dimension to the domestic politics of Estonia and Latvia that goes beyond the scope of this thesis.

3. Estonia and Latvia After Independence

Post-independence Latvia and Estonia have many similarities such as history, democratic development, relations with Russia, and difficulties with ethnic minorities. Because of this minority problem, both countries have become 'ethnic democracies' after independence (Hughes, 2005; Järve, 2000; Smoosha, 2001). In ethnic democracies, the dominance of one ethnic group is institutionalized (Smoosha, 2001: 24). In Estonia and in Latvia this institutionalization of the dominance of the ethnic Estonians and ethnic Latvians can be observed in the restrictive citizenship and language legislation. Estonia and Latvia differ in this sense from Lithuania, which has adopted a more inclusive type of democracy after its independence. This was possible because Lithuania has a more homogenous ethnic structure than Etsonia and Latvia. This is the reason that Lithuania is often discussed as a separate case while Estonia and Latvia are often paired together (Steen, 2000: 68)

The development of Estonia and Latvia was especially similar during the first decade after they became independent. However, in the late 1990s a different approach to ethnopolitics in the two countries became clear. Estonia began to develop a more accommodative stance towards the Russian-speaking minority, while in Latvia the ethnic cleavages remained the most important issue in politics.

The goal of this chapter is twofold. First, it will provide background information regarding ethnopolitics in Estonia and Latvia. This will make it easier to analyze the two cases in the chapters that follow. Second, this chapter will both explain the similarities Latvia and Estonia share and highlight the differences between them. It will become clear that the history of the two countries, the demographic situation and the public opinion towards the ethnic minorities cannot account for the ethnopolitical differences which appeared in the late 1990s. Instead, the explanation for these differences is found in the differences in party systems and party politics.

3.1 Historical background and demographical change

Estonia and Latvia do not have a long history of independence. After centuries under German, Danish and Russian rule, the two countries became independent after the 1917 Oktober Revolution in Russia. However, their independence did not last long because in 1940 the Baltic States were incorporated into the Soviet Union (Tsilevich and Poleshchuk, 2004: 284). Under Soviet rule, the Soviet policies caused major demographic shifts (Hughes, 2005: 2).

Industrialization projects were set up in all three of the Baltic States, which were accompanied with large migration flows from other parts of the Soviet Union into Estonia and Latvia. Many of the migrants were motivated to move to the Baltic States because of the better socio-economic conditions and their cultural closeness to Europeans (Hughes, 2005: 2). Moreover, the demographic balance of the Baltic States was also changed by the significant number of retirees from Soviet military garrisons, as well as Stalin's mass repression and deportations to Siberia (Hughes, 2005: 2). In the years following the Second World War, approximately 40.000 Estonians and 60.000 Latvians were deported to Siberia. Between the deportations and the lives lost during the war itself, the Baltic States lost 20 per cent of their population. This imbalance was deepened by the low birth rates among ethnic Latvians and Estonians (Nørgaard, 1999: 34-37). Table 2 (see below) shows how the Estonian and Latvian population changed during the twentieth century.

Table 2: Demographic changes in the Estonian and Latvian population in the Twentieth Century (%)

	Estonians	Russians	Latvians	Russians
1922 (Estonia) 1925 (Latvia)	86.7	8.2	75.5	10.6
1959	74.6	20.1	62.2	26.6
1989	61.5	30.3	52.0	34.0

Source: Priit Jarve and Christian Wellmann, 'Minorities and Majorities in Estonia: Problems of Integration at the Threshold of the EU', ECM I Report No. 2 (Flensburg, 1999), 43 (Table 1); Paul Kolstoe (ed.) NationBuilding and Ethnic Integration in Post-Soviet Societies. An Investigation of Latvia and Kazakhstan (Boulder, Oxford, 1999), 64 (Table 4.1) in Poleshchuk and Tsilevich, 2004: 284.

When Estonia and Latvia became independent, they feared the loss of Estonian and/ or Latvian culture. The main question was how to treat the Russian-speaking population that in some cases had been living in Estonia and Latvia for decades. Estonia and Latvia regarded the Soviet occupation as illegal and wanted that the Russian immigrants to move back. The struggle of how to treat these immigrants was fought out in politics between the independence groups' elites, communist party elites and Soviet Bureaucrats (Nakai, 2012: 53).

Latvia decided to reintroduce its interwar constitution. This was important because it would show that the state did not stop existing during Soviet occupation and it granted a legal basis to deny citizenship to the Russian-speaking population. Estonia decided to write a new constitution, because the interwar constitution of Estonia was not democratic (Nørgaard, 1999: 65). In both countries the basis of the citizenship legislation was that citizens who arrived during

the period of Soviet Occupation had to go through the process of naturalization. During this process knowledge of the constitution, the national anthem, the history of Estonia or Latvia and proficiency in the national language are tested. Moreover, new citizens had to swear an oath of allegiance. The Latvian citizenship law was adopted on and the Estonian citizenship law on 19 January 1995[7] (Van Eluswege, 2004: 3).

The strict citizenship policies did not have the desired result of re-migration of the Russian-speakers. During the 2000 census, large parts of the Estonian and Latvian populations were non-citizens. Estonia had 170,000 stateless people within its borders, Latvia had 500,000. This is a considerable part of the 1,3 and 2,3 million populations, respectively (Tsilevich and Poleshchuk, 2004: 284).

Estonian and Latvian citizenship policies

Estonia and Latvia wanted to show that the Soviet Occupation had been illegal and that the people that moved from other parts of the Soviet Union to Estonia and Latvia were illegal immigrants. Both countries restored their pre-war citizenship legislation. This meant that only those who had national citizenship of Estonia or Latvia before the day each country became part of the Soviet Union received automatic citizenship. Thus, automatic citizenship was only granted to those with citizenship predating the 16th of June 1940 in Estonia, and the 17th of June in Latvia (Krüma, 2007: 65; Thiele, 1999: 14).

People who became non-citizens because of the restoration Of the interwar citizenship legislation could apply for naturalization, however this was a difficult procedure with high requirements for language proficiency and knowledge of history. People who did not go through the process of naturalization and were not Russian citizens remained stateless en became non-citizens. These non-citizens did receive certain rights. They were allowed to work and received pensions and social security from the state. However, they were not granted political rights such as the passive and active right voting rights in national elections (Kürma, 2007: 69).

The citizenship legislation has developed roughly the same in Estonia and Latvia. However, the citizenship and language legislation[8] in Latvia are more restrictive than citizenship legislation in Estonia. Citizenship legislation has been the most debated topic in politics in both Estonia and Latvia and this has resulted in (limited) changes to the legislation.

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[7] Lithuania chose for the 'zero-option' and granted citizenship to all residents that were living in Lithuania permanently when it became independent. The Lithuanian citizenship law was adopted much earlier than the Estonian citizenship laws, on 5 December 1991.

[8] Language legislation closely connected to the citizenship legislation. In chapter 4 and 5 the amendments to the language legislation will be explained in more depth. In general when there is referred to citizenship legislation this also points to the language legislation.

3.2 Public opinion towards the Russian-speaking population

In Estonia the ethnic majority was and is quite hostile towards the Russian-speaking population. In Latvia on the other hand there was more 'societal closeness' (Bennich-Björkman and Johansson, 2012: 598). To explain this difference more in-depth the data of the New Baltic Barometer (NBB)[9] can be used. The data of the NBB suggests that in Estonia there were more tensions between the ethnic Estonians and the Russian-speaking population than in Latvia (Bennich-Björkman and Johansson, 2012: 597).

The data of the first Baltic Barometer performed in 1993 shows that almost 70% of the Estonians was afraid there would be conflict between the ethnic majority and the ethnic minority groups. In Latvia this fear was much less present, only 46% of the population was afraid of conflict. Over time, this difference decreased but kept existing to some extent. In 2000 53% of the ethnic Estonians saw the Russian population as threat to Estonia. In Latvia this was still 43%. As table 3 (see below) shows the fear in Estonia declined slowly, but the level of fear remained constant in Latvia.

Table 3: conflict between the majority and the (Russian) minority is a threat to the country (percent agree)

	1993	1994	1995	2000
Estonians	69	50	57	53
EstRuss	38	40	42	27
Latvians	46	42	41	43
LatRuss	34	33	23	27

Source: New Baltic Barometer in Bennich-Björkman and Johansson, 2012: 597

Russians living in Estonia and Latvia did not share the same fear for conflict between the majority and minority groups. They did fear hard-line nationalist politicians. As table 4 shows (see below) in Estonia this feeling decreased towards the end of the 1990s, while in Latvia the fear for nationalist politicians did not Fade away to the same extent.

Table 4: Hard-line nationalist politicians in this country are a threat (per cent agree)

	1995	1996	2000
Estonians	35	40	43
EstRuss	60	73	43
Latvians	45	48	48
LatRuss	56	55	53

Source: New Baltic Barometer in Bennich-Björkman and Johansson, 2012: 598

In Estonia the polarization in society was much stronger than in Latvia. From the Russians living in Estonia answered 42% in the NBB-survey of 1996 that they felt a cultural connection with the

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[9] The New Baltic Barometer is a research project that started 1993 that measured public opinion in all three of the Baltic States with surveys. The New Baltic Barometer has been conducted in 1993, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2001, and 2004.

ethnic Estonian community. In Latvia this was only 22%. The main reason for this was the language problem that was more severe in Estonia than in Latvia. The Estonian language is not related to the Russian language but belongs to the Finn-Ugric language family while Latvian is part of the Indo-European language family, just as Russian. Because of this language gap it was more difficult for non-citizens in Estonia to connect with the ethnic Estonians (Bennich-Björkman and Johansson, 2012: 598).

3.4 Conclusion: the political explanation

In conclusion, the development of Estonia and Latvia after they became independent has been very similar. A large Russian-speaking minority was living in both countries. Although the Estonian and Latvian governments wanted that these minorities re-migrated to Russia or became naturalized citizens, the strict citizenship legislation has not made these wishes a reality. In 2000 there was still a considerable minority of stateless people living in both countries.

Although the historical development en demographical situation in both countries is roughly similar, Estonia has liberalized its citizenship legislation further than its neighbor. Also public opinion towards the Russian minority cannot be the reason for this difference because in Estonia, where the citizenship legislation was more liberal, the public opinion was more hostile than in Latvia. The Estonian society was more polarized over the issue of the Russian minority than it was the case in Latvia, yet Estonia has been more forthcoming towards its minority than Latvia.

This thesis argues that the more liberal minority policies in Estonia can be explained by political factors. More specifically, in Estonia and Latvia party system dynamics are the main contributors to the ethnopolitical differences. In the next chapter the party systems of Estonia and Latvia will be explained in more depth.

4. Development of the Latvian and Estonian party systems and party competition

In order to research the effect of politicization of ethnicity on substantive minority representation we must first establish whether Estonian and Latvian minority parties had a fair chance to represent the ethnic minorities in their countries. First, the electoral systems of Estonia and Latvia will be discussed to establish whether these systems have characteristics of the consiociational model proposed by Lijphart and whether there are no restrictive electoral rules. The second part of this chapter will discuss the party systems of Estonia and Latvia to determine what kind of party competition takes place: centripetal or centrifugal.

4.1 The Electoral systems

Latvia

After independence both Latvia and Estonia struggled with building up institutions and drafting a new constitution. Both countries had a quick and consensual transition and in less than 14 months the new regimes were established (Pettai and Kreuzer, 1998: 149). In Latvia the constitution of 1922 was reintroduced. Latvia became a parliamentary republic in which the president has a ceremonial role and the parliament – *Seaima* – is the most important institution (Nørgaard, 1999: 65-9).

The main reason Latvia wanted its pre-war constitution restored was because preservation of this constitution meant that voting rights would only be granted to those who held citizenship in pre-war Latvia and the 1919 Citizenship Law came back into force (Gelazis, 2004: 228). According to this law, citizenship was granted to those who lived in Latvia before 1940 and their descendants (Krüma, 2009: 65). With the restoration of the pre-war constitution the electoral laws also remained for a large part the same as in 1922. The 100-member parliament is elected under a proportional representation party-list system with arrangements for preference voting. Latvia has two large constituencies and three medium-sized ones. Parties can submit party-lists for each of the constituencies.

The pre-war law was changed several times. The first amendment had the purpose to modernize the electoral system and lowered the voting age from 21 to 18 years to European example. The second amendment was to protect the independence of the state. This amendment

made it obligatory for candidates to show that they did not work for Soviet security services. Furthermore, the use of simple quota was changed in Sainte Laguë, a system in which the number of votes is divided by odd numbers. Finally, the electoral threshold was raised from four percent (only used in 1993) to five percent to overcome the problem of party fragmentation and also to prevent ethnic minority parties from running. This high threshold can be regarded as restrictive for ethnic minority parties and it hampered some Russian parties from participation in the elections. But because of the size of the Russian minority there were several ethnic minority parties that passed this threshold.

Estonia

In Estonia, reintroduction of the inter-war constitution was problematic because Estonia's inter-war constitution was not democratic. In June 1992 a new constitution was adopted. In this constitution the parliament – *Riigikogu* – is the legislature and the president is the head of the state. In the Estonian system the president also merely has a ceremonial function and can only oppose to a law by bringing it to the Supreme Court for judicial review (Nørgaard, 1999: 68).

The main reason Estonia wanted to restore its pre-war constitution was that this would put pre-war Citizenship back into force. This issue was in the new constitution settled through a compromise between the Supreme Council (the Soviet parliament) and the Estonian Congress. The Estonian Congress acknowledged the Supreme Council as representative institution and the Supreme Council agreed with a referendum on the citizenship legislation. The outcome of this referendum was that the majority wanted that the strict citizenship legislation was restored (Nørgaard, 1999: 65). This meant that only Estonian citizens could vote in the first elections and that almost 500.000 non-citizen residents were not allowed to participate.

The development of an electoral system was in Estonia more difficult than in Latvia. During the first years of democratization, 1989 -1993, there were nine different elections in Estonia. Five of these elections were national elections (of which one presidential), two national referenda and also two local elections. The first national referendum was about restoration of independence in 1991 and the second national referendum was on the restoration of the citizenship legislation in 1992. Remarkably, during the four national elections between 1989 and 1992 different electoral systems were applied (Grofman, Mikkel, and Taagepera, 1999: 232).

In the elections before 1990 majority rule in single member districts was used. This was standard in Soviet Era elections. However, when independence became within reach, the awareness of other electoral systems than the Soviet system raised and for the election in 1989

Estonia adopted a Single Transferable Vote (STV)[10]. This is a form of proportional representation in which candidates only need quotas to get elected. Votes are transferred from the first to the second preference of the voters when the candidate has no chance on being elected or already has enough votes.

This was the beginning of a period in which the electoral rules were often changed. In the 1990 Supreme Council election STV was used. The reason for this was that the Communist party wanted to avoid party lists because of their discredited party label. In the 1990 Estonian Congress elections Limited Vote was used. In the Limited Vote system voters can vote for several candidates, but they do not have as much votes as candidates that can be elected. The ground for this was that the vote had to be personal because local activists participated in the elections and those were often part of different groupings. No regular parties participated at that moment in the elections, candidates represented social movements or electoral lists (Estonian Institute, 2000a). Voters were given votes along the district magnitude. For the 1992 parliamentary elections the Social Democrats wanted a different method than STV. The Social Democrats had observed that the STV had weakened the emerging party structures and wanted a closed list system. The Communist parties were afraid their support would decrease even more and wanted to block the decision to change the electoral rules. As a compromise they decided for a 'personalized' list PR. This meant that voters voted for a specific candidate but they also marked the list they voted for. This way candidates could be personally elected but also by lists. The list remainders were accumulated nationwide and assigned to the closed party lists with 'quasi – d'Hondt divisors': $1, 2^9, 3^9, 4^9,…$ (Grofman, Mikkel, and Taagepera, 1999: 234-9).

This system was problematic because there was a large number of lists in the elections. There were seventeen multicandidate lists and twenty-five independent lists. For this reason, only very few of the lists received full quota, that is one-eighth of all votes. The rest of the votes had to be distributed on the national level. In the 1992 election this resulted in the problem that 60 of the 101 seats in parliament were distributed this way. Only 56 candidates that received the highest portion of the votes were elected to parliament. As a consequence, the mixing of open and closed list components had a deligitimizing effect (Grofman, Mikkel, and Taagepera, 1999: 240).

The Estonian electoral system was not much changed for the elections of 1995 and 1999. The constraint of a five percent threshold led to a decrease in the amount of parties. This was necessary as Estonia knew 31 parties after independence (Estonian Institute, 2000b). These

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[10] This is a form of proportional representation in which candidates only need quotas to get elected. Votes are transferred from the first to the second preference of the voters when the candidate has no chance on being elected or already has enough votes.

parties originated from the social movements that had played a crucial role in the achievement of independence. The party system will be discussed in more depth in the next section.

4.2 The development of the Party Systems

The party systems of the younger democracies in Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) differed right after democratization in general from party systems in Western Europe. The most prominent difference is that the number of electoral parties is much higher than in Western European countries. Moreover, new parties are constantly emerging, parties are frequently splitting and merging – the system is constantly in flux. Because parties only emerged after the democratic transition of these countries, voters do not have strong connections with parties and volatility is high. Moreover, ideological stances of parties, just as cleavages in the political systems, are sometimes hard to define (Tõnis Saarts, 2011: 84-85).

All these characteristics also apply to the Baltic States. Volatility and party fragmentation in the Baltic States are even higher than in other CEE countries. Electoral volatility is an indicator of party system stability. Compared to Latvia, the Estonian party system seems to be more stable because voter volatility is on average lower. In Estonia voter volatility is declined since the 1990s while in Latvian elections are always marked by high voter volatility. Also in terms of party fragmentation Estonia is performing better than Latvia. The Estonian case shows that relatively fragmented systems can also be quite stable party systems (Lewis, 2006).

Party competition in both party systems is dominated by the ethnic cleavages. In the following sections the party systems of Estonia and Latvia will be discussed[11]. From this discussion it will become clear that, as a result of the party fragmentation and volatility already described, the party systems of the two countries have developed differently.

Latvia

The Latvian party-system has been highly fragmented and there are not many stable parties that survived several years in power. Scholars have categorized Latvian parties along different dimensions, but the interest of this thesis lies with the ethnic dimension. For that reason the Latvian parties will be classified along the typology of Hansen (2009), that classifies parties as ethnic, inclusive or non-inclusive. An overview of the Latvian ethnic parties can be found in table 5 (see below). As can be seen, the Latvian party system only knew ethnic parties and non-

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[11] When concepts as left- or right-wing parties are used, this points in general to left and right on the ethnic dimension. When these concepts point to another dimension, this will be explained.

inclusive parties. There have been no inclusive parties present in the Latvian party system. This points to severe polarization of the party system.

Table 5: Classification of Latvian parties and percent of Russian candidates

Classification	Party	Election Year	% Vote	Relaxing Citizenship Policy	Pro-minority Language policy	Relations with Russia	Multiculturalism	Russian Candidates
Ethnic	National Harmony Party (TSP)	1998	14.1%	+	+	+	+	60% (33)
	For Human Rights in a United Latvia (PCTVL)	2002	19.0%	+	+	None	+	50.1% (39)
		2006	6.0%	+	+	+	+	62% (44)
	Harmony Center (SC)	2006	14.4%	+	+	+	+	42.9% (36)
Minority Inclusive	None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Non-inclusive	Social-Democratic Alliance (LSDA)	1998	12.8%	-	None	+	+	2.5% (2)
	People's Party (TP)	1998	21.2%	None	None	+	+	4.5% (3)
		2002	16.6%	None	None	None	None	1.8% (1)
		2006	19.6%	None	-	None	+	0
	Fatherland and Freedom/ LNNK Alliance (TBL/LLNNK)	1998	14.7%	-	-	+*	+	3% (2)
		2002	5.4%	-	-	-	-	1.5% (1)
		2006	6.9%	-	-	-	-	0
	Latvia's Way (LC)	1998	18.1%	-	None	+	None	1.6% (1)
		2002	4.9%	None	-	None	None	3.6% (2)
	Latvia's First Party (LPP)	1998	7.3%	None	None	None	+	0
		2002	9.5%	None	None	None	None	5.9% (3)

	Year	% Vote						
Latvia's First Party/ Latvia's Way Alliance (LPP/LC	2006	8.6%	None		- **	None	+	6.3% (4)
New Era (JL)	2002	23.9%	None			+	+	0
	2006	16.4%	-		- ***	None	+	1.2% (1)
Green and Farmers Party (ZZS)	2002	9.4%	None	None	None	None	+	1.6% (1)
	2006	16.7%	None		-	None	None	5.7 (4)

Source: Data of the Comparative Manifestos Project (Klingemann et al. 2006), with data on election results (% Vote) and candidate data from the Central Election Commission of the Republic of Latvia (www.cvk.lv). Comparative Manifestos data for Latvia 2006 is not yet available. Data presented are estimates based on reading of party program. (in Hansen, 2009: 60-1).

Note: Number in parentheses is the number of Russian and Russian-speaking (Ukrainian and Belarusian) candidates on the party list.

* Includes some negative mention of relations with Russia.

** Includes some mention of respecting minority rights, but stronger favoritism to Latvian language and culture.

***Includes some mention of multicultural rights, but greater mention of promoting Latvian culture, for instance, greater teaching of Latvian in minority language schools.

This discussion of the Latvian party system will start with ethnic minority parties. In Latvia, similar to Estonia, ethnic parties began to emerge after independence. The first Russian ethnic party in Latvia was the National Harmony Party (TSP) which later broke up in the For Human Rights in a United Latvia (PCTVL) and Harmony Center (SC). These parties are classified as Russian ethnic parties because their main goals is to promote the interests of the Russian minority and a majority of the candidates on their list is Russian. Other parties in the Latvian party system were only limited open for Russian candidates on their party lists and are marked as non-inclusive parties. There were no inclusive parties present in the Latvian party system. Only one party: the Harmony Center Alliance tried to bring the Russian population closer to the ethnic majority (Hansen, 2009: 68).

After independence the National Harmony Party was the main Russian ethnic party in Latvia. The TSP was not a traditional ethnic party along the definition that has been used so far because it did not exclusively address the ethnic minority but it wanted to represent the interest of more moderate Latvians (Nakai, 2012: 64). This was possible because the left of the party system on the ethnic dimension was controlled by Russian ethnic parties and the right by nationalist Latvian parties. The party tried to make a bridge between the ethnic Latvians and the ethnic Russians and included Latvians on its party list. The Harmony Party won six seats during the 1995 elections and the Equal Rights party won five (Nakai, 2012: 64).

The Equal Rights Party was the second major ethnic minority party. The two parties tried to gain wider support by joining For Human Rights in a United Latvia (PCTVL) before the parliamentary elections of 1998.[12] This was an alliance with the Equal Rights party and the Latvian Socialist Party (LSP). However, the PCTVL differed from the National Harmony Party in the sense that it did not want integration of the ethnic minority into the Latvian society but it wanted conflict. In 2002 the TSP and LSP decided to form a new alliance with the New Center party and participated in the 2006 elections as the Harmony Centre (SC) alliance. These parties have been winning seats in the Latvian parliament ever since (Hansen, 2009: 71).

The SC coalition and the PCTVL represent the Russian ethnic minority interests in different ways. The SC coalition seeks cooperation with the ethnic minority. The party is pro-European Union and wants Latvia to function 'as a bridge between East and West' (Hansen, 2009: 71). Moreover, the party wants more of the non-citizens to naturalize and promotes Latvian language education. The party also wants that the non-citizens get the right to vote in local elections as the non-citizens in Estonia have (Hansen, 2009: 72). Both the SC and the PCTVL function as left-wing parties on the ethnic dimension but also on socio-economic

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[12] In the 1998 elections PCTVL took part under the name the National Harmony Party (TSP).

dimension. The party promotes left-wing social policies such as tax relief and fights corruption. However, the PCTVL is much more critical to the more mainstream, right-wing parties, and blames them for the exclusion of the Russian ethnic minority and corruption scandals. The PCTVL was against membership of the NATO: it wanted regional self-rule but did support membership of the EU (Hansen, 2009: 73). The reason for this was that the party wanted to use the European Elections to show the human rights problems and to push for more minority and language rights (Pridham, 2007: 579).

Next to the ethnic parties, the Latvian party system knew several non-ethnic parties with moderate market-oriented attitudes, but they were non-inclusive or right wing parties on the ethnic dimension. These parties appeared and disappeared. Since independence Latvia voters with market-oriented attitudes could vote for: Latvia's Way, New Era, the New Party, the First Party, the People's Party, the Democratic Saimnieks, Green and Farmers and Unity (Nakai, 2012: 64). Often these parties were built around a strong leader and when these leaders decided they wanted to split or merge with other parties, new parties were formed[13].

The already existing Democratic Centre Party can be marked as a centre-left party on the socio-economic policy dimension but on the ethnic dimension as an non-inclusive party as well. The party changed its name after independence to Democratic Party Saimnieks (DPS) in 1994 and won seats in the 1993 and 1995 elections.

The strongest nationalist party was the For Fatherland and Freedom/ Latvian National Independent Movement (TB/LNNK) (Nakai, 2012: 64). This party was formed out of two nationalist parties and promoted the repatriation of aliens, strict citizenship laws and protection of the Latvian Language. The TB/LNNK merged in 2011 with the ultranationalist party: All for Latvia! (Lanford, 2014: 811).

Table 6 will provide an overview of the main political parties and their number of seats in parliament from 1993 until 2011.

Table 6: Political parties in Latvia and their number of seats between 1993-2011

		1993	1995	1998	2002	2006	2010	2011
Ethnic parties	SL	13	11	-	-	-	-	-
	PCTVL (TSP+LSP)	7		16	25	6	0	0
	SC	-	-	-	-	17	29	31
Non-	LSDP	0	0	14	0	0	0	0

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[13] Hasom Abu Meri notes that this is still a problem in Latvian politics. The barriers to start a new party are too low (only two hundred signatures are needed to form a new party), and this results in party system fragmentation. The formation of new parties often rests on strong leaders and voters vote for the ethnic identity or personality of party leaders instead of for party ideology (Interview Hosams Abu Meri, 07-01-2015).

inclusive parties	(LSDA)							
	DPS	5	18	0	-	-	-	-
	LPP (JP)	-	-	8	10	10	8	0
	LC	36	17	21	0			
	TP	-	-	24	20	23		
	JL (V)	-	-	-	26	18	33	20
	LNRP	-	-	-	-	-	-	22
	KDS	6	8	0	LPP	0	0	-
	LZS	12		0	12 (ZZS)	18	22	13
	LZP	0	8	0				
Non-inclusive/ nationalist parties	LNNK	15		17	7	8	8	14
	TB	6	14					
	TKL	-	16	0	-	-	-	-
	Others	13	19	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Source: Central and Election Commission of Latvia, Parties and Elections in Europe in Naikai (2012: 67).

Acronyms: LC: Latvian Way; LZS: Latvian Farmers Union; LNNK: Latvian National Independence Party; TB/LNNK: For Fatherland and Freedom; DPS: Democratic Party Saimnieks; KDS: Latvian Christian Democratic Union; LZP: Latvian Green Party; LNRP: Latvian National Reform Party; LPP: Latvia's First Party (JP: New Party from 1998); TP: People's Party; SL: Harmony for Latvia; PCTVL: For Human Rights in a United Latvia: SC: Harmony Centre; LSDP: Latvian Social Democratic Party; JL: New Era; TKL: Peoples' Movement

This discussion of the Latvian party system shows that the system was very fragmented. There were especially a lot center-right parties that had been formed around a strong political leader and wanted to win the vote of the Latvian middle-class voters. In this fragmented party system none of these non-inclusive center-right parties wanted to represent the ethnic minority. Agreement to minority policies could give rival political parties room to adopt more extremist positions. The large number of non-inclusive right-wing parties gave voters the opportunity to easily switch between these parties and these parties are in constant competition with each other. The nature of this party system, polarized on the ethnic political dimension, makes it difficult to get policies that connect with the interests of the ethnic minority.

Estonia

The Estonian party system after independence was similar to the party system of Latvia at the time. It was also highly fragmentized, but consolidated faster than the Latvian system and five strong parties emerged that still dominate the system. The big difference between the Latvian

system the Estonian system is that the ethnic parties in Estonia were not successful. These parties only won seats in the elections of 1995 and 1999 and disappeared afterwards (Nakai, 2012: 87). However, there can be found inclusive parties in the Estonian party system which point to less polarization of the party system compared to Latvia. The following table (table 7, see next page) provides an overview of the ethnic, inclusive and non-inclusive parties in the Estonian party system.

Table 7: Classification of Estonian parties and percent of Russian candidates

Classification	Party	Election Year	% Vote	Relaxing Citizenship Policy	Pro-minority Language policy	Relations with Russia	Multiculturalism	Russian Candidates
Ethnic	Our Home is Estonia (MKOE)	1995	5.9%	+	+	+	+	75.3% (55)
	Estonia United People's Party (EURP)	1999	6.1%	+	+	+	+	61% (105)
		2003	2.2%	+	+	+	+	72.6% (77)
	Russian Party of Estonia (VEE)***	1999	2.0%	+	+	+	+	77.7% (115)
		2003	0.2%	+	+	+	+	75% (9)
Minority Inclusive	Center Party (Kesk)	1999	23.4%	None	+	None	None	9.9% (24)
		2003	25.4%	None	+	+	None	12.8% (16)
	Reform Party (Reform)	2003	17.7%	-	None	None	None	10.4% (13)
Non-inclusive	Center Party (Kesk)	1995	14.2%	None	None	None	None	4.4% (5)
	Reform Party (Reform)	1995	16.2%	None	None	None	None	0
		1999	15.9%	-	None	None	None	3.7% (8)
	Moderates (Mõõdukad)	1995	6.0%	None	None	+	None	4% (4)
		1999	15.2%	-	None	None	None	4.6% (14)
		2003	7.0%	None	none	None	None	4% (5)
	Republican & Conservative Peoples' Party (Parem)	1995	5.0 %	None	None	+*	None	3% (2)

	1995	32.2%	None	None	+	None	3.1% (5)
Coalition Party & Rural Union (KMÜ)							
Coalition Party (EKK)	1999	7.6%	-	None	+	None	6% (13)
People¨s Union (Rahvaliit)	1999	7.3%	-	-	None	None	4.2% (7)
Pro Patria (Isamaa)	1995	7.9%	None	-	+/-**	None	1.8% (2)
Res Publica (ResP)	2003	24.6%	None	-	None	None	6.4% (8)

Source: The Comparative Manifestos Project (Klingemann et al. 2006) and candidate data from the Estonian National Electoral Committee (www.vvk.ee) in Hansen, 2009: 69-70.

Note: Number in parentheses is the number of Russian and Russian-speaking (Ukrainian and Belarusian) candidates on the party list.

*Parem's program also includes some negative mention of relations with Russia.

**The Pro Patria and ERSP Union have an equal number of positive and negative quasi-sentences regarding relations with Russia.

*** Political parties that failed to pass the electoral threshold and are not included in the Comparative Manifestos data.

The right wing of the Estonian party system consists of nationalist, non-inclusive parties. The Estonian National Independence Party (ENIP), established in 1988, became part of the Nationalist Bloc together with the Pro Patria Party and they promoted the restoration of the pre-1940 republic of Estonia. This approach was built on the idea that Soviet Occupation of Estonia had been illegal and they had to restore the old republic to end this. Their approach was successful in the sense that restoration became the fundamental idea of Estonian politics. Pro Patria coalition was made out of four parties that emerged during the process of independence in 1990-91. From 1994 a liberal party was added to the right wing of the Estonian party-system, the Reform-party. This party managed to win a significant part of the votes during the 1995 elections and continued to have about 15% of the votes until 2002 (Pettai and Toomla, 2003: 3-4).

The other non-inclusive parties formed the center of the Estonian party-system. The largest party among these parties was the Moderates, which participated in 1992 elections as a coalition between the Social Democrats and Rural Centre Party which merged in 1999. The Social Democrats is one of the five largest parties and is supported by younger residents, who live outside the city and the higher educated. The Coalition Party (CP) was the second major party in the center of the Estonian party-system. The party was in the governing coalition from 1995-1999 because voters were dissatisfied with the rule of Pro Patria, ENIP and the Moderates. During their period in government the CP was supported by 'rural and social-niche parties': the Rural Union (*Maaliit)*, The Countries People's Party (*Maarahva erakond)*, the Farmers Assembley (*Põllumeeste kogu)* and the Pensionners and Families Party *(Pensionäride ja perede erakond).* These parties emerged in 2002 into the people's Union (Pettai and Toomla, 2003: 5-6).

The left of the Estonian party-system can be divided in center-left parties on the economic dimension and parties that represent the ethnic minority. The center-left of the party-system was shaped by the Centre Party. The party-leader of the Centre Party was Edgar Savisaar, founder of the Moderate Popular front. The Center Party had the same economic policies as the Social Democrats but its electorate consists of older, lower-educated citizens, mostly living in the cities. The Russian minority was represented by the United's Peoples Party (UPP), The Russian Party of Estonia (RPE) (Vene Erakond Eestis, in Estonian) and the Russian Unity Party (RUP). These parties had difficulties mobilizing voters because of the restoration of the pre-war citizenship policies (Pettai and Toomla, 2003: 8). In the election of 1992 no Russian party participated in the elections and the election of 1995 should be seen as a starting point for ethnic party competition. During this election the Our Home Estonia (MKOE) received 5.9% of the votes and won 6 seats in the parliament. The reason for this success was that Our Home Estonia was a coalition of the UPP, RPE and RUP (Hansen, 2009: 62).

The Our Home Estonia coalition fell apart during the next elections because the party leaders of the RPE and the EURP had disagreements about the track of the party. In the following years the parties suffered from declining electoral support and almost disappeared. The EURP made a new start in 2009 with the Left Party as the United Left Party of Estonia. The RPE and the EURP were the most outspoken ethnic parties of Estonia. They both wanted more liberal citizenship policies, closer ties with Russia and opposed membership of the NATO. Moreover, the parties value greater influence of the municipalities as the non-citizens are allowed to vote in municipal election and in some municipalities the Russian-minority has a majority. The VEE (VEE (Vene Erakond Eestis, in Estonian) can be marked as a more radical ethnic party as they see the Russian population as the historical population of Estonia (Hansen, 2009: 64).

Two other ethnic parties that are worth mentioning are the Baltic Party of Estonia that was formed in 2000 and merged with the Reform party as well, and the Russian Unity Party that was formed in 1998. Both parties addressed the issues with the strict Citizenship Law but were not able to pass the electoral threshold (Hansen, 2009: 64). In Estonia Russian parties clearly have had problems with passing the 5% threshold even though the amount of Russians that naturalized was gradually increasing. The Russian ethnic minority parties failed to mobilize enough voters. At the same time, Russian voters were dissatisfied with the limited success of the Russian ethnic minority parties and started to vote for ethnic Estonian parties.

In 2003 no ethnic parties participated in the elections anymore and the Russian deputies in parliament were members of the Reform Party and the Centre Party. As table 7 shows, the Centre Party became an inclusive party after the elections of 1995. The Centre Party started to try to win the vote of the Russian-speaking minority but cooperating with the former Russian parties. The party included Russian members on their lists and emphasized the importance of the relationship with Russia and prudence with NATO membership. In 2004 the party even started to cooperate with the party of Russian President Putin United Russia, which sparked critique from more right-wing parties in Estonia. A large part of the Russian speaking population voted for the Center Party. The main reason for this was that the party leader, Edgar Savisaar, fought for the minority interests. Although this all implies support for the Russian-speaking minority the party program of the Centre Party does not mention the liberalization of the Citizenship Law (Hansen, 2009: 66).

The Centre Party has moved from a more centrist position to the left,. The Reform Party on the other hand presented itself as a liberal democratic party but has moved to a more centrist position. This points to centripetal party competition instead of the centrifugal party competition in the years before. The Reform Party, marked in table 7 as inclusive party during the elections of

1999 and 2003, has not been very responsive to the interests of the Russian speaking minority and is in favor of more strict citizenship policies. The party is even nationalist in the sense that it emphasizes the importance of the Estonian language as the basis of Estonian citizenship. It was a strategic move of the party to start a Russian faction led by the former party leader of the EURP when it witnessed the decline of the Russian ethnic parties in 2003 (Hansen, 2009: 67).

Finally, in the first elections of 1992 a few marginal parties managed to win seats in parliament and therefore are worth mentioning. These parties were the Estonian Citizen and the Royalist Party that both won five seats but fell apart after the first elections. In 1995 the Future Estonia Party which was a former part of Pro Patria participated and a group of intellectuals that formed the alternative Blue Party. Both parties did not manage to win seats. Lastly, in 1999 one religious party, the Christian People's Party, tried to run but failed as well (Pettai and Toomla, 2003: 9).

In Estonia the EURP and the VEE have been the most influential ethnic parties. As the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia has voting rights in the municipal election, these parties are still active but have not been able to win seats in parliament since 2003. Some authors have marked these elections as the moment of normalization of the ethnic relations because mainstream parties started to chase the ethnic vote by adopting minority policies and putting minority candidates on their lists (Pettai, 2004).

As has been mentioned above, the Estonian party system consolidated quickly and this resulted in five main parties: the People's Union (earlier the Coalition party), the Pro Patria Union, the Social Democratic Party, the Reform Party and the Centre Party. Remarkably, these parties are all supported by different segments of the population. The competition between the parties was limited and the election results in Estonia have been fluctuating between results in favor of the center-right, center-left and center-right again. The amount of seats won by each of the parties between 1992 and 2011 was as follows (see below).

Table 8: Political parties in Estonia and their number of seats between 1992-2011

		1992	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011
Ethnic parties	Our home is Estonia!/ EURP	-	6 Our home is Estonia!	6 EURP	0	0	0
Inclusive parties	SDE (M)	12	6	17	6	10	19
	K	15	16	28	28	29	26
	RE	-	19	18	19	31	33
Non-	RP	-	-	-	28	19	23

inclusive parties	IL + ERSP	39	8	18	7		
	EK	8	0	-	-	-	-
	ERL (EME)	-	41	7	13	6	0
	KE	17		7	-	-	-
	Others	10	5	0	0	6	0
	Total	101	101	101	101	101	101

Source: Central and Election Commission of Latvia, Parties and Elections in Europe in Nakai (2012: 90).
Acronyms: EURP: Estonian United People's Party; K: Estonian Centre Party; SDE: Social Democratic Party; ERL (EME): People's Union of Estonia; KE: Coalition Party; RE: Reform Party; RP: Res Publica; IL+ ERSP: Pro Patria and Res Publica Union; EK: Communist Party

From this discussion of the Estonian party system it becomes clear that the Estonian party systems has developed differently from the Latvian party systems. In the first years after independence there were many similarities: the party system was very fragmented and party competition was centrifugal. This latter point becomes clear from the fact that there were no inclusive parties in the Estonian party system until the elections in 1999. However, the limited strength of the ethnic minority parties and their disappearance have led to a less extreme competition on the ethnic dimension and ethnic Estonian parties that started to fill the gap of the Russian ethnic minority parties. Parties understood that they their success could be dependent on the votes of the Russian minority and the lower voter volatility made it easier for the parties to support minority-friendly policies because voters would not easily choose another party to support. Even if they don't support a party's ethnic policy, other parties will be too far from their interests on other interests dimensions to switch.

4.3 Concluding remarks

The discussion of the electoral systems and the party systems reveals evidence for two distinct patterns of party competition in Latvia and in Estonia. The first analysis of the electoral systems shows that Estonia and Latvia use roughly the same systems: proportional representation with an electoral threshold of 5% to limit the amount of parties. There are no real restrictions on ethnic parties except that a large part of the Russian population has no citizenship rights and therefore are excluded from political participation. Moreover, the high threshold also limited the emergence of Russian ethnic parties to some extent. In Estonia several ethnic minority parties had difficulties with mobilizing enough voters and were not able to pass the electoral threshold. In Latvia on the other hand, the electoral threshold did not hamper ethnic minority parties from participating in the elections.

The analysis shows that party competition in Latvia remained centrifugal and the party system polarized. The Estonian system on the other hand consolidated faster and the limited success of the Russian ethnic minority parties resulted in a different pattern of competition in the party system. Estonian non-inclusive parties started to compete for the Russian vote and became inclusive parties. In Estonia party competition moved from centrifugal competition to centripetal competition. Some Estonian parties started to moderate their demands and became more accommodative towards the Russian minority. In Latvia ethnic outbidding remained the main form of competition in the party system.

In the next chapter the effects of these two different forms of party competition on minority representation will be analyzed. By monitoring the process of decision-making the causal link between the politicization of ethnicity and substantive minority representation will be revealed.

5. The Decision-Making Process on the Citizenship and Language Legislation in Latvia and Estonia

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The following chapter presents an analysis of the role political parties played in the decision-making process behind the citizenship and the language legislation. It will become clear that the patterns that have been discovered in chapter 4, are also reflected in the decision-making process.

In Latvia, the ethnic outbidding makes it difficult for ethnic minority parties to influence the decision-making process. Moreover, as a result of the extremist positions of the Latvian right-wing parties, the Latvian citizenship and language legislation do not become more liberal but even more restrictive. In Estonia on the other hand, the citizenship and language legislation is becoming more liberal as a result of the switch to accommodative politics of two former non-inclusive parties. In Estonia the legislation was very restrictive in the early 1990s with a focus on protecting the Estonian nation and culture, this changed after 1998, with improved representation for the ethnic minority.

5.1 The role of political parties in the decision-making process on citizenship and language legislation in Latvia

Citizenship legislation

The following table shows an overview of the development of citizenship legislation in Latvia[14]:

Table 9. Political parties and Latvian language legislation

Date	Proposed Legislation	Policy effect and content	Initiated by	Supported by (parties voted for)	Opposed by (voted against	Neutral (parties abstained)
August 21st 1991	Restoration of the Citizenship		Pro-independence Popular			

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[14] There must be noted that the information on the exact amendments of the citizenship and language legislation in Latvia is limited. To tell which parties initiated the legislation, which parties supported it, which opposed, and which were neutral it is necessary to study strategic program documents of the Latvian parties in parliament. These programs are only available in Latvian. The Estonian strategic program documents have been researched by Tolvaišis (2012). For this reason the information about the Latvian case is not as elaborate as the information about the Estonian.

	Law of the interwar period		Front Movement		
June 21st, 1994	Citizenship Act, adopted, (subsequently vetoed by the president)	Restricting			
January 19th 1995	Amendment Citizenship Act	Restricting. Establishment of the window system, registration without residence in another state or received and expatriation permit restrictive	LC and Harmony for Latvia		
16 March 1998	Amendment Citizenship Act	Liberalizing. Ethnic Latvians who came back to Latvia after the Second World War and residents who have completed a course of general education taught in Latvian did not have to take the language tests for naturalization	LNNK/ LZP		LNNK, TB

Source: Tsilevich, Boris. Development of the Language Legislation in the Baltic States. *IJMS: International Journal on Multicultural Societies*. 2001, vol. 3, no.2, pp. 137-154.

In Latvia the 1922 Constitution was reinstated after independence instead of adopting a new Constitution, as Estonia did. This decision was based on the principle of state continuity and aimed to gain international recognition. The Baltic States wanted to show the international community that although they had been under Soviet Rule for more than 50 years, they did exist legally. Because of this principle of state continuity, the Citizenship Law of 1919 came back into force on 21 August 1991 (Gelazis, 2004: 228). Latvia, like Estonia, acknowledged those who were Latvian nationals before 17 June 1940 and their descendants. The prerequisite was that those individuals had lived in the country and registered as citizens before the first of July 1992 or, in case they did not reside in Latvia, had submitted an 'expatriation permit' (Krüma, 2009: 65). This

meant that ethnic Latvians had privileged access to citizenship if they had been living in Latvia permanently. *Ius sanguinis*[15] was the most important principle of the legislation and only those who had been living in Latvia and were legal citizens during the inter-war state had the right to participate in the first elections in 1993. The Citizenship Laws resulted in only 64 percent of the Latvian population being allowed to vote (Gelazis, 2004: 228).

The debate in both Estonia and Latvia on nationality and citizenship already started at the late 1980s. In Estonia a new Citizenship Act was passed on 19 January 1995 (Järve, 2009: 47). In Latvia the Saeima voted in favor of a new Citizenship Law on 22 July 1994 (Gelazis, 2004: 229). In both countries negotiations about amendments to the Citizenship Laws were marked by high levels of nationalism and it was not possible to create a long-term integration policy. In Latvia the citizenship law was amended in 1995, 1997, and 1998. The 1995 and 1997 amendments were minor, technical adjustments to the law but with the 1998 amendment, the law became somewhat more liberal. In this amendment the window-system was abolished and children of non-citizens, born in Latvia after independence were granted citizenship. This way the citizenship law was not purely based on *ius sanguinis* anymore but also had elements of the *ius soli* principle (Brans Kehris, 2010: 98).

The 1998 amendment was made under pressure of the EU and followed the recommendations that were made by the OSCE. Latvia wanted to meet the conditions for EU membership and this external pressure was the most important incentive for Latvia to change the citizenship legislation (Morris, 2003: 22). However, aside from the pressure from the OSCE to change the legislation, pro-minority parties had already submitted several proposals for amendments. These proposals did not pass the Saeima because there was no majority. The amendment that was pushed through in June 1998 under pressure of the EU had failed in 1997 and February 1998. The party leader of the nationalist party said this was because the Russians did not give the impression that they were willing to integrate. But the party leader of ethnic minority party People's harmony explained it differently blaming the non-inclusive right-wing parties for only taking into account of the interests of the ethnic Latvians. Politicians felt that representation of the ethnic minority would cost them votes (Nakai, 2014: 70).

During the negotiations concerning the amendments of the citizenship law, the tensions between ethnic Latvians and the Russian minority grew. In April the Russian Embassy and a synagogue were bombed by extremist. The bombings were connected with the Legion Day, a remembrance day of the soldiers of the Latvian Legion, part of the Waffen SS. The bombings

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[15] Nationality by the *ius Sanguinis* principle means that the nationality is determined by the nationality of the parents (Järve and Poleshchuk, 2010: 7). Other ways to regulate citizenship is on the basis of place of birth *(ius soli)* or on the place of residence *(ius domicillii)* (Järve, 2009: 44).

harmed the relationship between Latvia and Russia, which was a reason for the Democratic Party Saimnieks to start representing the interests of the Russian minority and push for amendment of the citizenship law. The party received its electoral support from the business sector, since a bad relationship with Russia would harm the trade between the two countries (Naikai, 2012: 70). Moreover, the West criticized the worsening relationship between Latvia and Russia (Morris, 2003: 27). The Democratic Party Saimnieks was the biggest Latvian party but the decision to support the ethnic minority meant its end because several parties moved to a more nationalist position, drawing voters away from Saimnieks.

The People's party, TB/LNNK and Latvia's Way started a nationalist campaign against Democratic Party Saimnieks. When Latvian President Ulmanis emphasized the importance of liberalization of the citizenship law for Latvian membership of the EU, the nationalist parties emphasized that there were other problems that needed to be resolved first. The campaign was to some extent effective in Latvian society: on the day the amendments were to be passed some citizens held a demonstration (Naikai, 2012: 74).

The main opponent of the amendment, TB/LNNK, began to collect signatures for a referendum to review the amendment. They managed to get enough signatures and a referendum was held in October together with the parliamentary elections. There was a lot of tension in Latvia about the issue and this was evidenced by the massive participation of the Latvians in the referendum. Almost everybody that had participated in the previous parliamentary election took part in the referendum and with a small majority of 52.54% the amendment of the citizenship law was endorsed (Rozenvalds, 2010: 50-1).

As table 6 in chapter 4 shows the Democratic Party Saimnieks, a non-inclusive centre-right party lost the favor of the Latvian people and as a consequence all its seats in the 1998 elections. The People's Party was the winner of the election. In the polarized Latvian party-system it was not possible for mainstream parties to accommodate ethnic policies. Ethnic politics was at the center of the 1998 election and as table 6 shows, parties that used anti-ethnic discourse, such as TB/LNNK and the People's Party won the election (Nakai, 2014: 68-9).

Language legislation

Language legislation in Latvia and Estonia has received much attention in the context of majority-minority relations. In both countries, language legislation was part of nation-building strategies and the language of the titular nations received the status of official state language. Language legislation can also be part of ethnic containment strategies, management of linguistic

diversity, or be part of the democratization process. Often it is part of several strategies at once (Järve, 2003: 76).

Latvia adopted its first language act in 1989. In this act it was laid out that Latvian was the official state language. There was a transition period to switch from Russian as the official state language to Latvian. The Latvian Act on Language was amended in 1992 and specific references to Russian were removed. Still, the essence of the law was that monolingual Russian-speakers were not allowed to work in the public sector. However, the law could not ban bilingual Russian-speakers from the Public Sector completely because they were needed to communicate with a large part of monolingual Russian-speakers in society (Järve, 2003: 80).

The situation in Latvia at that moment could be described as ethnic containment. The importance of the state language was included in several other policies, such as education policy and electoral law. The language test that was part of the naturalization procedure was difficult and the language proficiency of the Russian-speakers was low because they never had to use Latvian before. This resulted in small numbers of naturalized citizens. The Latvian language is closer to the Russian language than the Estonian language and this should have made the naturalization process in Latvia more accessible for the Russia-speakers. However, Latvia kept the naturalization numbers low with the window-system (Järve, 2003: 81-3).

The new language law in Latvia was adopted in 1999. Before this law was adopted, nationalist parties already tried to restrict the use of Russian. TB/LNNK wanted to set up a 'language inspectorate' that would force employers to lay off employees who were unable to speak Latvian of a certain standard. This proposal did not pass parliament, but a bill that allowed employers to dismiss employees with insufficient knowledge of the Latvian language was passed. This bill resulted in harsh criticism from international organizations and the bill was vetoed by the president. However, the nationalist parties (TB/LNNK, People's Union and Latvia's Way) kept pushing for the law and, although adjusted, it came into force in 1999 (Nakai, 2012: 75).

The Russian minority parties protested against the law and said that the Latvian government wanted to establish discrimination in the labor market. Moreover, they wanted a provision that allowed the use of the Russian language in municipalities with mostly Russian-speaking citizens. The government coalition was composed of the People's Party, Latvia's Way and TB/LNNK and the latter party had an agreement with the two centre-right parties that they would support a strict language law. This nationalist coalition decided that the protection of the Latvian culture was more important than EU membership (Nakai, 2012: 76). The EU was putting a lot of pressure on Latvia at that moment to liberalize the law and Finland even threatened to

veto Latvian membership (Järve, 2003: 87) However, the nationalist government coalition was not responsive to this pressure.

TBN/LNNK even put more emphasis on the preservation of the Latvian language and proposed an amendment to Latvia's education law in 1997. The amendment proposed that Latvian should be used as instructional language on all secondary schools. After the election of 1998, which was won by TBN/ LNNK, a new education law was passed. According to this law all general schools should teach exclusively in Latvian. From then on, the Russian minority was dependent on private schools for Russian education of their children. The Russian ethnic parties, PCTVL, had 16 seats in parliament at that time but the People's Union, Latvia's Way and the new Party, all non-inclusive parties, had 53 seats in parliament. Some of the ethnic Russian parties proposed amendments to the law in 2000 and 2001 but the amendments were not passed by the parliament (Nakai, 2012: 76-7).

5.2 The role of political Parties in the decision-making process on citizenship and language legislation in Estonia

Citizenship legislation

The following table shows an overview of the development of citizenship legislation in Estonia:

Table 10: Political parties and Estonian citizenship legislation

Date	Proposed Legislation	Policy effect and content	Initiated by	Supported by (parties voted for)	Opposing parties (voted against	Neutral (Parties abstained)
15 June 1993	Alien's Act (adopted, subsequently vetoed by the president)	Alien's Act (adopted, subsequently vetoed by the president)	RP	All represented parties	-	-
8 July 1993	Alien's Act	Permanent residence accorded to non-citizens.	Constitutio-nal commission (after presidential veto)	All represented parties	-	-
19 January 1995	Law on Citizenship	Restricting. Civics exam added, permanent residency requirement extended to 5 years.	ERSP	All represented parties	-	-

8 December 1998	Amendments to the Law on Citizenship	Liberalizing. Granting citizenship to non-citizens' children born after February 26, 1992, on the basis of parents' application. About 10,000 children qualifying for citizenship.	Government	Moderates, KE, RE, Russian Faction,	RP and ERSP	
14 June 2000	Amendments to § 34, 35 of the Law on Citizenship	Liberalizing. Naturalization requirements liberalized for disabled people	KE	All parties represented	-	-
8 May 2002	Law on Amending the Law on Citizenship (942 SE). Rejected.	Liberalizing. Possibility to non-citizens of (pre-)retirement age to obtain citizenship, being exempted from the language exam. 60,000 people affected.	EURP	EURP	RP, RE, KE (6 deputies), Moderates (4 deputies	KE (17 deputies), Moderates (7 deputies)
15 October 2002	Law on Amending § 35.4 of the Law on Citizenship (SE 1081)381	Liberalizing Naturalization requirements liberalized for disabled people.	KE	All represented parties	-	-
17 December 2002	Law on Amending the Law on Citizenship (954 SE)383. Rejected.	Liberalizing. Reducing the naturalization procedure period from 1 year to 6 months	KE	KE, RE	RP, moderates	

Source: Tolvaišis, 2012. pp.169-171

In Estonia the old constitution could not be restored and therefore neither could the pre-war citizenship legislation. However, after a referendum in 1992 a new citizenship law similar to the

pre-war citizenship legislation came into force. Although during the Soviet Union the main goal was to create a soviet identity, official registration of ethnic identity was still maintained. Estonians had 'Estonian' in their passports until the Soviet Union collapsed. However, this identity was not naturally transferred after independence. Estonian nationality was only granted to people who already had Estonian nationality before 16 June 1940, the day Estonia became part of the Soviet Union, or descendants of those people. The Law on Citizenship, that rested on the *ius sanguinis*[16] principle, was adopted on 26 February 1992 (Thiele, 1999: 14).

If the Russian-speaking immigrants from other parts of the Soviet Union wanted to obtain Estonian citizenship, they could get it through naturalization. For this process of naturalization the applicant had to be living in Estonia for at least two years prior to the application, and remain in Estonia for at least another year after applying. Furthermore, sufficient knowledge of the Estonian language was required. Moreover, because the first government of independent Estonia set the date for establishing a permanent place of residence in 1991, the naturalization process could not be started before 1993. This excluded a large part of the Russian-speaking minority, almost a third of the total population of Estonia of political rights and also from the parliamentary elections in 1992 (Thiele, 1999: 14-5).

The first cleavages between the non-inclusive ethnic Estonian parties emerged during the discussion and adoption of the Aliens Act in 1993. Initially, the law that was proposed by Res Publica did not grant residency rights to non-citizens. However, the president vetoed this provision. In parliamentary debates the Centre Party and the Moderates already supported more rights for non-citizens[17]. However, their overall policy position was in line with that of Res Publica, they also wanted that Russian population emigrated from Estonia (Tolvaišis, 2012: 171).

In Estonia a new Citizenship Act was passed in 1995, initiated by the ERSP. This law was more restictife than the Aliens Act of 1993 was. The language requirements were toughened and there was an exam on the constitution added. After this law the amount of naturalizations decreased. Up to this point the non-inclusive right wing parties strongly advocated a very restrictive naturalization procedure. However, Estonia was pressured by the EU to liberalize its citizenship policies and this had to the desired effect, to an extent (Tolvaišis, 2012: 173).

The pressure of the EU and the visits of High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Max van der Stoel, had considerable

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[16] Nationality by the *ius Sanguinis* principle means that the nationality is determined by the nationality of the parents (Järve and Poleshchuk, 2010: 7). Other ways to regulate citizenship is on the basis of place of birth *(ius soli)* or on the place of residence *(ius domicillii)*. This was not the case in Estonia and therefore, all migrants that had settled in Estonia after 1940 were excluded from citizenship (Järve, 2009: 44).

[17] The Center Party wanted to reject the Aliens act and the Moderates said that they did not want to substitute 'an old injustice with a new one' (Tolvaišis, 2012: 171).

impact on the amendment to the citizenship law in 1998. This was one of the most significant amendments Estonia has made thus far. According to the amendment, children of non-citizens born in Estonia and under the age of fifteen in 1998 were granted citizenship starting February 26th 1992 (Järve, 2007: 53).

After this amendment A division began to emerge in the positions of the non-inclusive parties. The Moderates, the Centre party and the Russian parties want further liberalization of the citizenship law, but this resulted in strong opposition. Especially Pro Patria was against the 1998 amendment and parliamentarians of the Reform Party said that most likely they would vote against future liberalizing amendments. Members of the Moderates explained that they did not have a position on the issue yet. Because of this harsh resistance a new amendment proposed by Russian politicians was rejected in parliament in 2002. The amendment would have given people at the age of retirement the chance to naturalize without taking the language exam.

It is important to note that the coalition at the time of the rejection of this amendment consisted of the Reform Party and the Center Party. This example and the adoption of the Citizenship Law and the Aliens Act earlier, shows that although the Center Party advocated a more liberal policy toward the Russian–speaking population it agreed with the right-wing non-inclusive parties in parliament during the period 1992-1998 (Tolvaišis, 2012: 174).

After 1999, the Center Party became the most important advocate of liberalization of the citizenship legislation. This was the result of pressure from the Russian members of the party. The Center Party was more successful than the Russian parties in pushing for liberalization because the positions of the Russian parties were considered too radical by the other parties in the system (Tolvaišis, 2012: 174). The the 2002 amendment proposed by the Center Party was initially rejected. Reason for this was that other parties accused the Center Party of only wanting to win the votes of the Russian-speaking minority. The right wing non-inclusive parties the Coalition Party and the Reform Party had the decisive vote on the amendment, because the parties that were in favor of the amendment had no majority in the Estonian parliament. These parties were divided over the question whether to vote for or against the amendment. The Reform party solved this division by letting the parliamentarians decide for themselves to vote in favor or against the bill. The Coalition party changed its position and decided to support the bill (Nakai, 2012: 93).

The Reform party changed in this period also from non-inclusive party to an inclusive party and became more open to the demands of the Russian-speaking population. The reason that both parties could change their position on the amendment of the citizenship legislation was that the chance that they would be criticized on ethnic issues was small. Ethnicity was not the

most important topic in Estonian politics anymore except for the nationalist party Pro Patria. During the election campaign for the elections of 1999 no other party used citizenship legislation to win votes. Topics that were debated on were mainly EU membership, agriculture and information technology (Fitzmaurice, 2001). As table 8 shows the Coalition Party lost most of its seats in the 1999 elections but this was not, as it was the case in Latvia, due to criticism from other parties but because of internal problems (Nakai, 2012: 94).

Language legislation

Again, it is best to begin with an overview of the most important amendments to the language legislation in Estonia. Table 11 (see below) gives an overview of the proposed legislation, the actors that initiated this legislation and the supporters and opponents of the legislation.

Table 11. Political parties and Estonian language legislation

Date	Proposed legislation	Policy content and effect	Initiated by	Supported by (parties voted for)	Opposed by (voted against	Neutral (parties abstained)
February 21st, 1995	Language Law (adopted)	All other languages declared foreign; minority languages not mentioned	RP	All represented parties	-	-
December, 15th 1998	Amendments to the Riigikogu Election Law, the Local Municipality Council Election Law and the Language Law (1073 SE, adopted)	Restricting. Estonian language requirements set for election candidates to Riigikogu and local municipality councils.	Constitutional Commission (RE)	All represented parties	Russian faction	-
June 14th, 2000	Law on Changing the Language Law (390 SE)	Liberalizing. Estonian language requirements for private sector employees softened.	Culture Commission (Moderates)	All represented parties	-	-
November 21st, 2001	Law on Amending §-2, 2.1 and 26 of the Riigikogu Election Law	Liberalizing. Estonian language requirements for election candidates	IRL, Moderates' and RE deputies	RP, RE, Moderates, ONPE, individual KE deputies	ERL, KE (most deputies)	Individual members of KE, RP, RE, ONPE

	revoked.				
and § 3, 3.1 and 26 of the Law on Elections to the Local Municipality Councils (880SE)					

In Estonia, just as in Latvia, language was a particularly controversial issue. The Estonian Language Act was adopted on 18 January 1989 by the Supreme Council. This law received a lot of attention, as it was the first of its kind in the Soviet Union. Just as the Latvian language law later would try to do, the Estonian law tried to make the Estonian language the official state language. The Russian language was mentioned nowhere as official minority language or language of interethnic communication. This frustrated the Russian-speaking politicians in parliament at the time and revealed the political tensions. On the other hand, the law gave permission to communicate with all state authorities and institutions in Russian and thus, actually acknowledged that Estonia was bilingual (Järve, 2003: 78-9). However, the law did prescribe the period during which a switch to the exclusive use of Estonian in the private and public sectors would occur. Education in Russian was only available in areas where the Russian-speaking population lived. This showed that nation-building was the most important goal of the Estonian government rather than the management of diversity in society (Järve, 2003: 79).

After independence Estonia still feared for its state language and the the former political majority of ethnic Russians, now a minority, started to claim minority rights and protection of their language. Estonia wanted to ban the Russian language more than ever but had to satisfy the membership requirements of the European Union. According to Järve (2003) Estonia (and Latvia as well) conducted two different policy-agendas of language legislation simultaneously (see table 12).

Table 12 : Language-related policy Agendas in Estonia and Latvia		
Time period	Official agenda	Additional agenda
1989–1992	Restoring of the status of titular languages and preservation of national culture and identity	Restoring of the status of titular languages and preservation of national culture and identity
1992–1999	Establishment of naturalization procedures with titular language proficiency tests	Stimulation of remigration of Soviet-era settlers to their former homelands
1999–	Introduction of national	Continuation of previous

	integration programs with an emphasis on the learning/teaching of the state language as the main agent of integration	citizenship and language policies in order to control the access of non-titular groups to political power
Source: Jarve, 2003. pp.82		

Language legislation is part of the naturalization procedure in Estonia and therefore party positions on this topic are closely related to party positions on the citizenship legislation. It will become clear that the same separation is present in the party system on this topic as it is on the citizenship legislation.

Some language rights were already laid out in the constitution but In 1995, Estonia adopted a new language law in which the actual language policies were described. The biggest change in this the 1995 Language Act was that every other language besides Estonian was marked as a foreign language. This meant that only Estonian could be used in public institutions such as the legislative and executive institutions, but also in private businesses and public media (Tolvaišis, 2012: 82). According to the language act, local governments of cities in which more than half of the residents were members of the national minority were allowed to use that minorities language. In the North-East of Estonia there are several of these types of local governments. However, up to 2003 the Estonian government allowed none of these local governments to use their minority language (Järve, 2003: 84).

Because of international pressure, Estonia amended its citizenship act in 1998, granting citizenship to children born in Estonia to non-citizens. After this amendment the parliament decided to strengthen the Language Act and amended it the 'Language Act, the Riigikogu Election Act and the Local Government Council Election Act establishing proficiency requirements in the state language for elected officials' (Järve, 2003: 86). The international community interpreted this amendment as an attempt to mitigate the effect of Estonia's changing of the Citizenship Law. The amendments to the language law were passed in 1999. This meant that everybody working in the private sector had to have sufficient knowledge of the Estonian language (Järve, 2003: 86).

The amendment was the initiative of Pro Patria. Interestingly, the amendment to the law led to the Russian minority party EURP and inclusive Center party to win seats in parliament (Nakai, 2012: 95). Max van der Stoel and the EU criticized the amendments of the language law. Estonia did not want to risk losing EU membership and decided to readjust the language law according to EU rules. Pro Patria, the governing party at that time, was still very much in favor of the strict language law but only had 18 seats in parliament. The United People's Party (EURP) and the Centre Party combined had 34 seats in parliament. Two other parties, holding 36 seats in

parliament, would be decisive in this matter: the Reform Party and the Social Democrats. According to an analysis of the reports in Baltic News Service and *The Baltic Times* around that time, both parties agreed with the amendment and the bill was passed in June 2000. The voters of the Reform Party and the Social Democrats were very keen on EU membership (Nakai, 2012: 96).

At this point the Reform party decided to represent the interests of the Russian minority and to pursue Russian votes. This is evident from the fact that the Reform Party merged with the Russian Baltic Party. The Estonian parties can do this without the fear of an ' ethnic backlash' (Naikai, 2012: 96). Parties in the Estonian system did not criticize each other on their decision to support the amendment of the citizenship law because they would not win voters from other parties by doing so. The socio-economic policies of these parties were so far apart that this would be impossible.

5.3 Concluding remarks

The analysis of the role that parties have played in the decision-making process of the citizenship and language legislation shows a different result in the two countries. In Latvia, where ethnic outbidding was taking place, the legislation concerning citizenship and language has remained very restrictive. Evidence has been found that supports the expectation that when ethnic outbidding occurs, minority representation is hampered. The Latvian ethnic minority parties were quite successful and received stable electoral support and won seats in parliament since 1993. However, the extremist position of the non-inclusive parties made these parties block every proposal from the ethnic minority parties about liberalization of the citizenship and language legislation. Evaluation of the policy making process shows that an ethnic minority party winning seats in parliament did lead to more influence for these parties.

In Estonia on the other hand, substantive minority representation has emerged but not as a result of ethnic minority parties. The ethnic minority parties were unsuccessful in mobilizing voters and disappeared. However, the different pattern of party competition in Estonia and the decreasing importance of the ethnic cleavage in politics[18] resulted in non-inclusive parties changing gears to support accommodation of the ethnic minority. These parties were able to

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[18] There must be noted that the importance of the ethnic cleavage was decreasing to a limited extent. The Russian system was still polarized but and the ethnic division became part of the hidden agenda of many politicians. Russian politicians and Human Rights Organizations were discredited by the KAPO (The Estonian Internal Security Service) and described as threat to the national security (Interview Miroslavs Mitrofanovs, 31 December, 2014). .

influence the decision-making process and to liberalize the citizenship and language legislation to some extent[19].

This analysis of the substantive representation of the ethnic minorities of Latvia and Estonia also brings up opportunities for further research. The next section, will discuss these possibilities, as well as some further considerations of the results found in this chapter.

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[19] The citizenship and language legislation liberalized considerably compared to the citizenship and language legislation in Latvia. However, there must be noted that the legislation in Estonia remained restrictive and that ethnicity is still one of the most salient cleavages in politics up till today.

Discussion

The qualitative empirical analysis of the party system and the decision-making process on the citizenship and language legislation provides evidence for the negative impact of politicization of ethnicity on substantive minority representation of the ethnic minorities. The expectation was that ethnic minority parties could improve the minority representation of the ethnic minority, if there are power-sharing institutions in place and ethnic minority parties were able to access the decision-making process. However, as the analysis of the Latvian case shows, when the politicization of ethnicity results in ethnic outbidding and party competition becomes centrifugal, this will harm the minority parties' ability to influence the decision-making process and it will influence minority representation negatively. The Latvian citizenship and language legislation has not become more liberal. The Estonian case shows that when ethnicity becomes less salient the substantive representation of the ethnic minority improves; the Estonian citizenship and language legislation was liberalized. The ethnic minority was not represented by ethnic minority parties anymore, rather they were represented by Russian-speaking representatives of non-ethnic parties.

The observations from this thesis fit the expectations that have been proposed at the end of chapter 1. However, both the analysis of the party systems and the analysis of the decision-making process leave some room for discussion. For example, as the analysis of the party systems of Estonia and Latvia shows, polarization in the Latvian party system remained higher than polarization in the Estonian party system. This was evidenced by the fact that in the Estonian system, there was room for inclusive parties, room that did not exist in the Latvian system. According to this thesis the main reason for this difference was that in Estonia, ethnicity became a less salient cleavage in politics. Ethnic minority parties in Estonia were unsuccessful in mobilizing voters and did not pass the 5% voter threshold and disappeared. The degree of polarization in the Estonian system was less severe than in the Latvian system, but it is debatable to what extent. To this day, the Russian minority in Estonia has only one party to vote for: the Center Party (during the end of the 1990s also the Reform Party, but this party turned back into a non-inclusive party. Other parties feel threatened by the support the Center Party receives from the Russian speaking population, thus polarization remains a factor[20]. Moreover, it is debatable whether the ethnic cleavage truly has become less salient in Estonia. Ethnicity is still an important

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[20] Interview Tõnis Saarts, 2 December, 2014.

part of the 'hidden agenda' of parties in Estonia today. The fact that the Estonian Internal Security Service monitors Russian politicians shows that Russian representatives are still not fully accepted in Estonia.

This is in contrast with the Latvian party system in which party competition is clearly defined by ethnicity even today. The ethnic minority parties have managed to win a steady amount of seats in the elections, but still have no voice in the citizenship and language legislation. In other policy fields, the Russian ethnic minority parties have participated in the decision-making process but citizenship and language policies are frozen[21]. The polarization is also displayed in the fact that ethnic minority parties have not been able to enter the governing coalition. The ethnic Latvian parties are not willing to cooperate with the representatives of the ethnic minority and seek other coalition partners instead. Nonetheless, the representatives of the Russian minority parties are accepted and respected. They are not pursued by the security service like in Estonia and the take part in governmental commissions. This respect means a lot the Russian speaking population.

Further research is needed to give a definitive answer to the research question of this thesis. First of all it would be good to expand the timeframe of the analysis of the development of the citizenship and language legislation to the current day. This would provide stronger evidence for the patterns that have been revealed in this thesis. Also, the influence of (prospective) membership of the European Union and pressure from Russia should be further considered. The current situation in Ukraine has great impact on the day-to-day politics of the Baltic States. It would be interesting to research whether these tensions and the pressure from Russia on the Baltic States has a reversing effect on the liberalization of citizenship and language legislation in Latvia and Estonia. The question is whether Russian pressure leads to increased polarization of the party systems, and whether this can undo the achievements of the Russian representatives.

Another way this research could be strengthened is by the assessment of more policy fields that concern ethnic minorities. For example, state integration policies should be taken into account during the analysis. Since the late 1990s, both countries started to reconsider their integration policies and introduced integration plans. Moreover, education policy should be analysed. Although language policy is closely connected to education policy and has been briefly touched upon in this thesis, a closer look at education in minority languages can further complement this thesis. Finally, the analysis of media policies could have strengthened this thesis.

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[21] Interview Hosams Abu Meri, 7 December, 2014.

In both Estonia and Latvia, representatives of the Russian minority have been fighting for TV channels that broadcast in Russian , the results have been different in each country.

The research in this thesis has focused on substantive minority representation at the state level. However, as has already been mentioned, membership of the EU has introduced a new level of politics with consequences and opportunities for minority representation[22], and the local level is another important dimension for minority representation. In Estonia, the Russian minority has voting rights on the local level. In Latvia, local elections are an important channel of influence for Russian minority representatives, as is shown by the fact that the Russian Major of Riga, Nils Ušakovs, is an important personality in Latvian politics[23].

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[22] An overview of this argument can be found in: Spirova, M., & Stefanova, B. (2012). The European Dimension of Minority Political Representation Bulgaria and Romania Compared. *East European Politics & Societies*, *26*(1), 75-92.

[23] An overview of this argument can be found in: Cianetti, L. (2014). Representing minorities in the city. Education policies and minority incorporation in the capital cities of Estonia and Latvia. *Nationalities Papers*, *42*(6), 981-1001.

Conclusion

This thesis was developed to explore *the effect of the politicization of ethnicity on the substantive representation of ethnic minorities.* This research is a contribution to the academic literature on ethnic minority parties. The literature is divided on the question whether the presence of ethnic minority parties has a positive effect on minority representation or a negative. Research on this topic is highly relevant as marginalization of ethnic minorities could ultimately lead to instability and violence.

The debate that has been used to formulate expectations rests on two competing arguments: consociationalism and ethnic outbidding. Expectations that followed from the first school of thought were that ethnic minority parties contribute to better substantive representation if the democratic system is cooperation is institutionalized with power-sharing institutions. On the other hand, following the ethnic outbidding theory, one would expect that the emergence of ethnic minority parties results in marginalization of the ethnic minority because the competition in the party systems becomes centrifugal.

The main findings of the empirical research of this thesis have been presented in the empirical chapters and can be summarized as follows: politicization of ethnicity leads to decreased substantive representation and marginalization of ethnic minorities. The evidence for this finding has been collected by an in-depth analysis of the party systems of Estonia and Latvia on the one hand, and of the decision-making process on citizenship and language legislation between 1991 and 2003 on the other. From the analysis of the electoral rules and party systems of both countries it has become clear that initially in both countries ethnicity was politicized and ethnic parties were active. However, in Estonia the ethnic parties were unsuccessful and disappeared. This changed the party competition in the party system and made it possible for non-ethnic parties to represent the ethnic minority. In other words, in Estonia the politicization of ethnicity quickly decreased and at the same time minority representation increased: citizenship and language legislation was liberalized. In Latvia the situation has almost remained unchanged since 1991 and the party system is still shaped by ethnic competition. This has resulted in ethnic outbidding in the party system and in the exclusion of the ethnic minority parties from the decision-making process on citizenship and language legislation.

This research contributes to the literature by giving a clear insight in the direct consequences of politicization of ethnicity. Although more cases should be researched before

definite conclusions can be drawn about consistency of this effect, this research has given a valuable insight in the causal mechanisms behind the effect. It leads to a next-level debate about the question whether ethnic minority parties are desirable at all or whether ethnic minority representatives should be incorporated in non-ethnic parties, as it is the case in Estonia. It remains a highly sensitive issue in politics but also highly relevant in countries like Estonia and Latvia where ethnic minority are significantly underrepresented.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. List of the persons interviewed

Estonia

Olga Sõtnik, Member of Parliament, Estonian Centre Party. (23 December, 2014);

Tõnis Saarts, Lecturer of Political Science at Tallinn University. (2 December, 2014);

Viktoria Ladõnskaja, Member of Parliament, IRL (Union of Pro Patria and Res Publica). (2 January, 2015).

Latvia

Hosams Abu Meri, Member of Parliament, Unity Party. (7 December, 2014);

Miroslavs Mitrofanovs, Leader of the Russian Union. (31 December, 2014).

Appendix 2. Structure of the semi-structured interview questionnaire used in the research for interviews
I. Ethnic Aspect the party system

1. Are there parties present in the Estonian/ Latvian party system that represent target groups with certain ethnic characteristics?

2. Is party membership in Latvia/ Estonia defined in terms of ethnicity?

3. Are there parties in the Estonian/ Latvian party system that pursue ethnicity as an electoral strategy?

II. Responsiveness to the interests of the ethnic minority

4. What are the party positions of the most important parties in the Estonian/ Latvian party system on minority policies?

5. Do you feel that the Russian minority is well represented in Estonian/ Latvian politics in terms of minority-friendly policies and does the Russian minority has a voice in Estonian politics?

6. Can all elected parties participate in shaping minority policies?

 III. Development of party competition

7. What has been the most important changes in Estonian/ Latvian party politics that you have observed over the years?

8. Do you observe a shift in the public opinion towards the ethnic minority?