

# **Public Awareness and Promotion Campaign for Latvian Citizenship**

## Evaluation

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Citizenship and the naturalization process remain important unresolved issues for Latvia and the integration of society. Since the beginning of naturalization in 1995 more than 50,000 residents have acquired citizenship through naturalization. The number of non-citizens is still staggering: 523,095 out of a total population of 2,339,928, or 22.4%. At approximately 10,000 a year, or even the 15,000 of the peak year 2000, naturalization rates continue to be low and even declining. The Public Awareness and Promotion Campaign was conceived with a view to reverse the declining naturalization application trend.

The Naturalization Board and the OSCE Mission to Latvia, together with the Society Integration Department of the Ministry of Justice and UNDP in Latvia, initiated and managed the campaign. International donors – USA (USAID and Freedom House), Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden and Norway – jointly provided the funding of USD 260,000 to formulate and implement a campaign consisting of multiple elements, but primarily focused on an extensive media campaign. The campaign ran from November 2001 to mid-February 2002 and was targeted at 100,000 non-citizens aged 15-40.

The outcome analysis conducted shortly after the campaign indicates that the number of naturalization applications nationally increased by 20-30%. Most important, the campaign, combined with the exam rationalization and the lowering of naturalization fees in the summer of 2001 and the Fast Track Language Training Program providing language courses to naturalization applicants launched in September 2001, has had the effect of reversing the extended downward trend in naturalization applications by permanent resident non-citizens.

Closer analysis shows interesting regional differences in the dynamic of naturalization applications, confirming the need to elaborate a regionally differentiated policy. In most regions, there was a discernible positive effect from the campaign at levels above or at par with the national average (Valmiera, Saldus, Rīga-Pārdaugava District, Jelgava, Rīga-Vidzeme and Latgale Districts and Daugavpils). In Liepāja there was no positive effect during the campaign, but some indications that a delayed positive effect may be in the offing. No positive effect on naturalization activity was evidenced in Ventspils, Rēzekne and Rīga-Center.

Analysis of the relative naturalization activity of different age groups during and immediately after the campaign indicates that there was a disproportionately large impact on the 18-30 year old group. There is evidence of some increase in the activity of the 31-40 year olds as well, but no positive effect on the 15-17 year olds, possibly due to postponing naturalization until after secondary school graduation, reflecting the new regulations exempting recent graduates from the naturalization exams. The target group was reached, but actually a narrower segment than initially intended, people mostly in their 20s.

The second aspect of the campaign, raising public awareness and level of information among the target group has been successful. Telephone calls to Naturalization Board branches, especially using the newly provided toll-free number, dramatically increased during the campaign, and the newly established web page received thousands of

visitors. Surveys and qualitative data indicate that the response to the direct mail information, TV clips and programs, information booths and related activities conducted in schools throughout Latvia was positive. Less successful was the use of radio and printed press advertisement.

The inference from the information aspect of the campaign is that there remains a large unfulfilled need for information on citizenship and naturalization issues. The response to the campaign also indicates that the rates of naturalization can indeed be positively influenced through concerted action. One of the most important effects of the campaign as a whole is the perception of a gesture of reaching out to non-citizens by the state, expressing the wish to see them as part of a common society. This is an invaluable aspect of the campaign, considering that signals coming from the state or government have been contradictory in the past.

## **I BACKGROUND**

Despite a jump in naturalization rates after the “window” quota system was lifted following a referendum in 1998, leading to a yearly record number of 15,100 naturalization applications to the Naturalization Board in 1999, starting in 2000, interest in naturalization steadily diminished to reach a low point in 2001 of 8,672 applications.

The accumulated experience of the Naturalization Board and social opinion polls pointed to insufficient information and motivation as major causes preventing persons even with high levels of language proficiency from applying for citizenship.

The survey and analysis of the “On the Way to a Civic Society 2000” was seen to indicate that there was an opportunity to conduct a targeted and successful campaign to motivate non-citizens to apply for citizenship. Nearly 80% of non-citizens in the Survey saw citizenship as an integral part to their families’ future and long-term interests. Two-thirds of the non-citizen respondents expressed it to be important for their children to be citizens of Latvia. 73% of non-citizens emphasized the importance of political rights, while two-thirds expressed the belief that their security would be enhanced if they were to become citizens. The Survey also reported that 20% of the respondent non-citizens, which at the time of planning corresponded to 110,000 persons, calculated from the 550,000 then actual non-citizens planned to apply for naturalization within the following 12 months. Based on demographic data it was suggested as likely that these were “younger, relatively affluent, urban-dwelling and relatively liberal-minded non-citizens.” It was also noted that of the respondents who indicated that they did not intend to apply for citizenship through naturalization 20% blamed insufficient information.

It was assumed that 100,000 non-citizens was an appropriate target group which, if approached with an effective campaign message, could be motivated to apply for citizenship through naturalization. It was decided to focus on “young people aged 15 to 40, who know the Latvian language and are motivated to integrate into society.”

These facts and assumptions provided the background or the elaboration of the project “Public Awareness and Promotion Campaign for Latvian Citizenship,” which was the joint initiative of the Naturalization Board, the Society Integration Department of the Ministry of Justice, the OSCE Mission to Latvia and the UNDP in Latvia.

It was intended as a support to the implementation of the national integration program. It also became a part of the UNDP Programme Support Framework and was funded by the governments of the USA (USAID and Freedom House), Canada, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden and Norway.

The main objective of the project was defined as the increase of naturalization rates in Latvia through the implementation of a public awareness campaign on citizenship and naturalization issues. The goal was seen as consisting of two main aspects: 1) to increase public awareness of citizenship and naturalization issues by evoking and supporting the individual decision-making process and public discussion and 2) the implementation of an advocacy campaign encouraging non-citizens to apply for Latvian citizenship.

Two project bodies were established: the Advisory Committee and the Steering Committee. The former was to include donor representatives, providing input, advice and support to the institutions involved in the implementation of the campaign. The Steering Committee consisted of representatives of the Naturalization Board, the Ministry of Justice, UNDP and the OSCE Mission to Latvia. It was defined as an oversight and final decision-making authority.

The Steering Committee selected three winners of the tender in July-August 2001: SIA Adell (Adell Saatchi & Saatchi) PBN Baltic, and SIA Consensus, which were to design, develop and implement the campaign.

The “Public Awareness and Promotion Campaign for Latvian Citizenship” was launched on 19 November and ran through 15 February 2002. The campaign subsumed a wide range of activities: an advertising campaign in mass media, the distribution of informative brochures directly to non-citizens throughout the territory of Latvia, information booths in towns and cities of Latvia, TV shows, internet web page, Citizenship Day at schools and posters in public places.

The project was closely linked to the Fast Track Latvian Language Training Programme, developed by the Naturalization Board in cooperation with USAID, UNDP and the OSCE Mission to Latvia, aimed to facilitate the naturalization process in Latvia.

## **II POLITICAL CONTEXT**

Choosing to become a citizen of a country is a priori a political decision. In Latvia, for various complex reasons, the issue is more than usually politicized. The political context of the public awareness campaign must therefore be taken into account, as it clearly has influenced aspects of the project as well as the project’s outcome.

The citizenship issue is the one where the bifurcation of society is most clearly visible. The disintegrative tendency of some media on both sides of the political and ethnic divide makes it easy for radical politicians to seemingly dominate popular discourse. The moderate national voices often lose out in the discourse, or back away from it, while winning in the policy action. But the unwillingness of the moderates to pronounce official positions against national radicals perpetuates the problem of

political will in supporting the promotion of naturalization. Latvian ruling coalition politicians in general do not perceive the huge number of non-citizens as a problem and their assumptions in this regard do not coincide with those of western interlocutors. If it is perceived as a problem at all, it does not have a high level of priority and is largely conceived by moderate politicians as one that should be managed rather than solved. A consequence of this unstable political will is that the implementing agency of the government's official policy on naturalization, the Naturalization Board, is unusually exposed to political attacks by opponents to the policy and can count on very little public support. High-level credible statements of support are therefore indispensable but were kept to a bare minimum during the information campaign.

Another aspect of political context for any project of such sensitivity is timing. The launching of the project was delayed for two and a half months and came disturbingly close to election campaigns for the upcoming parliamentary elections. The publicly reported attacks by the Saeima Citizenship Implementation Committee on the idea of the information campaign as such and the barely disguised attempts by national radicals to oust the head of the Naturalization Board illustrate the point.

In addition, unforeseen external factors can all negatively influence the ability to carry out a project like this one and disrupt any positive effects in a moment. The corruption scandal involving the Naturalization Board, regardless of cause, clearly has an effect. First, the halt in the granting of citizenship by the Cabinet of Ministers meant that no new citizens were registered for about three months, from February to 7 May, when 1,800 did finally get their citizen status confirmed. This cannot but have a negative effect on potential naturalization applicants. Second, the extremely negative statements and disruptive actions by the Citizenship Implementation Committee blur the positive signal sent to target groups that they are wanted as citizens and social actors by the state. This is particularly true since the radical views are expressed by members of the ruling coalition. Third, the scandal could entail a possible devaluation of the Naturalization Board among the general public and the potential clients. If one of the underlying aims of the project is to create a benevolent atmosphere for the integration of non-citizens, examples like this show the fragility of any progress in areas related to ethnic integration, especially citizenship and language.

Finally, the closure of the OSCE Mission also bears on the political will of Latvia's politicians on citizenship and minority integration issues. It is not only a question of the mechanics of future international cooperation for the implementation of projects, but also of assuming the responsibility for the official goals and policies by the government when there is no one to blame for pressure. Incidentally, this applies equally to the Latvian government and to some donor representatives, who have up until now been able to take a less active bilateral role on certain issues because of the work of the OSCE Mission.

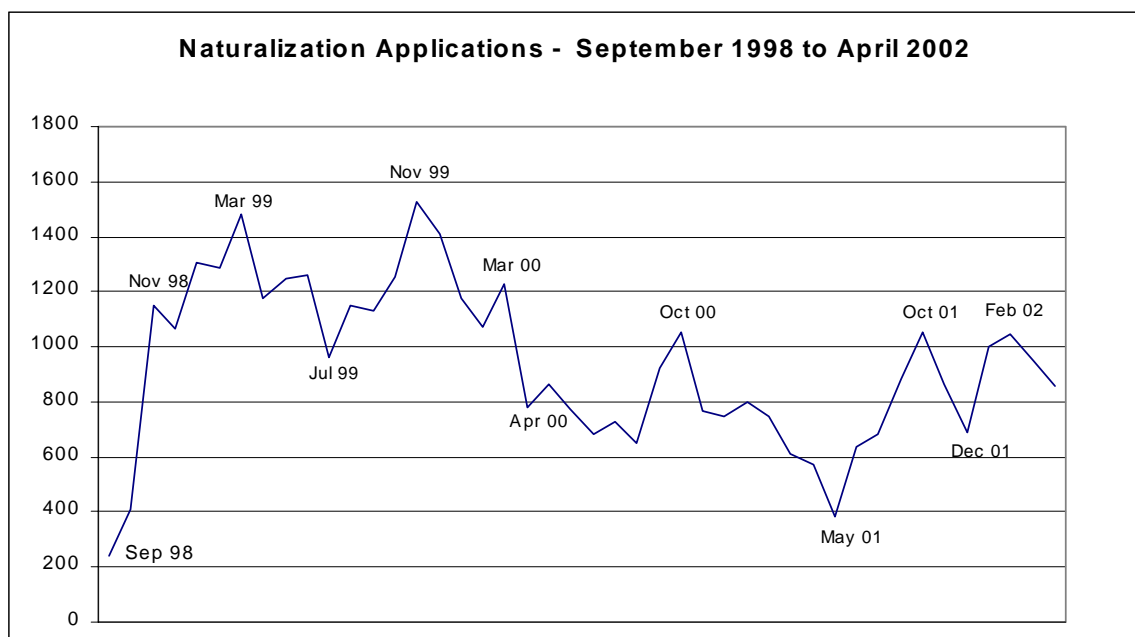
All of these political factors have played a role in the planning, implementation and results of the public awareness campaign.

### III EVALUATION

#### A. Naturalization Applications

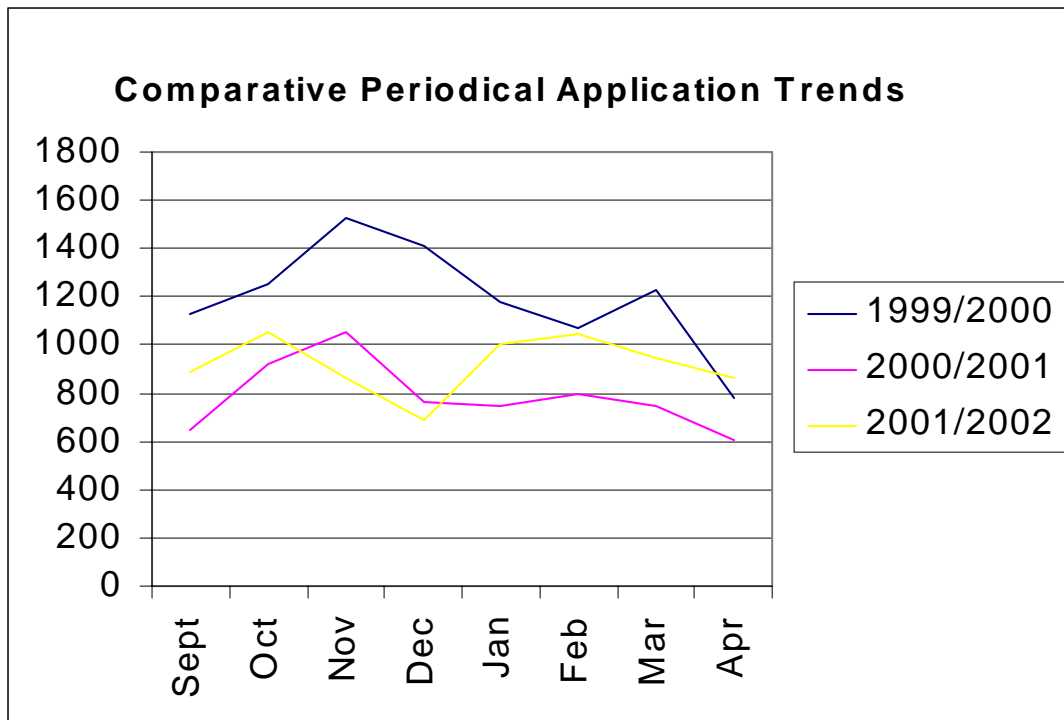
##### a. General

Before looking at the specific figures of the public awareness and promotion campaign for Latvian citizenship it is useful once more to remember the general naturalization context. By the end of March 2002, 53,397 persons have applied for naturalization since the process was started seven years ago on 1 February 1995. On 1 January 2002 there were 523,095 permanent resident non-citizens in Latvia, dwarfing the significance of one or two hundred additional applications a month, even if it may represent a fair percentage rate for an increase. It also makes it more difficult to assess the significance of specific changes in numbers over the short term.



Apart from the exceptional peak months of October 2000 and to some extent March 2000, the picture clearly indicates the general downward trend after the highs of 1999, and especially during the first half of 2001. This trend was broken in the fall of 2001, and the drop in December 2001 can be explained as a common seasonal variation due to the extended holiday season. The combined effect of the lowering of naturalization fees, the fast track language program launched at the end of September and the public awareness and promotion campaign clearly has renewed overall activity.

Looking more closely at the months immediately before, during and after the campaign and comparing them to the same months in the two previous years the picture is less clear:



Applications in September and October 2001 (after the start of the fast track language training) are up compared to the same months in 2000, but not 1999. In November and December 2001, at the start of the campaign, applications are down to 865 and 692, respectively, the lowest they had been for those months since the window system was abolished. In January, February and March 2002 applications increase again, but although they are well above what they were in those months in 2001, they are lower than the figures for 2000. In April 2002, however, the number of applications is higher than the same month in 2001 and 2000.

To establish the increase or decrease of the number of applications, we need to determine which baseline to use. three different points of comparison are dealt with here.

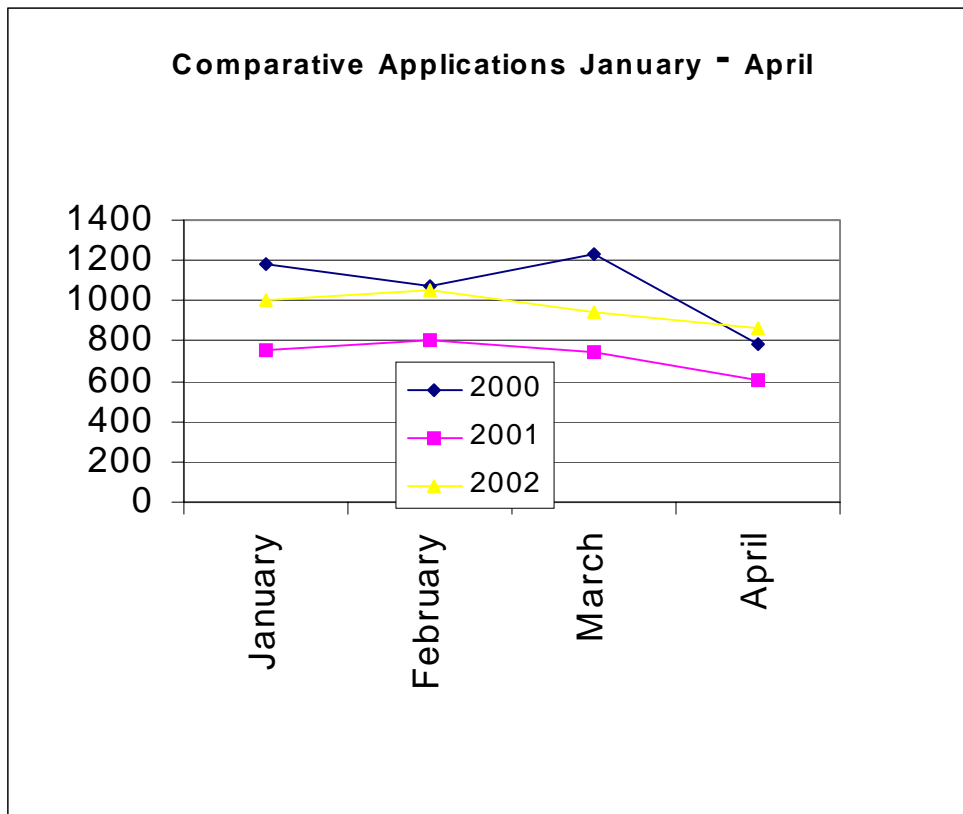
First, in terms of percentages, if we compare the five months that have passed since the beginning of the campaign (November 2001 to March 2002) with the five months preceding it (June to October 2001), the sum of applications has gone up from 3639 to 4554, which represents a **25%** increase. This is, of course, questionable, since the previous period includes the seasonal lows of the summer as well as the all-time low in June.

Second, using August, September and November 2001 as a base line (taking out the uncharacteristic peak in October), we get the average of 810 applications. The monthly average of the first three months of 2002 is 999 and this would then indicate an average increase during the impact months of **23%** over the baseline of the preceding period.



A third, reasonable possibility is comparing the three beginning months of the year with the same months in the two previous years (the year 1999 must be discounted as the time immediately following the window abolition).

In that case applications have increased from 2001 by **30.4%** (2997 total compared to 2298), but compared to 2000 they represent a decrease of 13.9% (from a three-month total of 3479).



The **breaking of the downward trend in naturalization applications** by the second half of 2001 is a major achievement and reflects the combined positive effect of the lowering of fees, fast track language training and the public awareness and promotion campaign for Latvian citizenship.

Significant increase in naturalization applications reaching the **thousand mark** for the first time in almost a year **first in October** (fast track language program effect) and then in **January-February** indicates a positive campaign effect on the number of applications.

Applications in January, February and March 2002 **increased by 30%** compared to the same three-month period in the previous year, but indicate a 14% decrease compared to the high period of 2000. Using the preceding time period as a baseline, the increase is **around 25%**.

In **April 2002**, although the actual number of applications is in decline, the figure **surpasses the April figure for both 2001 and 2000**.

## b. Regional and Demographic Specifics

### Regional

To compare regional effects we can take a look at the applications regionally for the same six months October through March, and compare January – March 2002 to January – March 2001, to see if the dynamic differs from the general one.

**Rīga: Vidzeme and Latgale districts** (non-citizen population % of national total 1.1.2002: 25.4%)

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	300,	245,	234	(26% of national 3-month total 2,997)
January - March 2001:	168,	203,	162	(23.2% of national 3-month total 2,298)
October – December 2001:	275,	237,	210	(27.7% of national 3-month total total 2,610)

The number of naturalization applications is proportional to the percentage of non-citizens resident in this area, is essentially stable over the period reviewed with a slight increase of the proportion compared to the national average in the beginning months of 2002 compared to 2001. The absolute numbers of applications have increased from 2001 to 2002. This means that there is a positive effect from the campaign, which essentially corresponds to the general national trend, and there is therefore no significant differentiated regional effect.

**Rīga: Centre** (non-citizen population % of national total: 13.5%)

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	124,	122,	99	(11.5% of national total)
January - March 2001:	127,	107,	105	(14.8% of national total)
October – December 2001:	161,	128,	93	(14.6% of national total)

This is a proportionally active segment of the non-citizens. However, there is no discernible positive campaign effect: relatively speaking, the proportion of applications compared to the rest of the country decreased during and immediately after the campaign. Although this could be explained by relatively increased activity in other regions one should also note that even absolute numbers decreased for two out of the three months compared to 2001, which is out of line with the rest of the country.

**Rīga: Pārdaugava (including Jūrmala)** (non-citizen population % of national total: 20.5%):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	209,	229,	180	(20.6% of national total)
January - March 2001:	127,	143,	136	(17.7% of national total)
October – December 2001:	191,	174,	133	(19.1% of national total)

Here we have a relatively stable and somewhat below proportional number of applications compared to the national total in 2001, which increases its relative share to proportional in 2002. Absolute numbers of actual applications increased significantly in October and November 2001, and especially in the first three months of 2002. These numbers clearly indicate a positive direct effect of the campaign, which moreover continued into March.

**Jelgava** (9.3% of total non-citizen population):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	105,	78,	122	(10.2% of national total)
January - March 2001:	89,	81,	86	(11.1% of national total)
October – December 2001:	100,	95,	75	(10.3% of national total)

Jelgava has a slightly above proportionally active non-citizen population in terms of naturalization, and its relative share has remained essentially stable over the period under review, indicating that the trend follows the general national trend, with no discernible special campaign effect over or under that of the general trend in the country. We should thus expect a significant but not inordinate increase in absolute numbers. They did in fact increase significantly in 2002 compared to the first three months of 2001, except for a slightly bigger decrease in December 2001 and in February 2002 compared to February 2001.

**Daugavpils** (10.7% of total non-citizen population):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	77,	162,	96	(11.2% of national total)
January - March 2001:	80,	70,	62	(9.2% of national total)
October – December 2001:	118,	57,	50	(8.6% of national total)

Daugavpils is of special interest because of its ethnic specificity and because of the relatively large absolute number of non-citizens, second place after Rīga, 34,629 in the city and 55,784 in the area covered by the Nationalization Board’s regional office, by 1 January 2002. Here we have an encouraging overall picture, albeit fraught with contradictions. After a significant increase of applications in October 2001 (fast track language and lowering of fees?) there is considerable decline in the beginning months of the campaign, November and December, and in contrast to other regions even January 2002 does not reach the level of January 2001. But then, however, there is a sudden jump more than doubling the applications from January to February, followed by a lower but still high level in March. This suggests a significant campaign effect, albeit with a somewhat delayed effect compared to other regions. The relative share of naturalization applications compared to share of the non-citizen population hovers around the proportional, but from a below proportional percentage before the campaign has increased above the proportional share during the latter part and immediately after the campaign.

**Saldus** (3.2% of total non-citizen population):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	28,	50,	42	(4% of national total)
January – March 2001:	21,	22,	27	(3% of national total)
October – December 2001:	14,	36,	14	(2.5% of national total)

Saldus is a region which includes Dobeles, Kuldīga and Tukums, and with 16,743 non-citizens as of 1 January 2002, representing around 3 percent of the total non-citizen population. It is therefore clear that absolute numbers of naturalization applications are not likely to be high, and the significance of even as high an increase as 30-50% in applications is difficult to ascertain, considering that it means no more than twenty persons or so a month. Nevertheless, the picture we get of Saldus is one of activated non-citizens, who from the slightly below proportional 3 and 2.5 percent of applications in 2001 increased their share to 4 percent of the national total, above their share of the non-citizens population. The first three months of 2002, and especially February and March, thus do indicate a positive campaign effect which, moreover, does not show the signs of decline evident in the overall national figures.

**Valmiera** (3.4% of total non-citizen population):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	49,	66,	51	(5.5% of national total)
January - March 2001:	19,	32,	31	(3.6% of national total)
October – December 2001:	41,	20,	36	(3.7% of national total)

Non-citizens in Valmiera represent approximately 3.4 percent of the non-citizen residents, and they are consistently more active than the national average, significantly so in the first three months of 2002. The increase in applications during and following the campaign is clearly evident and significant, essentially doubling the figures for the same months a year earlier.

**Liepāja** (6.8% of total non-citizen population):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	48,	51,	69	(5.6% of national total)
January - March 2001:	42,	83,	77	(8.8% of national total)
October – December 2001:	75,	49,	32	(6% of national total)

Liepāja with its significant number of non-citizens (31,740 in the city and 35,346 together with the region by 1 January 2002) presents a different and gloomier picture. Although the share of applications of Liepāja's non-citizen population roughly corresponds to their share of the total number of non-citizens in the country, the application trend has clearly been declining rather than increasing. Uncharacteristically for Latvia as a whole, the first three months of 2002 has seen fewer applications in absolute numbers than the same period in 2001. Apart from a mild upsurge of applications in October, before the campaign (but after lowering of fees and fast track language program) figures reflect a continuing decline. Here there is no evidence of any positive effect of the campaign, so far. The nationally uncharacteristic increase in March compared to January and February may indicate a delayed reaction, however, and future figures need to be analyzed.

**Rēzekne** (4% of total non-citizen population):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	37,	28,	26	(3% of national total)
January - March 2001:	48,	24,	23	(4.1% of national total)
October – December 2001:	47,	41,	15	(3.9% of national total)

Although Rēzekne's non-citizens apply for naturalization in numbers overall proportional to their share of that population, the trend over time is stable at best and declining at worst. An increase of four and three applications in February and March, although theoretically representing a 20% increase, cannot be considered significant. And relatively speaking, Rēzekne's share compared to the total of the country is declining. It is difficult to discern any positive campaign effect here.

**Ventspils** (3.3% of total non-citizen population):

	Naturalization Applications			
January – March 2002:	24,	18,	28	(2.3% of national total)
January - March 2001:	29,	35,	39	(4.5% of national total)
October – December 2001:	31,	28,	34	(3.6% of national total)

Another discouraging trend can be seen in Ventspils: the above average activity from a year ago has declined to less than its share of the total non-citizen population. Here, the decline is both relative and absolute: application numbers in the first three months of 2002 are significantly lower than those of the year before, breaking the general trend of the country. There is no positive effect from the campaign in evidence. This is particularly significant because although Ventspils' city's 14,736 non-citizens represent only approximately three percent of the national total of non-citizens, the ratio of non-citizens to citizens is relatively high: 1/3 to 2/3 (in the region, including Talsi, it is approximately 16%). Considering the active municipal integration program Ventspils has been known for, these results are clearly worse than expected.

Summary of Regional Differences:

The campaign had an above average **positive effect** on naturalization applications in **Valmiera**, and **Saldus**.

The campaign had a **proportionally positive** effect generally in line with the national average in **Rīga-Pārdaugava** , **Rīga-Vidzeme** and **Latgale** and **Jelgava** districts.

The campaign had a **delayed positive effect, but above average**, in **Daugavpils**.

In **Liepāja** the campaign had **no discernible positive effect** through January and February 2002, but there are some indications that there **may be a delayed positive effect** starting in March.

The campaign did **not have any positive effect** on the naturalization application dynamic in **Ventspils**, **Rēzekne** and **Rīga-Center**, where the trend was either stable or declining.

**Demographic factors: Activity of Different Age Groups**

In order to further analyze not only whether the campaign had an effect on naturalization numbers overall and regionally but also whether the target group was successfully motivated, we need to look at the age structure of the new applications compared with previous periods and compared with the overall age structure of the non-citizen population.

The relative share of all naturalization applicants at the start of the information campaign was (end of October 2001):

<u>Age</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
15	2.2%
16-17	6.5%
18-30	24.9%
31-40	21.7%
41-50	21.9%
51-60	13.1%
61-	9.7%

In comparison to this baseline, we can assess potential deviations from the pre-campaign average on the general national level:

<u>Age</u>	<u>% November-March</u>	<u>% January-March</u>
15	1.7%	1.1%
16-17	6.3%	5%
18-30	30.7%	31.9%
31-40	22.3%	23.1%
41-50	20.7%	20.4%
51-60	12.9%	13.6%
61-	5.4%	4.9%

It appears then that considering the overall figures for the country, the campaign has had a significant effect in encouraging non-citizens aged 18 through 30 to apply for citizenship, while those aged 61 and above (not targeted by the campaign) display a relative decline in applications during the campaign impact months. There is a decline in the relative weight of 15-17 years olds, despite this being part of the target audience. A likely explanation for this, however, is that secondary school students may rationally decide to delay naturalization until after graduation, considering the changes adopted in the summer of 2001, whereby graduating secondary school eliminates the need for examination when naturalizing. For those aged 31-40, there is a slight increase in application shares (from 21.7 percent in pre-campaign average to 23.1 during the first three months of 2002). The 41 through 50 years old have experienced a slight decline in their relative position.

The dynamic of activity by age group during and after the campaign indicates that the campaign has been **successful in reaching and activating the target group**, particularly the sub-group of **18-30 year olds**, with a minor positive effect on the 31-40 year olds.

### **Regional Deviations from National Age Pattern of Naturalization Applicants**

Comparing the overall national success in reaching the target group **18-30** in terms of submitted naturalization applications to regional figures, there are some noteworthy deviations. If the national average November through March approximates 31 percent and January through March 32 percent as a share of applications by all age groups, the regional figures vary from a high of 36.2% and 37% in Rīga Center to a low of 15.6% and 20.9% respectively in Rēzekne. The regional variations are thus substantial, with a much higher proportion of young people naturalizing in the capital. This is partly due to the higher average age in the regions, but there are significant developments over time.

In **Rīga Center** – where the campaign had little effect on overall applications, as seen above – there is a relative increase in the applications from this age group from 31% in January through March 2001 to **37%** in the same months of 2002. In Rīga Center this segment of the target group has been activated during and immediately after the campaign. In contrast, the share of the target segments 16-17 and 31-40 have a relatively decreased share of the total (by 2-3 percentage points compared to the three first months of 2001), while the other groups have remained essentially stable.

The 18-30 year old applications have also increased as a share in **Rīga districts**, from 28% in January through March 2001 to **33.8%** in those same months in 2002.

In **Saldus**, where applications were up significantly in the first three months of 2002 compared to 2001, the share of the 18-30 year olds increased from 26% to **34%**, while the 31-40 group retained a stable percentage.

**Liepāja** has also seen an increase in the relative share of the 18-30 group's applications, from 21% in the first three months of 2001 to **29%** in 2002. On the other hand, the relative share of 18-30 year olds is still lower than the national average of 31.9%. In addition, absolute numbers of total applications are down from 2001. A peculiarity in Liepāja that distinguishes it from other regions is the relative **high share of 15 and 16-17 year olds, which has remained stable** over the period under review at around 3 and 9 percent, respectively.

In **Ventspils** the relative share of the **18-30** years old has increased from 25% to **33%** from 2001 to 2002 (first three months), but since applications are decreasing, the **absolute number of applications from this age group is actually down** somewhat over that same period. The **largest decline** in absolute numbers of applications in Ventspils is in the group aged **41-50**, whose share has also declined from 27% to 23%. Elderly persons applications, 61 or above, have also declined both in absolute and relative terms.

The regions with a **significantly lower than national share of applications by 18-30 year olds** are **Rēzekne** and **Daugavpils**. But if **Daugavpils** has had a stable lower share than the national average at around 26-27% in the period examined (with an increased absolute number of applications, however, but proportionally stable), then **Rēzekne** is a special case with a significant **relative decrease in the applications by the 18-30 age group** from 24% in January-March 2001 to 16% in November-March and **21%** in January-March 2002. A **declining share** of the total applications is also evident in the age group **41-50**: from 30% in January-March 2001 to 18% in January-March 2002, while the total absolute number of applications remained essentially stable. The group that **significantly increased** its application activity in the period under review is the **31-40 age group**: from 19% in January-March 2001 to **31%** in November-March 2002 to 34% in January-March 2002. In contrast to other parts of the country, in Rēzekne it used to be the relatively older group of 41-50 year olds who were most active, but they have ceded their leading position to the ones in their thirties.

In **Valmiera** the relative share of the **18-30** year olds' applications has **declined** from January-March 2001 to January-March 2002 from 29% to **25%**, **but the absolute number is up significantly**. Here as in Rēzekne the age group that has **increased both its relative share and the absolute numbers is the 31-40 year olds**: from 28% to 34% in the first three months of 2001 to 2002.



In **Jelgava** the **18-30** year olds have retained a **stable** share of total applications at approximately 30% in January-March 2001 as well as January-March 2002.

Regionally, the group that most frequently has **increased** its relative share (with or without an increase in absolute numbers) is the **18-30** year old one, which corresponds to the national trend.

In some areas, notably **Rēzekne** and **Valmiera**, the group that has significantly increased its share of applications is instead the **31-40** year old one, while the **18-30** group has **decreased** its relative share. In **Daugavpils** the relative share of **18-30** year olds has remained **stable**, while actual applications have increased.

In all areas the share of **15-17** year olds has **decreased**, and although actual numbers of applications have declined in **Liepāja** in this group as well, its share of the total remains uncharacteristically high.

## Gender

It is well known that an overwhelming majority of naturalization applicants are women: by the end of 2001 68.8% of all naturalization applicants over time were women, and 31.2% men. The overall picture during the impact months of January-March 2002 reflect this ratio almost exactly: 69% and 31%. There is thus no reason to suspect a gender-differentiated effect of the campaign.

On the other hand, there are again significant regional differences worth noting. In the first three months of 2002 the highest percentage of women applicants was in **Daugavpils (74.3% women, 25.7% men)**, while the lowest was in **Saldus (60% women, 40% men)**.

In some of the regions, moreover, there appears to be significant changes in ratios from 2001 to 2002. These include **increases in the share of women** applicants in **Daugavpils** (from 67.9/32.1 to 74.3/25.7), **Jelgava** (from 59.4/40.6 to 66.6/33.4), **Ventspils** (from 66/34 to 71.4/28.6), **Rīga center** (from 66.4/33.6 to 71/29), **Valmiera** (from 62.2/37.8 to 66.9/33.1) and a smaller change in **Rīga district** (from 67.2/32.8 to 70.2/29.8).

Two regions have retained a **stable gender ratio** over the months under review: **Saldus** (58.6/41.4 to 60/40) and **Rēzekne** (67.4/32.6 to 67/33).

In one region, **Liepāja**, the **share of women has actually decreased** (69.8/30.2 to 66.1/33.9).

Despite interesting differences, no conclusive inferences can be made from these numbers, but they do indicate a need to study the sociology more closely, including the intersection of regional, age and gender differences.

## **Ethnic Differentiation**

A brief look at naturalization applications by ethnic group should indicate whether there has been a discernible differentiated impact of the campaign. The **percentage share of applications from Russians has remained stable** at 68.6 and 68.8 from the first three months of 2001 compared to January-March 2002. Absolute numbers are up, however, from 1,577 to 2,063. This share of applications by Russians is essential proportional to the Russian share of the non-citizen residents, 66.8% by 1 January 2002.

The same proportional and stable pattern is reflected for the other ethnic groups as well, with Belorussians at around 10%, Ukrainians at 9%, Poles at 4%. The Belorussians are slightly underrepresented compared to their percentage of the non-citizens (12.8%), while the Poles are slightly overrepresented (3.5% of non-citizens).

The only group that appears to have changed its share over the corresponding period in 2001 is the **Lithuanian/Estonian group**, but because of the small numbers, it is difficult to ascertain any significance of it: from 2.7% of the total applicants in the first quarter of 2001 their corresponding share in 2002 was 3.2%. In absolute numbers this means that instead of 63 individuals last year, this year 95 applied.

We can conclude that there is no evident need to perform a more detailed analysis of the ethnic dimension in naturalization applications for this project, although for future regionally differentiated projects the ethnic dimension is undoubtedly significant.

## **B. Level of Target Group Activity**

Another criterion to consider is the activity of the non-citizen audience relatively to naturalizations issues, apart from actual applications. Primarily we can judge from number of telephone calls and home page visits.

### **Telephone calls**

Telephone calls directly to the Naturalization Board's regional branches remained more or less stable over the campaign period, both in Rīga and in the regions. In September they were quite a bit higher than in August (a total of 2074 to 1447), and reached the maximum figure in Rīga over the entire period (1355). December with its holidays represent a low for branch calls at 1542.

Against this background of stable direct calls to the branches, we can see the **unquestionable success of the toll-free number**. The 800 20 50 number was established in September, and already the first month there were 1398 calls to it, in addition to the 2074 to branches. The effect of the campaign can be seen in that after a slightly lower figure for October, there is an increase in November by a couple in hundred and then, as the campaign got started in earnest, a jump to 1856 in December and a record 2585 in January 2002 and still high 1776 in February, falling behind number of phone calls to branches, once more, but still high. Again, with the ending of the campaign and the visibility of the number, the phone calls were in decline during March. All in all, telephone calls to the toll-free number matched or surpassed the branch phone calls, and there is a **clear and unmistakable link to the campaign period**.

**A striking majority of the toll-free number telephone calls -- 86% -- were made from the Rīga region**, which represents 59% of the non-citizen population (the region includes Jūrmala). Otherwise only Saldus and Rēzekne had a higher than proportional percentage of phone calls, while the rest had slightly under their non-citizen proportion (Jelgava), or significantly lower. Daugavpils' region's non-citizens represent 10.7% of the entire non-citizen population and made only 4.6% of the phone calls. Liepāja's share of calls to non-citizen share approximates 1/3, while Ventspils' is 1/2. These latter figures corroborate the picture we got from the lack of activity on the application front in these two cities. The conclusion is that although the toll-free number is a success, it works disproportionately to the advantage of the capital, while application rates are not correspondingly high there. It may serve as an indication that **although the toll-free number should work nationally, there need to be more complementary and direct contact activities in the regions.**

In terms of effectiveness in spreading the information about the existence of the toll-free number all in all television advertisement and the direct mail brochures are by far the two most frequently mentioned sources by callers, followed by other, radio and then press. It is also interesting to note that although television as the source is most frequently noted overall, the television advertisement wears off rather quickly and in March, although the overall numbers are in decline, callers refer to the pamphlet more frequently than television. This makes sense, of course, since the pamphlets are probably kept for referral.

### **Home page visits**

The home page [www.pilsoniba.lv](http://www.pilsoniba.lv) has been on-line since 14 December 2001 and has been designed as a source of information on citizenship and naturalization, with examples of tests and testimonials from recently naturalized citizens aimed primarily at younger people. From **November until February 2002 there were 6870 visits** to the site, most of which took place in December and January. An encouraging sign is that pages visited represent almost four times the figure for visits, which means that those who did visit the homepage were interested enough to make further connections to information. In February, however, the visits fell sharply to 942 (from 3509 in January). The homepage has been a success and should be continued, but considering the limited audience it is likely to reach, it should clearly be **considered complementary to other information possibilities.**

### **Information booths**

Another measure of direct response and activity from the target audience is the number of visits to the information booths or tents. This was originally set up as a complementary activity to the campaign and was organized by Consensus, in cooperation with Naturalization Board regional offices and the youth club Māja. The idea with the booths was to provide information through direct contact, as well as written information and test samples for the naturalization tests.

**Twenty information booth activities** took place, eight of which were in Rīga districts (outside the center) and 12 in various regions. The target set was to reach 2,000 non-citizens, and the result was **1,506 registered visits**. 927 of these were to districts of the

Rīga region (Imanta, Ķengarags, Ziepniekkalns, Purvciems, Vecmīlgrāvis, Jugla, Pļavnieki), 148 in Jūrmala (in two events), 80 in Jelgava, 63 in Ventspils (in two separate events), 60 in Daugavpils, 49 in Liepāja, 21 in Rēzekne, 11 in Jekabpils and 9 in Krāslava and 11 in Dobeles. The sensation caused by the visit to Seda was also reflected in numbers of visitors: 127 (out of a total non-citizen population of approximately 1,200).

The organizers claim to have experienced a high level of interest and almost exclusively a positive attitude by visitors who, however, did not represent the narrow target audience but rather an older segment of the non-citizen population. This can at least partially be explained by the fact that the booths were set up during business hours, when the active part of the population is not available. Interestingly enough, however, many of the elderly visitors seem to have claimed that they were actually gathering materials for other family members, not themselves. It is also highly likely that visitors were kept back by bad and sometimes very bad weather. Considering Latvia's climate and the time of the year of the campaign it is surprising that this factor was not reckoned with.

**In general, the information booths should be considered a success** and an indication that there are many areas outside the urban centers where information is genuinely lacking. The activity despite the adverse conditions is also another indication that **direct contact is an effective way to spread information.**

### **C. Reach of Advertisement and Information**

Another criterion for success is the planned and actual reach of advertisement and information. This is less of a criterion than direct activity by non-citizens reflected in naturalization applications and other activity in that it does not deal with the response, but only the exposure to information. It is, however, an important aspect in evaluating the professional performance of the contractors and serves as an indicator of actual exposure to information.

#### **TV, Radio and Printed Media advertisement**

The media campaign represents the bulk of the campaign, and was conceived as such. The media chosen to convey the message of the campaign were television, radio, national newspapers, regional newspapers, internet advertisement and posters. In TV there were 7 clips, which had been tested on focus groups, which were shown on the channels TV2, ORT, TV3 together 400 times. Seven jingles and 7 advertisements were produced for radio, and were aired a total of 885 times in six different radio stations. In printed media there were advertisements in both central press (3 papers) and regional (7 papers) 49 and 34 times, respectively. There were also 1,000 posters.

The target audience for the media campaign had been defined as non-Latvians aged 16 to 40. In terms of figures, this represents 359,000 persons. One should note that these are all non-Latvians in that age group, not only non-citizens – for obvious reasons, since targeting non-citizens specifically in general media is not possible.

The success rate at reaching this audience varied over time, being lower in November and December, but picking up in January when the actual figures surpassed the planned ones. All in all Asell Saatchi & Saatchi analysis shows that 81% of the set target

audience were reached through radio, 77.9% through TV, 21% through regional press and 75% through the central press. Together this entails that 89.2% of the target audience of non-Latvians aged 16-40 were reached by the advertisement, translating into around 309,000 individuals.

### **Direct mail pamphlet**

The information booklets with the design of the Latvian citizens' passport were mailed through the Department for Citizenship and Migration, thus overcoming the legal issue with protection of personal data. **100,000 booklets** were mailed to a target audience of **non-citizens aged 18 to 40**. Considering the absolute number of this particular target group from among the non-citizens, it is clear that a very high percent of them -- **between one half and two thirds-- received a direct mail brochure**. Three quarters of the brochures were mailed to the seven cities, with Rīga receiving the bulk of those, 50,219 or 59,821 for the Rīga region. On the other hand, with sometimes rather low numbers of brochures mailed to proportionally small concentrations of non-citizens, the direct mail geography was comprehensively broad and **covered all the territory of Latvia**.

The impact of the brochures was quite substantial within its target group. Because the omnibus survey does not specifically identify the intended target group the effect is probably underestimated in the general response, in which 15 percent of the respondents, when asked specifically which activities they recognized, responded that they had noticed the booklet. But these are, we should remember, non-citizens aged 15 to 74, thus far broader a group than the target group. Information on telephone calls to the toll-free number shows that the booklets are the second most common source for the 800-number mentioned by the callers. The booklets are also frequently mentioned in newspaper articles, and members of the Naturalization Board staff have expressed the impression that many visitors to the branches mention the booklet in a positive way. Interviews with persons who can plausibly represent some of the target audience also supports the view that the booklets were well received, barring a few examples of criticism. The positive response seems to be both to the design of it, the usefulness of the information and the direct contact. **The booklets thus seem to have been a success, and the reach is clear, but more information is needed on the subjective response to the booklet.**

In addition, **1,000 posters** were placed in schools and municipalities. The posters were in both Latvian and Russian.

### **Complementary Event Assessment**

#### **TV Shows**

Apart from the advertisement clips produced for television there were also TV shows of various kinds as complementary activities. One is the "5 Minutes on Citizenship" programs, with 12 emissions with average audience of 50,000, thus reaching media contacts of 600,000.

There were also shows in both Russian and Latvian in the Latvian TV1 and Latvian TV 2 channels, dealing with naturalization issues. The Russian language shows included “Vos’moj etazh,” “Shok Shov,” “S pozitsii vlasti,” “Domovoi,” “Nesluchainie vstrechi,” and “Dzivate” in Russian. The Latvian shows included “4. studija,” “Dzīvīte,” “Tādi esam,” “Sarunas bez rāmja,” and “Mini mani.” According to Consensus analysis, the total audience of the TV programs was 700,000.

### **Schools: Citizenship Days**

The citizenship days in schools were organized at the beginning of the campaign, timed to coincide with the week of 18 November, Independence Proclamation Day. Although this was not envisioned as a main part of the campaign, and in fact it may be questioned whether this should be a component of a media information campaign or a separate, albeit useful element, the school days received much attention in the press. It should also be mentioned, that this was the only activity under this campaign that received exclusively positive coverage from all the press.

The school days were organized throughout Latvia, and materials on citizenship were distributed to the School Boards. Various activities were organized by the schools on a voluntary basis, centered around the civically conscious theme of “Latvia and me,” rather than strict citizenship issues. There were essay contests and preparation of projects, and sometimes the school days in the regions were combined with visits by Naturalization Board representatives or socially prominent visitors. The Citizenship Days in schools can be judged as a success from the numbers: more than three quarters of schools chose to participate, and this included both Russian and Latvian schools.

## **D. Feedback from Target Audience and Others**

### **Omnibus poll**

A survey was prepared after the end of the campaign to serve as a basis for an evaluation. The respondents were chosen to reflect society in its entirety, being permanent residents of Latvia aged between 15 and 74. Of these 414 were non-citizens, same age range. It is therefore not always clear that the survey provides an accurate picture of the response of the target group, young non-citizens.

In terms of a general effect, the poll shows that around 20 percent of non-citizens mentioned the slogan “Latvian citizenship. Make your choice!” spontaneously, and over 30 percent of non-citizens recognized it when it was asked of them specifically. (This compares to a mere 9% of spontaneous recognition of the total resident respondents.) The second most recognized element of the campaign among non-citizens was the special program on the TV show “Vos’moj etazh,” which was mentioned by almost 30% of respondents. The nine most recognized elements after the slogan itself were either TV clips or TV shows, which indicates the effectiveness of TV in this campaign. The poll analysis also indicates that TV clips were noticed more frequently than on average by non-citizens aged 25 to 34, that is, well within the target group, while the TV shows had a more varied audience, depending on the show. After TV follows the booklet, then more TV, and only then printed media and radio.

The information booths are recognized infrequently (4.8%), which is in interesting contrast to the attention they have received in the media. On the other hand, considering that only approximately 1,500 individuals visited them, and that there were only 20 such events at certain locations throughout Latvia, the number is not so low.

The low percentage recognizing the homepage (4.1%) obviously reflects the relatively infrequent use of internet among respondents at large, but would probably appear far larger in the target groups as such and in even more so in certain subgroups (educated, urban, high income).

Among non-citizens who were asked to react to specifically mentioned elements of the campaign 12.3% said they hadn't noticed anything, while an additional 8.9% were not sure.

Beyond the effectiveness of the various elements of the campaign in reaching the audience, and in some ways more interesting, are a couple of questions that attempt to reach into the response to the campaign. The answers most frequently given by non-citizens on the effect of the campaign was that it allowed them to clarify some questions and also that they discussed the issues with family members (approximately 20% of respondents). 14.5% claimed that the campaign reduced their insecurity, and while 14% thought the campaign was pleasant, 12% thought it was irritating. Although 7.7% responded that the campaign made them actually apply for naturalization, numbers do not bear this out (that would have been around 40,000 applications!), and serves as another cautionary reminder to opinion polls as factual basis. Those who said that the campaign had no effect on them and those who found it hard to answer together made up 43% of respondents. This percentage was even higher among older respondents.

Important for future planning is the response by non-citizens to preferred way to receive information, which confirms the impressions on the relative success of the various elements. The first three preferences are markedly ahead of the rest: direct mail information (35%), TV advertisement (33%) and toll-free telephone number (31%). One should note that only 11% would like to have special events in the city and even fewer, only 4%, expressed interest in having special events in schools.

If a third or a quarter of all 523,000 non-citizens have noticed the campaign -- that is approximately 150,000 individuals -- **the reach must be considered a success**. More than a third also express interest in receiving information on citizenship issues through mail, TV and toll-free telephone, which confirms that there is indeed **a receptive target audience**. And one in every five non-citizen respondents claims to have discussed the issue with family members as a result of the campaign. We can conclude in very general terms on this basis that the response to the campaign has been positive.

### **Printed Media Coverage**

The analysis of the press coverage is based on the "RKT-Publicitāte" monitoring and press clippings from November 2001 to February 2002, with independent content analysis.

RKT has provided 168 articles on issues related to the topic of the campaign, taken from 14 central publications (both Latvian and Russian) and 10 regional publications, as well as periodicals and LETA and BNS press agency announcements. Although the list of

articles does not seem to be a complete one, and although some of the articles in the list are not judged by this author to be relevant to the topic at hand, these articles serve as an adequate basis for press coverage analysis.

Of the clippings a large number are brief announcements of upcoming events, especially for the information booths, which therefore seem to gain an inordinate amount of attention through many, brief mentions.

Overall it appears that the Latvian-language press has covered the campaign more actively than the Russian-language press. The leader in terms of number of articles (and also average length of the articles as well as readership) is, in fact, Lauku Avīze, although most of the articles are critical of the campaign or its issues, with some of them bordering on personal attack. Most of the criticism concerns the campaign as such, some of them against naturalization, and a frequently expressed idea is indignation at advertising or pushing citizenship for the benefits it provides. There are, however, five neutral articles and even two positive ones, one on the information booths and one on the citizenship days in a school.

Diena has also carried a large number of articles, a mix of short and long ones, some positive and some neutral, but none negative. Article on the general campaign mix with articles on information booths and days at various locations. Extensive articles on the information booths with interviews with visitors gave a positive view of the process, and an article on the heretofore isolated village Seda and the visit of Naturalization Board representatives especially stresses the importance of reaching out.

Neatkarīgā Rīta Avīze articles have tended toward the neutral, but with both positive and negative examples, while the official gazette Latvijas vēstnesis has not provided any surprises: most articles are factual and neutral, and a couple are with a positive slant.

Of the Russian-language press it is Vesti segodnya and Chas that have published most articles. Vesti segodnya has carried a large majority of negative articles, but a couple of neutral ones and even an occasional positive one have appeared as well. Most of the negative articles are concerned with the campaign as such, and even with naturalization as a whole, but there are also specific articles, like one criticizing the passport booklets. Chas has a mixed record leaning to the positive, and even published a long interview with Eiženija Aldermane at the end of November. An article in December illustrates the hesitant position of the paper through short interviews with target group representatives, who have give arguments and emotions for and against naturalization. Many of the points concern having positive feelings for Latvia as a country but negative toward the government.

Panorama Latvii and Telegraph have also carried articles, the former being more negative and the latter more positive. Panorama Latvii even carried an article that was positive to naturalization in general, but negative to the information campaign and cynical of its motivation. Vechernaya Riga carried several neutral and positive articles.

The regional press has been mostly positive, but then also has mostly focused on the information days and visiting booths and the citizenship days in the schools.

The campaign has received substantial coverage in the printed media, and although the press tends to lean one way or the other in terms of supporting or opposing the



campaign, none of the negatively oriented ones (Lauku Avīze and Vesti segodnya) have carried exclusively negative articles. Most articles have dealt with the information booths and in the beginning of the campaign also with schools' citizenship days, although a fair number has described the campaign as a whole.

#### IV SIDE-EFFECTS AND GENERAL LESSONS LEARNED

Although the information campaign can be judged as a qualified success on the basis of the figures for naturalization applications and more of a solid success on the basis of the spread of the information, there are also other, less measurable effects that need to be mentioned.

- The most positive effect of the campaign has been the perception of a **reaching out to the non-citizen population** by the government or an official actor, which is the first time ever.
- The information campaign has indeed raised **public awareness** in the sense of bringing the issue of citizenship onto the public agenda. This is so both because a large number of persons have been reached directly, but also because of the media attention (and that of politicians!). Whether for or against, the topic is up for discussion, and that in itself is a major achievement.
- Another effect is the gradual **getting used to social advertisement**. Although quite a few voices are still heard against “the advertising citizenship as though it is toothpaste,” many more say that it is possible to have a campaign with information like this one.
- For Latvia as a state and for the government the campaign has shown a certain amount of **goodwill** that has been all too absent in the past, with a positive foreign policy dimension.
- The stress on personal choice in the Unified Thematic Message has the broader effect of encouraging **civic society and social responsibility**. An interesting point in this regard is the Omnibus poll responses indicating that the TV clip most frequently remembered by far was the one concerning the right to vote. A potential side-effect of activating the population, through public awareness raising or action motivation, is to reduce the extensive alienation from state and government life.
- Despite many efforts at information dissemination over the years, a large part of the population remains uninformed: information projects and easy access to contact need to be maintained. This information concerns both the motivational aspects of reasons to be a citizen of a country and the purely practical ones on requirements and procedures.
- It is a normal part of the process that information will have to be reiterated periodically, considering the tendency to pay attention to information that is

directly relevant only and that a different group of individuals will have “matured” to the decision to naturalize at different times.

- The campaign shows that it is possible to influence the naturalization numbers in the short term, even if the problem is likely to remain a long-term one, and as such will depend on beneficial long-term development of the environment and a sustained climate of encouragement.