Cecilia Möller

Transforming geographies of tourism and gender

Exploring women's livelihood strategies and practices within tourism in Latvia

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Cecilia Möller. *Transforming geographies of tourism and gender - Exploring women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism in Latvia*

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Abstract

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This thesis explores different geographies of tourism, gender, work and livelihood in post-socialist Latvia. The study puts focus on the overall transformation process and the reshaping of the tourism sector, in how Latvia is reimagined both as a nation state and as a tourism destination. One central aim is to analyse the transformation process as genderised, and how existing gender identities in general and femininities more specifically are being transformed and mirrored within tourism. The thesis first contain an analysis of how Latvian tourism-marketing carries genderised meanings and identities, based on three interrelated ‘geographies’ as part of the transforming ‘national common space’: geographies of neo-nationalism, geographies of Europeanisation and geographies of relic-communism. These hold certain imaginations and conceptions of space and place, and include aims and priorities of the transition process. Secondly, focus is placed on the changing conditions for women’s livelihood within rural tourism in the Cēsis district, and spa/health tourism in Jūrmala. The thesis has mainly a qualitative approach, including semi-structured interviews and text analysis, but the case studies also comprise a survey.

The thesis illustrates how tourism becomes an arena for reclaiming a Latvian national identity rooted in a pre-Soviet past, while also manifesting a Western European identity, and negotiating the remains of the controversial Soviet heritage. This process reveals, for example, traditional feminised features of the nation state, portraying women as the ‘mothers’ of the nation. Two case studies of female employees and entrepreneurs within rural tourism and spa/health tourism also show how women negotiate different ideals of femininities, including ‘traditional’, ‘Western’ and ‘socialist’ ideals, through their everyday livelihood practices within both the public and the private sphere. Their negotiations for a more independent livelihood are also affected by structural factors, such as wages and taxes, but also by the local socio-cultural context and related gender identities, including class, family structure, age and ethnicity.
Contents

Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................. 9

Part I – Encountering transformation
Chapter one - Introduction ...................................................................................................... 13
  Thesis purpose and research questions .............................................................................. 17
  Feminist geography .............................................................................................................. 18
  Geographies of tourism and gender .................................................................................... 21
  Gendered work and livelihood within tourism ................................................................... 25
  Case studies and methods ................................................................................................... 28
  Structure of the thesis ......................................................................................................... 29
Chapter two - Methodological journeys ............................................................................. 31
  What is feminist methodology? .......................................................................................... 31
  Text analysis ....................................................................................................................... 35
  The case studies: Jūrmala and the Cēsis district ............................................................... 38
  The survey ......................................................................................................................... 40
  Implementation of the interview study .............................................................................. 45

Part II – Setting the scene
Chapter three – Geographies of neo-nationalism .............................................................. 57
  The relations between music and place ............................................................................ 60
  Folk music as a source for national awakening ............................................................... 62
  Folk music as a contemporary national manifestation .................................................... 65
  Gendering the nation ......................................................................................................... 68
  From ‘local’ to ‘global’ heritage ....................................................................................... 78
  Conclusion ......................................................................................................................... 82
Chapter four – Geographies of Europeanisation ............................................................... 85
  Tourism in transition ......................................................................................................... 88
  Towards regionalism ......................................................................................................... 93
  Manifesting the ‘return’ to Europe through tourism marketing ......................................... 98
  Riga as a ‘sex tourism destination’ .................................................................................... 99
  Sex tourism and the East/West divide ............................................................................. 101
  Gendered marketing ......................................................................................................... 103
  Regulating sex tourism in Latvia ..................................................................................... 108
  Conclusion ......................................................................................................................... 114
Chapter five – Geographies of relic-communism ............................................................ 117
  The transition as continuity with the past ....................................................................... 120
  Tourism during the Soviet regime .................................................................................... 123
  Tourism and the negotiation of the past .......................................................................... 127
  ‘Normalising’ space ......................................................................................................... 129
  Commercialisation of the Soviet heritage through tourism ............................................. 133
  Making the past (in)visible through tourism marketing ................................................. 139
Part III - Transforming femininities
Chapter six – Femininities, work and national common space
The Soviet gender system
Work and post-socialist gender identities
Reclaiming traditional ideals of femininities
‘Western’ ideals of femininities
Continuity of socialist ideals of femininities
Conclusion

Chapter seven – Gendered work and livelihood within tourism
Exploring work within tourism
Gender identities and work
Livelihood ideologies and practices
Setting the framework for women’s livelihood
Conclusion

Part IV - Exploring women's livelihood within tourism in the Cēsis district
Chapter eight – Geographies of place: rurality, rural tourism and the labour market in the Cēsis district
What is rural tourism?
Three approaches to ‘rurality’ and rural tourism
The rural as a national symbol
The rural as a site for consumption
The rural as a ‘problem’
Conclusion

Chapter nine – Women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism in the Cēsis district
Survey: general overview of rural tourism
Employment within rural tourism
Rural entrepreneurship within tourism
Women’s entrepreneurship in the Cēsis district
‘Survival’ strategies
‘Lifestyle-oriented’ strategies
Diversifying women’s entrepreneurship
Conclusion

Chapter ten – Balancing everyday life: women’s livelihood practices within rural tourism
Private remains private: traditionally-oriented practices
Part V: Exploring women's livelihood within tourism in Jūrmala

Chapter eleven – Geographies of place: transforming Jūrmala as a health tourism resort

Chapter twelve – Women’s livelihood strategies within tourism in Jūrmala

Chapter thirteen – Negotiating femininities: women’s livelihood practices within tourism in Jūrmala

Part VI - Curtain call

Chapter fourteen – Transforming geographies of tourism and gender

References

Appendix 1 – Interview themes female entrepreneurs within rural tourism
Appendix 2 – Interview themes female employees within tourism.........431
Appendix 3 – Questionnaire for survey of employment within tourism in Jūrmala and in the Čēsis district..........................433

List of figures

Figure 1: “Mind map” figure, illustrating the relations and intersections among ‘national common space’, ‘geographies of place’ and livelihood strategies and practices.27
Figure 2: Map of Latvian regions and districts (the Čēsis district and Jūrmala highlighted). 28
Figure 3: Number of foreign overnight stays in hotels and other accommodation establishments in Latvia and Riga 1993/1999-2007.92
Figure 4: Russian overnight travellers and overnight visitors in accommodation establishments 1993/1999-2007.127
Figure 5: Economic activity for the Latvian population aged 15-64 by sex 1996-2007.164
Figure 6: Share of women and men working part-time 2002-2007 (%).166
Figure 7: Registered unemployment 1992-2006.167
Figure 8: Share of women in total employment by sector (%).179
Figure 9: Latvian women’s share in total employment within services 1992 and 2007 (%).180
Figure 10: Employment rates by ethnicity and sex 2002-2005 (%).182
Figure 11: The interrelations among livelihood ideologies, practices and physical and material resources and restrictions.199
Figure 12: Intersections between gendered livelihood ideologies, strategies and practices.203
Figure 13: Map of the Čēsis district and municipalities.214
Figure 14: Share of women of employed, unemployed and economically inactive population 2007 (aged 15-64, in percent).231
Figure 15: Age distribution of survey respondents.243
Figure 16: Number of years at current work within tourism.243
Figure 17: Division of work between the members of the household.278
Figure 18: Monthly income from tourism (Lats).292
Figure 19: Who is the main income provider in your household?293
Figure 20: Number of tourists in registered accommodation establishments in Jūrmala 1996-2007.308
Figure 21: Number of registered unemployed persons in Jūrmala by sex 2001-2008.322
Figure 22: Share of unemployed persons in Jūrmala by level of Latvian proficiency, 2005 (%).325
Figure 23: Age distribution of survey respondents by sex.333
Figure 24: Distribution of Russian and Latvian-speaking female respondents based on “Main work assignment” (numbers).346
Figure 25: Distribution of Russian and Latvian-speaking female respondents based on gross monthly income from tourism (numbers).346
Figure 26: Age distribution of female respondents according to their native language.350
Figure 27: Division of household chores (female respondents).359
Figure 28: Who is the main income provider in your household? (female respondents).365
List of tables

Table 1: Overview of the different parts of the thesis ................................................................. 29
Table 2: Overview of the survey study in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala ...................................... 41
Table 3: Overview of the interview study .................................................................................. 48
Table 4: The ethnic composition of the Latvian population (%) .................................................. 140
Table 5: Citizenship and ethnicity in Latvia 1995 and 2006 .......................................................... 142
Table 6: Labour force participation in Latvia 1989 (%) ............................................................... 156
Table 7: Employed by status of employment and gender (% of total number of employed persons) ......................................................................................................................... 176
Table 8: Femininities and national common space ..................................................................... 184
Table 9: Geographies of place in the Cēsis district ..................................................................... 238
Table 10: Female employees included in the interview study ....................................................... 246
Table 11: Female interviewees, rural tourism entrepreneurs ....................................................... 254
Table 12: Paradoxes of women’s entrepreneurship in the Cēsis district ......................................... 298
Table 13: Geographies of place in Jūrmala .................................................................................. 326
Table 14: Female interviewees within tourism in Majori, Jūrmala ............................................... 335
Table 15: Gross monthly income from tourism (Latvian Lats) ...................................................... 343
Table 16: Paradoxes of women’s livelihood practices within tourism in Jūrmala ....................... 379
Table 17: Reimagining national common space ......................................................................... 386
Table 18: Interrelations between ideals of femininities and women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala ................................................................. 395
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Kalmar, December 2008
Cecilia Möller
Part I
Encountering transformation

View over old Riga and the Daugava River from the top of St. Peter's Cathedral. Photo: Staffan Nolhage
Chapter one

Introduction

There are no words expressive enough to convey an authentic view of Latvia. That is why you should come here - you should see, hear, taste and feel it all yourself (…) Take a moment to dream about this land and see its colours, hear its sounds and feel its beauty (www.latviatourism.lv, E-Latvia, 2008-05-26).

This dissertation is about different transforming geographies of tourism, gender, work and livelihood in Latvia. During my period as a Ph. D. student I was often asked the question; “why did you choose to study tourism in Latvia?”, when presenting my research in different academic contexts, or when visiting Latvia for interviews and more empirical work. In some cases, the question automatically assumes that I would have previous personal links to Latvia, for example, as a member of a Swedish-Latvian ‘exile community’, which is not the case. My first visit to Latvia was in the spring of 2004, just a few weeks after Latvia became a member in the European Union. I arrived as an ‘ordinary tourist’ at Riga airport just as thousands of other visitors, took a taxi across the Daugava River to one of the budget hotels, and a couple of hours later walked the first steps along the cobbled streets in the old town of Riga with a tourist map in my hand. Unlike an ‘ordinary tourist’, whose motives for the journey might involve an escape from the routines of everyday life, what brought me to Latvia was mainly a personal and academic interest in tourism as a socio-cultural and geographical phenomenon. More specifically, my journey started when browsing through a number of colourful Latvian, Estonian and Lithuanian tourism brochures, with the aim of analysing gendered representations within tourism-marketing for a Ph. D. course in feminist geography. Images and quotations, such as the above example, of Latvia as an ‘authentic’ and ‘exotic’ tourism destination then became interesting. I already had the keywords, ‘tourism’, ‘gender’, ‘work’ and ‘post-socialism’, for the main focus of my thesis, but decided after further inquiries to choose Latvia for my empirical case studies.

The focus of the thesis is to analyse the development of tourism in Latvia as an example and reflection of the transformation process which has taken place since independence. Research about tourism development in the Baltic States in a post-socialist context has been scarce, with a focus mainly on Estonia (see Jaakson 1996; Worthington 2003). Hall (1998; 2001; 2004) and
Williams and Balaz (2000) claim that tourism both reflects and contributes to the economic transition process in post-socialist countries. From being a centrally-controlled tool for socialist ideals, tourism is today regarded as a way of creating national and regional economic growth and employment possibilities. Thus, the commitment to tourism development has a symbolic significance in terms of manifesting a new-born Latvian national identity and a more western ‘European’ identity, but also represents a restructuring of the economy, for example, through a strongly growing service sector.

Some studies of the ‘transition’ in the Baltic States in general and of tourism in particular tend to view it as having a predetermined form and direction in the shift between two apparently known circumstances. This often includes an abandonment of the past, putting an end to the Soviet times, and instead embracing the ‘new’ western capitalist economy. Such reasoning largely reflects economical and political aims of classic modernization theories (Blom et al. eds. 1996; Blokker 2005). Some actors, for instance, the World Bank, claim that the transition period could be regarded as completed for some of the post-socialist countries, especially for those countries who have become members of the European Union (The World Bank 2002). The meaning of the concept ‘transition’ has been debated. Young and Light (2001) criticize approaches advocated by economists and political scientists, who describe the transition process mainly as a question of establishing new institutions and legal frameworks in order to reach aims of democracy, as well as implementing privatization and price-liberalization.

(...) post-socialism is more than just a set of technical changes: instead it involves the re-definition of almost the entire fabric of everyday life. Thus, post-socialism involves other transformations of culture, identity, traditions, history and symbols – which are not always immediately apparent through an analysis of macro-processes of political and economic reform, but which are intimately related to such processes (Young & Light 2001:942, references to Verdery 1999).

Thus, the transition has social and cultural dimensions which interact with political and economic processes. As a consequence, the effects of these changes and transformations might also take longer time to interpret and evaluate, and might not be measurable in more quantitative and technical terms. Moreover, the transition does not always follow a linear and logical development phase, but depends on the countries’ different social, cultural and political conditions. The process of transition is also affected by external relationships, in which global processes interrelate with the local context (see Gal & Kligman 2000a,
Two alternative concepts to ‘transition’ which will be used in this study are pathways and transformation, which I find more appropriate because they allow an analysis of a continuation of social patterns, rather than merely focusing on the expected results and aims of the transition. I agree with the statement made by Gal and Kligman (2000b), who point out “the importance of seeing the post-1989 period not simply as a break with the past, but also in part a continuation of it” (Gal & Kligman In: Gal & Kligman 2000b:6). I would suggest that tourism research in a post-socialist context needs to take into consideration not merely the economic and political aspects of the transition process, but also the social and cultural dimensions, including transforming gender relations and identities. From a relational perspective, tourism is part of a network of power structures and control, which are expressed in different types of inequalities, for example, depending on class, ethnicity and gender. Gender may in this context not merely reflect and express the transforming society in terms of political and economic processes, but may also actively contribute to and affect the outcome of these processes. Thus, this study will discuss how the transformation process is genderised, and how existing gender identities in general and femininities more specifically are being transformed and mirrored within the tourism sector, alongside more general economic, political and socio-cultural societal changes. Using the term ‘femininities’ illustrates the need for recognising multiple sets of gender identities, in which different ideals of ‘femininity’ may exist parallel to and intersect with other social characteristics, such as class and ethnicity. I will return to these central themes of the thesis below.

Research on tourism as a societal phenomenon has been conducted on a multi-disciplinary basis with influences from a variety of subjects, ranging from geography and sociology to economics. The research traditions have developed from merely quantitative models of destination management and development to more profound theories and qualitative methods to illustrate the complex character and effects of tourism, in relation to more general societal processes. Tourism studies have traditionally had a weak link to feminist theories and gender issues, and were not introduced on a larger scale until the mid 1990s (see Kinnaird & Hall 1994; Swain & Momsen 2002). Since then, gender studies within tourism have provided insight into how tourism reflects and challenges existent gender structures, relations and inequalities between women and men in a wide range of areas. Morgan and Pritchard (1998) claim that the connection between gender and tourism is necessary since tourism is a product of a genderised society. Thereby, the development of tourism reflects and shapes
existing gender relations which vary over time and space (Morgan & Pritchard 1998). Human geography has been one of the leading disciplines in the development of tourism research, with the purpose of highlighting tourism activities from a spatial perspective, but few studies have fully explored the connections between feminist theoretical approaches within human geography and tourism studies.

Apart from discussing how tourism and gender are part of the transformation process in Latvia in general, the dissertation contains an analysis of employment and entrepreneurship within the emerging tourism sector in Latvia more specifically, with a focus on women’s work and livelihood within tourism. In Latvia, as well as in other post-socialist and western countries, the tourism industry tends to be a ‘feminised’ sector of the economy, and reflects an overall gendered division of labour, in which women often constitute a majority of the labour force and tend to be found in low-paid jobs¹. A dissonance can be identified within tourism research of women’s roles and opportunities within the tourism sector. On the one hand, women are portrayed as ‘victims’ of the tourism industry, expressed in debates of, for instance, sex tourism and how the growing mass tourism sector uses traditional gender roles and stereotypes. On the other hand, women’s over-representation as employees is interpreted as a chance to strengthen their role in society, especially through more small-scale forms of tourism, by offering independence and a way of challenging existing gender structures (see Gibson In: Apostopoulos et al. 2001).

The dissertation takes its departure point in the transforming Latvian labour market since independence, from ‘equal’ male-female obligations to work during the communist era to the contemporary changing and unequal labour market. The Soviet system involved a high female participation rate within the workforce, as a result of communist equality ideologies and working ideals. Women should be ‘emancipated’ through their participation in the labour market, and be given the opportunity to access higher education and

¹ In 2007, women constituted 82 percent of the 31 200 persons employed within hotel and restaurants in Latvia. Despite their over-representation, they earned merely 79 percent of the men’s average income (based on number of employed men and women “in the main job (annual average)”, aged 15-74 years. The number of women employed within hotels and restaurants has increased more compared to the number of men, from the mid-1990s until today. In 1996, around 11 000 women were employed within the hotel and restaurant sector, comprising 2.4 percent of the total number of employed females. In 2007, the number had reached 25 600 employed women, representing around 4.7 percent. However, the number of men employed within the hotel and restaurant sector has remained static; from 4700 people in 1996, constituting 1 percent of the total number of employed men, to 5600 in 2007, also representing 1 percent (LCSB database, www.csb.lv, 2008-05-25).
traditionally ‘male’ occupations. Still, LaFont (2001) describes these aims as an illusory. Women tended to end up in low-paid jobs, and the vision of full employment was mainly rooted in enforcing the industrial development in the Soviet Union. Work as defined by the state became more or less imposed, and women had to face multiple burdens, due to the fact that they remained responsible for work within the household and family, at the same time as they were encouraged to fulfil the socialist ideals as faithful Soviet labourers (LaFont 2001; Gal & Kligman 2000a). Following independence, many work opportunities were lost due to privatisation and budget cuts, while at the same time low-fertility rates, nationalistic ideologies and welfare restructuring have paved the way for more stereotypical and traditional gender identities (LaFont 2001; True 2003). Concurrently, the transition to market economy and the development of tourism have made new demands on entrepreneurship and individualism, in contrast to the previous collective mentality and large-scale production.

Thesis purpose and research questions
The overall aim of the dissertation is to analyse the development of tourism in Latvia from a gender perspective in order to understand how different gendered identities in general, and different ‘femininities’ more specifically, are reflected, transformed and challenged within tourism. This more comprehensive purpose can in turn be divided into two separate and more specific aims:

Firstly, the aim is to analyse how tourism takes part in the reimagining and construction of the Latvian nation state, and how different spatial tourism representations in turn carry gendered meanings and identities. In this case, I will analyse different and contesting gendered ‘geographical imaginations’ of Latvia, in what I refer to as the construction of ‘national common space’, which will be further discussed below.

The second purpose relates to the transforming Latvian labour market and women’s work and livelihood within tourism. The purpose is to analyse how the reshaping of the Latvian tourism sector affects women’s livelihood strategies and practices, and how they in their turn reflect or challenge more dominating and gendered ideologies of livelihood and work. Here, I will highlight livelihood as a central concept for my case studies, in order to analyse both paid and unpaid work within both the private and the public sphere, and its spatial and socio-cultural expressions.

The analysis of women’s work and livelihood within tourism is based on two case studies, rural tourism in the Cēsis district, and employment within the
tourism sector in Jūrmala. In the case studies, the following research questions will be highlighted:

- What are the motives and strategies for women’s employment and entrepreneurship within tourism? What differences and similarities can be distinguished between rural and more urban areas?
- How do place-specific traditions and conceptions of work and livelihood affect women’s livelihood possibilities?
- What conditions, possibilities and restrictions are implied in women’s everyday life through their employment and livelihood within tourism?
- Do women’s livelihood practices within tourism challenge or merely reflect traditional gender relations and identities based on prevailing norms about livelihood?

Below I will discuss central concepts of the theoretical framework which relates to the above-described purposes and aims of the dissertation.

**Feminist geography**

I will take my departure point from within three interrelated theoretical concepts; feminist geography, gender identities and femininities. There exist multiple overviews of the historical development of feminist geography both internationally and in Sweden (see Schough ed. 2002; Little 2002). Therefore, I will not go in depth into the emergence of feminist theory and its influences on human geography. Still, it is important to emphasise the diversified character of the feminist geographical field of research, which means that there does not exist one single feminist theory or ideology; instead the feminist geography field includes multiple perspectives. Thus, it is more relevant to speak of feminist geographies (McDowell 1999).

My positioning within feminist geography is related partly to its emancipatory dimensions as part of a feminist research tradition with both theoretical and political origins and partly, the aim has been to emphasise the spatial and geographical dimensions of how gender identities are constructed and reproduced. In the first case, feminist theories have focused on how and why inequalities between the sexes are constructed and reproduced, while also criticising prevailing masculine-characterised methods and onto-epistemological frameworks within a range of disciplines, including human geography. Concurrently, the feminist currents constitute parts of a more comprehensive political project (mainly emerging in the Western world) with the aim to change
actively the societal inequalities which have been discussed and made visible through research (see McDowell 1999; Johansson 2000). The geographical dimension relates to how feminist geography applies a spatial perspective to feminist theory, in which place and space are not merely given physical attributes, but also gendered meanings. Doreen Massey (1994) emphasises how the place, space and gender are treated as mutually-interrelated within feminist geography, which means that (in)equality between the sexes varies between different spatial contexts.

(...) space and place, spaces and places, and our senses of them (and such related things as our degrees of mobility) are gendered through and through. Moreover they are gendered in a myriad different ways, which vary between cultures and over time. And this gendering of space and place both reflects and has effects back on the ways in which gender is constructed and understood in the societies in which we live (Massey 1994:186, original emphasis)

I regard the theoretical concept gender as a tool for analysis in order to understand the societal processes of power which position, but also subordinate, single individuals and groups based on socially and culturally-characterised perceptions of masculine and feminine. The concepts sex and gender have been central in the emergence of international feminist theory from the 1980s and onwards, and are used parallel in different research contexts. Gender, as opposed to sex in a more biological sense, is considered as a social construction, a product of the prevailing culture and ideas of what is considered as male and female, which varies in time and space. Recognizing gender as socially-constructed, opens up the questioning of gender as having a 'natural' and biologically-determining order, and contributes to opportunities of change. Gender has traditionally been associated with 'women' due to its close parallels to the feminist movement. However, gender studies put focus on the genderised relations between men and women, their different activities and experiences, and the construction of different masculine and feminine identities. The main purpose is to reveal, understand and explain, but also provide measures to alter genderised differences and inequalities (WGSG 1997).

I find it important to emphasise how gender is not something that exists independently outside people’s minds and experiences. Rather, gender is both relational and situated, and gendered conceptions are constantly produced and reproduced through social interactions, in the way we view and position ourselves and others. Consequently, the ways we think of gender influences how society is organised and how we relate to and think about the world around us (McDowell 1999). The spatial dimensions of gender can in this context be
Gender identities and femininities
In this thesis, I have chosen to use the concept of gender identities rather than gender relations. One reason for this choice is the wish to include a more diversified analysis on women’s employment, which focuses on the differences among women, rather than treating them as one homogenous group. Thus, gender identities stress how every individual may inhabit a more diverse set of identities, and how gender intersects with other identities, such as ethnicity and class. In Latvia, these are relevant categories to include, considering the large Russian-speaking minority and the social differences within the society following independence.

In my study, I focus on women’s, rather than men’s, work and livelihood in the more empirically-based case studies. This is due to women’s over-representation within the tourism sector in Latvia as well as in other countries. Different work assignments and occupations within tourism also tend to be ascribed as ‘female-coded’ work, which usually results in that the work is given a lower status compared to traditionally ‘masculine-coded’ jobs and sectors. Yet, the aim is to see how different gender identities are constructed, challenged and reflected within tourism. In this case, I will use the term femininities, which emphasises that there is no single identity shared by all women, but that different norms of femininities exist parallel and vary among different contexts. In terms of work and livelihood within tourism, I will analyse how different ideals of femininities are being reproduced, constructed and challenged, and how women themselves actively take part in this process. Here, more traditional ideals of femininities can be distinguished, some with roots in Latvian culture and with a focus on women’s role within the family. Other ‘Western’ ideals of femininities appear in terms of lifestyle and working ideals, while the ‘old’ socialist ideals of femininities and work linger and are being negotiated, rejected and reproduced.

I would suggest that there are several existing and potential connections between feminist geography and tourism as a research field due to the need for a spatial perspective of tourism, which is particularly interesting given the inter-
national spread of tourism and its mobile character. However, the theorising of space and place within tourism research has for a long time been treated as static and immune against gendered constructions. Gender perspectives within tourism research were introduced even later than within human geography, and were influenced by feminist theories within other disciplines, such as sociology. Literature with themes of gender and tourism has been published from the mid-1990s and onwards, including for example Kinniard and Hall’s (1994) *Tourism, a gender analysis*, Morgan and Pritchard’s (1998) *Tourism, promotion and power*, Swain and Momsen (eds) (2002) *Tourism/Gender/Fun* (?) and Pritchard et al. (eds) (2007) *Tourism and gender. Embodiment, sensuality and experience*. A majority of the early texts is based on empirical studies, but despite the roots in disciplines, such as human geography, the theoretical framework has remained rather weak until recent years, when a more ‘cultural turn’ based on post-structuralist theories has emerged.

In my dissertation I will explore the relations between space, place and gender identities within tourism in two main ways. Firstly, I will analyse how tourism-marketing in Latvia bears gendered and spatial representations. Secondly, the aim is to explore women’s work and livelihood within tourism from a feminist geographical perspective. These two aspects will be discussed further below.

**Geographies of tourism and gender**

With the aim to analyse how Latvia is reimagined and reconstructed in the post-socialist period both as a nation state and as a tourism destination, I will illustrate this process by using the term ‘national common space’?, which consists of different genderised ‘geographical imaginations’ of Latvia as a ‘new’ nation state. I distinguish three interrelated ‘geographies’ as constituting parts of a transforming national common space: *geographies of neo-nationalism, geographies of Europeanisation* and *geographies of relic-communism*. The three geographies are my own categorisations, which constitute analytical tools for understanding the spatial dimensions of the Latvian transformation process in terms of gender and tourism. They are in turn based on existing post-socialist research and different theoretical approaches to ‘transition’ and development, as well as my own empirical material and observations. By using *geographie*, rather than the singular geography, also serves to illustrate how each of the three geographies

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2 See also what Schough (2001) refers to as “Det gemensamma svenska rummet” (The Swedish common space), which consists of different national state directives of welfare and work, as well as discourses of gender equality, which influence gender relations on both a national and a local level (Schough 2001:86f).
may take different transforming expressions, and they are not static in their character. The aim is to illustrate the complexity and diversity of the transformation process, in how different post-socialist countries take multiple pathways depending on their national and local context. Thus, I regard the transition as a dynamic and constantly on-going process, rather than merely a completed one-way shift between two known economic and political systems.

The concepts of space and place constitute central parts of the theoretical terminology within human geography, and their meanings and definitions are persistently discussed and debated from different epistemological and ontological standpoints. I will use both concepts in order to analyze the spatial transformation processes which have occurred, and still are taking place in Latvia, with a special focus on gender and tourism. Each of the three ‘geographies’ will be discussed as having different imaginations and interpretations of space and place. With the concept ‘national common space’, I do not refer to a fixed and static geographically-delimited area, which would constitute the national territory of ‘Latvia’. It rather denotes how different aims and priorities for Latvia’s transitional process are revealed and prioritized. This includes, for example, what common national values are highlighted within tourism-marketing, such as culture and traditions, which involve questions of belonging and transforming national, ethnic and genderised identities. Moreover, I will relate the three geographies to different femininities and dominating ideologies of work and livelihood set on both a national and a local level, when establishing the theoretical framework for the case studies.

(Re)Imagining national common space

The process of (re)imagining the national common space can be analysed as having directional, relational, contested and genderised features. In the first case, the geographies represent different aims of development, with specific agendas, pointing out multiple paths through the transition process. Thus, they can be viewed as constituting diverse ideological projects, for instance, originating within nationalism, neo-liberal capitalism and multiple views of ‘development’, with each holding a certain imagination and conception of space and place.

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3 See upcoming Chapters 2-4.
4 See Chapter 4-5 and the case studies in Jūrmala and the Cēsis district.
5 The definitions of ideology are multiple and complex, as well as the relation to discourse as a concept, and will not be brought up in detail here. Syssner (2006) calls for reclaiming ideology as a concept within human geography due to its spatial dimensions, and defines it with reference to van Dijk (2004) as “(…) a set of action-related ideas of how the world is and how it ought to be. Ideology is, in other words, understood as a belief system shared by a group of people and used to mobilize other people for action” (Syssner 2006:21).
Each of the geographies also reflect different theoretical approaches to ‘transition’, including, for example, theories of path-dependency evident in the geographies of relic-communism, and more classic ‘modernisation theories’ illustrated in the geographies of Europeanisation. The transition process also involves a process of ‘looking back in history’, to the first Latvian independence, which will be discussed in terms of geographies of neo-nationalism.

Secondly, the reimagining of national common space is not merely taking place within the borders of the Latvian territory. I would suggest that the transition process is relational and takes place through both local and global networks of relationships, manifested, for instance, through EU-membership, the increase of foreign investments as within tourism, and the return of ‘exile-Latvians’ from abroad. Doreen Massey (2005) describes space as “the product of interrelations” (Massey 2005:9), emphasising space as a web of local and global social interactions. She calls for a spatial perspective which acknowledges space (the global) and place (the local) as closely interwoven and inseparable. Recognizing the mutual relations between space and place means that space affects the development of places, but places also actively contribute to the construction of space. In other words, places cannot be strictly ‘local’ in their character, but contain global relations. Massey describes space as a ‘meeting place’, in which different social relations and networks uniquely intersect from the local to the global. Thus, Latvian ‘local’ places, which may range from the household to the region, take part in the construction of the national common space and in a global context, while also being part of the effects, and vice versa. Consequently, space does not simply add up as the “sum” of a number of places, but illustrates the interlinkages and relational character of space and place (Massey 1994; 2005).

The relational nature of the transition process indicates that the national common space is constantly transforming, but also constitutes a contested arena. Massey and Jess (1995) emphasise how different actors have different ‘geographical imaginations’ (Massey & Jess In: Massey & Jess eds. 1995:134) of how place and space should be represented and developed, which are bounded to the social and cultural context. Syssner (2006) also argues that ideology as a concept contains power dimensions as some ideologies might be more hegemonic in relation to others. Still, ideology also has to be anchored in other groups than merely the more dominating. Thus, different imaginations of space may be conflicting and contested, which may be expressed within the development of tourism. I would suggest that the three identified sets of ‘geographies’
together compete, but also cooperate, in the construction of the national common space.

*Gendered representations within tourism*

Different imaginations and representations of space, as well as place, are not gender-neutral concepts but also carry *gendered* meanings. Thus, the three different ‘geographies’ introduced above each represent different gendered ‘imaginations’ of space and place, and reflect a constant negotiation of gendered identities. Massey claims that *place* as a concept within human geography has tended to represent a ‘local way of life’ and a ‘female’ realm, for example, in the studies of the ‘home’ or the ‘private’ sphere (Massey 1994:9f). The tendencies to ‘romanticise’ place have been rejected by Massey and other feminist researchers, emphasising that ‘home’ also may carry more negative characteristics, for example, through fear of domestic violence (see Rose 1993; Massey 1994). *Space*, on the other hand, has been represented by the abstract and infinite, often used with parallels to rational and universal scientific progress and development. In this case, space as the ‘public’ realm has been privileged with a more masculine-coding, inhabiting *one* single view of space rather than acknowledging its diversity.

My intention is not to reproduce the division between the female coded images of place and ‘masculine’ space, but to analyse critically how representations of national common space, reproduced through tourism-marketing, relate to genderised conceptions of both space and place. Morgan and Pritchard (1998) point out that media is a prominent actor taking part in the construction of gender relations within tourism, in how tourism advertisements use and reproduce female and male stereotypes in their messages, partly through current language, and partly through reflecting images and pictures. The messages within tourism-marketing often try to make a connection between the tourist and the landscape to establish an image of a place or a destination, which result in highly genderised representations (Morgan & Pritchard 1998). In the efforts to create a unified image for a tourism destination, brochures and other marketing material are used in which men and women are given different roles and symbolism. Women are usually embodying exotic destinations in more traditional guises, while men are represented through powerful and action-filled images, often as the tourists themselves. In the analysis of these images, different forms of power relations can be revealed, reflecting conceptions of the feminine ‘Other’, which are
portrayed in multiple guises, as the foreign and ethnic exotic (Gibson In: Apostopoulos et al. 2001).

Gendered work and livelihood within tourism
Research questions relating to women’s livelihood and work within tourism constitute central parts of my dissertation. The above-described geographies will be related to an analysis of work and gender in a post-socialist context, with a focus on which different ideals of femininities, work, and livelihood can be distinguished, in terms of how labour market and welfare policies are formulated in the period following independence, as well as what positions women have in the contemporary labour market. In this case, I will discuss how more traditional, ‘Western’ and socialist ideals of femininities, work and livelihood are interrelated and negotiated, and represent different spatial organisations of work in relation between the private and the public sphere. Apart from discussing these ideals as part of the formation of the ‘national common space’, I will also analyse how these ideals are expressed and negotiated in women’s livelihood strategies and practices in the two case studies.

Livelihood can be defined as “a means of securing the necessities in life” (www.oxfordreference.com 2008-12-11). Scholten (2003; In: Friberg et al. 2005) undercores that livelihood has both social and material dimensions, which may include supporting both oneself and others in an economic sense, but also as a more social responsibility, and care for children or other family members. In my theoretical analysis of women’s work and livelihood within the Latvian tourism sector I will use theoretical approaches within feminist geography in order to avoid equating livelihood with work, which tends to maintain the dichotomy between the reproductive private sphere and the productive public sphere. Feminist geography has questioned the accepted, traditional spatial division between the male-coded public sphere of production, and the private sphere of reproduction as ‘women’s place’. By deconstructing the dualism between Work-Home and between Private-Public, production and reproduction

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6 The dualism between the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ has been used by feminist researchers, such as Simone de Beauvoir and Gillian Rose, as well as within research of ethnicity and racialisation (see Johnston et al. eds 2006). Rose (1993) emphasises how identities are relational, constantly constructed in relation to ‘otherness’, which tend to position people in relation to each other. Masculinity is, for example, defined in relation to femininity, creating dualisms between the masculine norm (or the Same/Self) and the female, deviant ‘Other’. Thus, these categorisations are products of power relations, and one focus of feminist research has been to problematise, question and deconstruct these dualisms (see Rose 1993).

7 These ideals of femininities will be discussed in more detail in chapter 5. These are in turn related to the three geographies presented above. See also Table 1 below, which provides an overview of the thesis.
were analysed together as the result of interrelated processes. This is also emphasised by Gillian Rose (1993).

Reproduction is not explained with reference only to patriarchy, nor production to capitalism; nor is gender confined to the home and class to the workplace, for ‘the construction of gender identity actually occurs in the workplace as well as at home and in the community’ (Rose 1993:120).

Rather, the intention is to analyse the spatial preconditions for livelihood, and to illustrate the mutual relations between place, work and home/family, which together sets the framework for women’s livelihood possibilities. Thus, the choice of work within tourism does not have to be purely economic, but also reflects women’s roles and responsibilities at home and in the family (see Schough 2001; Friberg 1990; Scholten 2003).

Setting the framework for women’s livelihood

In order to illustrate the theoretical and empirical framework of the study, Figure 1 demonstrates the relations and intersections among ‘national common space’, ‘geographies of place’ and women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism. The figure will be discussed in more detail in Chapter seven, when the theoretical framework for the case studies will be discussed. As mentioned above, the national common space includes three different contesting ‘geographies’, which hold different reimaginings of Latvia as a national state and a tourism destination, and relate to genderised ideals and ideologies of work and livelihood.

The national common space is closely interrelated to ‘geographies of place’, and the two dimensions should be analysed as mutually intertwined. Geographies of place refer to the two case study areas, which reflect more place-specific ideologies of gender, work and livelihood. The three different geographies illustrated within national common space are also evident in the two case studies, but take different expressions and local variations. The more urban environment of Jūrmala offers, for instance, different physical, socio-cultural and economic possibilities and restrictions for livelihood compared to the rural areas of the Cēsis district. The two different areas also have different traditions of work and livelihood, which may affect women’s possibilities for creating a livelihood within tourism.
The national common space and geographies of place together set the framework of women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism, as a way of illustrating the structural transforming processes. It is also of importance to take into consideration women’s personal and individual strategies and intentions for livelihood, which may reflect more place-specific conditions and constraints, but may also reveal actions which challenge genderised norms of work and livelihood. Figure 1 illustrates how the ‘strategies/intentions’ and ‘individual conditions’ refer to the background and motives behind women’s employment or entrepreneurship within tourism. ‘Individual conditions’ relates to both concrete and abstract conditions for work within tourism, which may include place attachments, but also access to human and economic capital (see Stenbacka 2001). Here, I will also analyse women’s strategies in relation to other traits, such as class and ethnicity. The individual considerations, strategies and conditions also affect the different forms and ‘means’ of livelihood, for example, entrepreneurship and/or employment. The outcomes of the strategies

Figure 1: “Mind map” figure, illustrating the relations and intersections among ‘national common space’, ‘geographies of place’ and livelihood strategies and practices.
may be different from the original intentions, and therefore the case studies also put focus on women’s everyday livelihood practices in relation between the public and the private sphere. Here, the intention is to analyse what space for women’s more independent livelihood is created in relation to their practice orientations, and whether their livelihood practices involve a negotiation and challenge of, or an adjustment to, prevailing gender identities and norms of livelihood and work.

Case studies and methods
The methodological framework for the thesis will be discussed in more detail in the next chapter. The case studies of the dissertation can be grouped into two main parts: firstly, a section which focuses on the Latvian transforming national common space, discussed on the basis of the three gendered geographies. In the first part, I will discuss how tourism participates in the construction of this gendered ‘national common space’ with examples of how Latvia in general and Riga more specifically are marketed and represented within tourism.

Figure 2: Map of Latvian regions and districts (the Cēsis district and Jūrmala highlighted).

Moreover, I will also relate the geographies to different ideals of femininities, work and livelihood in both a socialist and a contemporary context. In both cases, the empirical material consists of a text analysis of tourism marketing material as well as policy-planning documents published by different state
institutions regarding both tourism development and questions relating to the labour market. Complementary semi-structured interviews have also been conducted with different public actors responsible for these issues.

Secondly, I have conducted two case studies concerning women’s work and livelihood within tourism; one in the Cēsis district in the central/eastern part of Latvia which illustrates the development of more small-scale rural tourism, the other in the city of Jūrmala, where large-scale health and spa tourism have emerged (see Figure 2). The case studies in both the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala have had a similar design and aim, consisting of a survey and an interview study with both female employees and entrepreneurs within tourism.

**Structure of the thesis**

The dissertation consists of six different parts, and the main contents of parts II-V are illustrated in Table 1. The thesis is structured in relation to the three different geographies which have been introduced above, which will be discussed separately in part II, including Chapter 3 of geographies of neo-nationalism, Chapter 4 of geographies of Europeanisation and Chapter 5 of geographies of relic-communism. Here, the purpose is to ‘set the scene’ for the thesis and provide an insight into the transformation process in Latvia since independence, with a focus on tourism and the gendered ‘national common space’. The different themes of the chapters are specified in the first section of Table 1.

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<th>Table 1: Overview of the different parts of the thesis.</th>
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<td><strong>Geographies of</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Part II</strong></td>
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<td><em>Tourism and ‘national common space’</em></td>
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<td><strong>Part III</strong></td>
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<td><em>Femininities, work and ‘national common space’</em></td>
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<td><strong>Part IV</strong></td>
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<td><em>Geographies of place in the Cēsis district</em></td>
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<td><strong>Part V</strong></td>
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Part III consists of two chapters, one relating to national common space and different ideals of femininities, work and livelihood in a post-socialist context, and one chapter which lays the theoretical framework of the case studies with a focus on gendered work and livelihood within tourism.

Parts IV and V put focus on the case studies of women’s work and livelihood within tourism in the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala. Each part has a similar structure and consists of three chapters: one analysing ‘geographies of place’, providing a local setting and framework for the three geographies of tourism and gender included in ‘national common space’. In the Cēsis district, I will highlight issues of ‘rurality’, and in Jūrmala, I will analyse the emergence of health and spa tourism. The chapters also provide an overview of the local labour market in both the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala, with a particular focus on women’s employment and unemployment. Chapter nine with the Cēsis study and Chapter twelve with the Jūrmala study contain discussions of women’s livelihood strategies within tourism, based on a survey and interview study, with a focus on the motives for employment and entrepreneurship within tourism. The last chapters of parts IV and V provide an overview of women’s livelihood practices within tourism, relating to the question of how they balance their everyday routines and work within tourism, and different paradoxes between their strategies and practices of livelihood. An analysis and comparison between the two case studies and their relation to the three geographies will be made in the concluding chapter of the thesis.
Chapter two
Methodological journeys

Our knowledge of the world cannot immediately be treated as an objective truth. Reality is only available to us through our categories – and our knowledge and our worldviews are not reflections of reality “out there” but are products of our ways of categorising the world (Winther Jørgensen & Phillips 2000:11, Author’s translation from Swedish).

Kvale (1997) describes the interviewer as a *traveller*, based on a post-modern metaphor, in how the production of knowledge is a *journey* through stories and values, where also the researcher’s own experiences are in focus. In other words, new knowledge is being produced in the meeting between the researcher and the people he or she confronts along the journey (Kvale 1997:11). I would claim that this metaphor is relevant for my own research project, which in many ways has included different methodological journeys, both as a foreign tourist in Latvia and as a researcher. Still, my journey has not been pre-defined or always moving from one point to another with the main aim of reaching a given destination or ‘objective truth’. Rather, the journeys have been part of the research process itself, including raising awareness of my own role as a researcher.

The aim of the present chapter is to describe the methodological framework of the thesis in general and the case studies conducted in Latvia more specifically. I will take my departure point from a discussion of feminist methodology(ies) in order to highlight issues such as qualitative research and subjectivity. Thereafter, I will describe the research process including conducting text analysis, as well as selecting and implementing the case studies for Jūrmala and the Cēsis district, which include both a survey and an interview study.

What is feminist methodology?
The choice of methodology has a very close relation to one’s own epistemology and ontology, which together form our view of knowledge, what it consists of, how it can be grasped, as well as our conception of reality and its contents. Within my own research, I consider feminist geography(ies) to be a well-established framework for both the definition and design of qualitative methods for my thesis and fieldwork. But what then constitutes a more feminist methodology? Feminist currents have highlighted how research for a long time has been characterised by a masculine view of science, which has resulted in the use
of more masculine-defined concepts and how men’s experiences have been put forward to a greater extent than women’s. Therefore, the aim has been to bring out and make visible women both in their roles as researchers and as subjects of interests in studies of women’s experiences and life stories (Widerberg 2003; WGSG 1997). Madge et al. (1997) point out how contemporary feminist research aims at highlighting a range of masculinities and femininities, and that the focus no longer is entirely on “research on, by and for women” (Madge et al. 1997 In: WGSG). As has been discussed previously, feminist geography is not a homogenous field of research, which also acknowledges the fact that there exist multiple feminist methodologies. However, there exists a common set of features, which focus upon a more critical approach to the production of knowledge and research methods. The feminist-geographical field has been one of the leading currents in the development and promotion of qualitative research methods within human geography, partly as a way of criticising the prevailing masculine character of geographical research, and partly as a way of acknowledging how the research process itself can be viewed as subjective and genderised. These two dimensions will be discussed separately below, as part of my own onto-epistemological positioning.

A qualitative approach
Qualitative methods are often described as a way of gaining more and deeper understanding for societal phenomena, and as a method to gain further insight into people’s lives and experiences. The qualitative research perspectives are often placed in contrast to quantitative research, reflecting a repudiation and critique of the positivist research tradition and epistemology, and its search for ‘objective’ truths (see Limb & Dwyer eds. 2001; Silverman 2005). Silverman (2005) criticises the dualistic division between qualitative and quantitative methods, and the assumption that qualitative methods automatically are “better” than quantitative. Rather, qualitative and quantitative methods can together be mutually beneficial, for example, in the mix of both survey and/or database material, together with semi-structured interviews and/or participant observation (Silverman 2005). I consider a mix of methods as being beneficial for my project for several reasons, which are related to the chosen research questions, but also to the chosen empirical field in terms of language and cultural barriers. The thesis has mainly a qualitative approach, including semi-structured interviews and text analysis, but I have also used more quantitative data, in the form of a survey and Latvian statistical data, for instance, encompassing tourist arrivals and labour market statistics. In the latter case, the
main data have been generated from databases distributed by the Latvian Central Statistical Bureau (LCSB) or statistical publications, while some also have been ordered separately on demand. In the Cēsis and Jūrmala case studies, the surveys became a first step to gain more empirical insight to employment within tourism in two quite different geographical areas, and served as preparatory work for the upcoming interview study. In other words, the survey has been essential as a methodological tool to conduct a more qualitative-oriented study.

Methodological positioning and reflections are essential in the ambition to analyse how to explain and gain understanding of societal phenomena. The research process usually consists of a close interaction among three crucially interrelated dimensions: empirical studies, theory and analysis. In my study, the methodological approach can be described as abductive, which illustrates the intimate connection among these three elements, but in a more non-linear rather than one-way-oriented movement. Alvesson and Sköldberg (1994) describe the abductive approach as involving the search for a more in-depth understanding compared to induction and deduction. Abduction has close parallels to a more inductive approach, since it starts from a more empirical context. Still, the empirical material is more closely combined with theoretical studies within the abductive approach, which also acknowledges the difficulties of separating “raw” empirical data, which has not been analysed and interpreted in a more theoretical context (Alvesson & Sköldberg 1994). I have taken my point of departure in a general overview of the field of research, which has included earlier empirical and theoretical case studies of gender, tourism and livelihood issues. Thereafter, more empirical work was started in order to provide an insight into the Latvian society and the development of tourism in a post-socialist context. This was done through contacts and interviews with actors within the tourism sector on a national and a regional level, as well as implementation of the survey and interviewees with employees and entrepreneurs in the Cēsis region and Jūrmala. The continuous work has thereafter oscillated between further developing the theoretical framework, and implementing and analysing the results of the survey and the semi-structured interviews.

Power, positioning and ‘situated’ knowledge

(…) thinking and doing the ‘F’ word implies a sensitivity to power relations within the field, an awareness of the ethical role of the researcher and a commitment to the progressive deployment of research as well as an understanding of how the researcher and researched have been gendered, sexualised, raced and classed (Jenkins et al. 2003 In: ACME no 2(1) p. 58, Author’s emphasis).
The citation points to an important dimension of feminist methodology: how the research process itself may contain different power relations between the researcher and the people in focus for the research project. I find this question of particular importance when positioning myself as a feminist researcher, which needs to be analysed from my own ‘situated’ and cultural context, as a Swedish, Western European, well-educated, middle class woman conducting research in Latvia, as a post-socialist country, representing a completely different socio-cultural setting. When doing research in a country which for a long time was termed as being part of “the second world”, these positions may bear substantial influence on the research process. This not only implies possible culture and language problems, but also the risk of being viewed as the privileged “outsider” who comes merely to collect material and knowledge to bring home, without giving something back.

Moreover, I also tend to represent a feminist field of research which has emerged largely within Western Europe, both theoretically and politically, and which bears some differences from feminist movements and research developing in post-socialist countries. Even though feminist currents in both ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ countries share many similarities, one central issue of critique within academia has been that ‘Western’ feminism often has constituted the ‘norm’ for how feminist research ‘should be conducted’ in other parts of the world. Liljeström (2005) emphasises how ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ feminists have tended to constitute two separate groups, each representing a sense of ‘we-ness’. On the one hand, she claims that ‘Western’ feminism’s studies of ‘Russian women’ have involved the construction of ‘Eastern Otherness’ and difference, as deviant from ‘Western women’, and how ‘Western’ feminist theories are applied to an ‘Eastern’ context. On the other hand, researchers in Russia and other post-socialist countries also tend to distance themselves from ‘Western’ feminism, while underscoring how research needs to be done on the basis of their own historical and cultural context (Liljeström In: Asztalos Morell et al. 2005:41ff).

This debate clearly illustrates how there does not exist one homogenous feminist research field, and the ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ versions of feminism should also be regarded as diverse and multiple rather than representing two divided units. The different perspectives provided by the ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ versions of feminism may also be mutually beneficial, rather than drawing boundaries between areas of research which may be conducted by ‘Western’ rather than ‘Eastern’ feminists and vice versa. The debate also raises the question of how can a researcher point to ‘difference’ without indirectly
Contributing to reproducing ‘Otherness’. This requires an insight to one’s own position as a researcher, taking into consideration how knowledge production in itself is ‘situated’, rather than making claims for an all-encompassing universal truth, which Donna Haraway describes as a “the God trick” of reality. Rather, Haraway emphasises the need for ‘local knowledge claims’, as a way of gaining insight into which context and under what conditions knowledge is produced (Widerberg 2003). Knowledge is, in other words, considered to be both embodied and situated; it is constantly produced in a social context and does not exist independent of people themselves. The feminist critique reflects a will to understand society from within, and thereby turn research objects into subjects and take into consideration the complex social relations in which they exist. Thus, objectivity, which the positivist tradition has long strived for, is not regarded as possible to achieve or to be desirable (Widerberg 2003; Cope In: Moss 2002). I will return to the discussion of situated knowledge below, when discussing the interview study in the Čēsis district and Jūrmala.

**Text analysis**

I have used text analysis as a qualitative method in order to analyse and discuss how Latvia in general and Riga more specifically are marketed and represented as genderised tourism destinations. Riga was chosen for two main reasons: one, the results of the transformation process have been very fast and strikingly evident in Riga as the national capital city. In some sense, Riga has taken the lead in the economic and political transformation in a symbolic, material and social sense. The urban area has been the main ‘growth centre’ and symbol of the new Western-oriented market economy, at the same time as it participates in the reconstruction of the pre-Soviet Latvian national state. Moreover, Riga has also a large Russian-speaking minority, and represents continuing linkages with the East. Two, and related to the above, tourism is highly concentrated in the Riga region, both in terms of the number of arriving tourists and the existing tourism infrastructure; thus Riga is relevant for closer focus and a more in-depth analysis.

Text analysis may include a variety of methods and have a more quantitative or qualitative approach, including an analysis of language structure, metaphors and rhetoric. In my own study, I have chosen a more qualitative approach which analyses how the texts may bear different genderised meanings, and are constructed by different actors. One source, I have chosen to focus on, is the marketing material published by public state actors due to their responsibility of marketing Latvia as ‘one’ tourism destination, revealing aims.
Chapter two – Methodological journeys

and priorities set up by the state. The state encourages not only tourist arrivals, but also a particular image of the ‘new’ nation state to be communicated to both domestic citizens and foreign tourists. In this case, I have used text material from printed tourism brochures and websites published by the Latvian Tourism Development Agency (LTDA) and the Latvian Institute (LI), which together constitute two of the main actors for marketing Latvia internationally, and also serve the state’s aims of tourism development and promotion.

Another source, I have used, is tourism marketing-material from the private sector in both printed and electronic forms, especially when analysing Riga’s nightlife and the use of the Soviet heritage within tourism-marketing. The material can illustrate the potential conflict between the aims set up by the public sector, and the aims of commercialisation which guide the private sector. Thus, the image of Latvia may have different expressions and outcomes depending on what marketing material is analysed, and thus, different perceptions of place and space may be revealed. The ‘messages’ in tourism-marketing have also been analysed in relation to the different ‘geographies’, thus analysing their spatial character as well as how the texts may have ideological roots, thereby reflecting the Latvian transformation process.

Apart from tourism marketing material, I have also analysed policy documents published on a state level concerning aims of the labour market, concerning aims of future development, economic growth, entrepreneurship and employment. The aim has been to see what aims and priorities are set up for women’s and men’s positions and possibilities in the labour market, and analyse them from national, regional and local contexts, as well how they relate to aims and policies set up by the European Union. Material has been selected

8 The Latvian Tourism Development Agency (LTDA) is a state institution responsible for the implementation of tourism policies set up by the Ministry of Economics, which includes supplying and distributing marketing material of Latvia as a tourism destination through channels, such as, the Internet, tourism fairs and international offices (see www.latviatourism.lv, www.em.gov.lv). The Latvian Institute is also a state-funded and governed institution responsible for the supply of information internationally about Latvia, for example, concerning Latvian culture and history (see www.li.lv). The text analysis includes in the former case printed brochures: LTDA (2004) Discover Latvia, LTDA (2007) The land that sings, and material published electronically at the websites www.latviatourism.lv. In the latter case, material published electronically at www.li.lv has been analysed, including themes such as “Music in Latvia”, “Society”, “Culture”, “History”, and “Nature”, which also are available as printed fact sheets from the Latvian Institute. For more details, see “Brochures and reports” and “Internet sources” in the list of references.

9 The text analysis includes tourism marketing material from the private sector: printed free tourist magazines such as Riga This Week and Guide for Enjoying and websites containing information about Riga’s nightlife, such as www.nightliferiga.com and www.partyinriga.com, as well as private tour operators such as www.rigaoutthere.com. For more details, see “Brochures and reports” and “Internet sources” in the list of references.
on the basis of relevance for my research questions, and on their availability in English and electronic form through official homepages of state institutions and ministries\(^{10}\).

**Validity and reliability**

In my text analysis, I position myself in relation to a more constructivist approach, which puts emphasis on how language participates in how we construct and make sense of our everyday lives, and in turn denies the existence of how language can be ‘neutral’ or ‘objective’, as suggested by, for example, positivist scientific research. Thus, language and texts are about communication and power, and reflect who has the possibility and power to express themselves, when and in what way. As Bergström and Boréus emphasise, “texts may reflect, reproduce or question for example power. But they do not themselves constitute power” (Bergström & Boréus 2000:15, Author’s translation from Swedish). Thus, texts are embedded in a human, socio-cultural context, and by interpreting and analysing texts, social power relations among people and actors within the society may be revealed. In my interpretation of the tourism-marketing material and other policy planning documents, the main focus has been on analysing different gendered representations, in how different femininities and perceptions of ethnicity are reproduced and constructed by different actors.

What then characterises a well-performed text analysis? Bergström and Boréus (2000) refer to two central concepts: validity and reliability, which have their origin in more positivist research traditions and remain controversial within qualitative research\(^{11}\). Issues of validity refer to the need to use the ‘right’ tools and adequate methods in order to provide answers for the research question at hand. However, within social science, it is not sufficient merely to make sure that the methods agree with the aims of the study, but also to take into consideration the role of the researcher who conducts the study based on her/his situated knowledge. Thus, questions of validity are complex and require reflections of the subjective dimensions of the research process rather than

\(^{10}\) These policy documents include, for example, *the National Development Plan 2007-2013*, *The Programme for Promotion of Business Competitiveness and Innovation 2007-2013*, *The National Lisbon Programme for Latvia 2005-2008*, which is a policy planning document in line with the Lisbon strategy, *The Programme for Implementation of Gender Equality 2007-2016*, *The Integration of Society in Latvia 2001*, and *A renewed EU tourism policy. Towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism*. For a more detailed list, see “Brochures and reports” in the list of references.

\(^{11}\) A separation is often made between internal and external validity. In the first case, the aim is to validate the results within the given study, while external validity aims at proving whether or not the results may be generalized into larger contexts (see Ryen 2004). Here, I refer mainly to internal validity.
merely focusing on the static ‘tools’ used for achieving the results. Here, again, parallels can be made to knowledge as ‘situated’; we obtain knowledge about the world around us through our language, and as researchers, we are a part of this production of knowledge when reproducing it through our own texts, and while analysing the meaning of other oral or written forms of language. Thus, the interpretation of texts is rooted in a social and cultural context of which the researcher is a part, based on individual knowledge and experience, as well as academic perspectives and theories. Reliability is also needed in order to show that the analysis is made on an accurate and transparent basis, where the interpretation is made visible by using correct references and citations (Bergström & Böréus 2000:34ff).

The case studies: Jūrmala and the Cēsis district
In general, a case study puts focus on one or a limited number of units for research, for a more in-depth understanding of a phenomenon, with a more holistic approach, aimed at understanding multiple features of the chosen case study. Thus, the focus is put on the intensity of the study (Gerring 2007; Denscombe 2000). In my case studies, my intention has been to study women’s livelihood within tourism, and based on this, I have chosen two ‘cases’ (two geographically-delimited areas) in order to make a more in-depth analysis of my research questions. Multiple methods (both qualitative and quantitative) are also advocated when using case studies in order to get a more comprehensive and detailed overview of the case(s) at hand (Merriam 1994; Denscombe 2000). The case studies in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala have included a survey and a qualitative interview study with a similar design and structure in both regions. The main focus of the case studies has been interviews with female employees and entrepreneurs within tourism, but the interview study also comprised representatives within the tourism sector on a local and regional level, as well as public actors involved in questions relating to local development and tourism in general and the labour market more specifically. Additionally, an analysis of planning and policy documents, for instance, relating to rural and regional development, employment and entrepreneurship, tourism development and marketing on a local level have been conducted, together with available labour market and tourism statistics, in order to provide further understanding and context for the interview studies and surveys.

I have chosen to make a comparison of women’s livelihood within tourism in two different areas. My analysis takes place in relation to place-specific eco-
nomic and socio-cultural contexts in order to distinguish both similarities and differences in women’s livelihood possibilities, strategies and practices. The aim is to use the analysis of the local geographical setting and women’s narratives in order to understand the larger post-socialist transformation process, by emphasising the interlinkages with the ‘national common space’ and feminised ‘geographies of place’.

Selecting the case studies

The choice of the two case studies came about through a combination of factors. First of all, the purpose has been to make a comparison of tourism in two different tourism regions, which reflect the growth, development and transformation of tourism in Latvia. In the Cēsis district, rural tourism is considered to have a large potential, as a tool for regional development. Rural tourism is regarded as a way of creating employment, with the idea of conducting tourism on a more small-scale and sustainable basis. The Latvian countryside struggles with problems of unemployment and migration to both Riga and abroad, and a general downturn of the agricultural sector due to reforms and privatisation. In other words, there is a need for alternative livelihood possibilities apart from agricultural work. In Jūrmala, there has been a large commitment to the development of health and spa tourism, in an attempt to rebuild a tourism resort which had its peak partly during the middle of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century as a health resort, and partly during the Soviet regime when Jūrmala was one of the largest recreation resorts within the Soviet Union. Jūrmala illustrates the transformation that Latvia’s tourism sector is experiencing, where the main goal is to attract more western tourists and large-scale investments. The city is also a part of the Riga region due to its proximity to the capital, and takes part in the flow and mobility of tourists from the urban centre, as well as being part of a larger urban labour market in terms of work within the tourism sector.

The second purpose for conducting the case studies in the above-described regions is to analyse how women’s work and livelihood differ in more urban and rural-characterised regions. The assumption is that women’s possibilities and conditions in the labour market vary between different places, as do their means of work and livelihood within tourism as employees or entrepreneurs within the private and the public sector. One aim is also to see how the small-scale or the large-scale character of tourism affects women’s possibilities and conditions for livelihood, and how different forms of tourism reflect or challenge gender identities. In Jūrmala, women’s work and livelihood
with more large-scale hotels and other tourism establishments are in focus, while the case study in the Cēsis district includes both women as entrepreneurs and employees within rural tourism. Entrepreneurship has no long tradition in Latvia due to the Soviet regime, but today the Cēsis district has one of the highest number of registered entrepreneurs within rural tourism.

The survey
In both case studies, the collection of more quantitative material in terms of a survey questionnaire has served as a background and selection for the more qualitative interview study. Quantitative data is in this case considered as constituting an important background and context for the study, but is not regarded as sufficient for answering the main research questions of the thesis. Latvia, just as many other countries in both Western and Eastern parts of Europe, lacks national, regional and local statistics which cover the extent of employment within tourism. Employment within tourism covers a diverse field of occupations, ranging from different forms of transportation to restaurants and hotels. Thus, conducting a survey provides both an opportunity to get a general overview of employment within tourism, at the same time as it offers a way of getting in contact with respondents for a more qualitative study.

The aim of the survey was to provide an overview of employment and entrepreneurship within both spa/health and rural tourism, as well as issues relating to livelihood. The survey was targeted at both men and women working as employees and as entrepreneurs within tourism, in both the public and the private sector. Since the survey should cover work within both rural and spa/health tourism, the questionnaire had to be designed to cover more general questions relating to employment. The questionnaire consisted of 39 different questions and 26 different statements, divided into the following sections (1) Personal background (2) Employment within tourism (3) Additional work and income (4) Former employment and education (5) A background to the work within tourism. The questionnaire covered a range of survey data, including more classifying background variables (age, ethnicity, family), work-oriented questions (both paid work within tourism and household work) and also different statements relating to opinions about people’s work and reasons why they chose to work within tourism (see Appendix 3). The questionnaires were accompanied with an introductionary letter, in which information was given about the project and its aims, and Latvian/Swedish contact details. Those who returned their questionnaires with contact details
automatically participated in a lottery. The idea was to offer something in return for participating in the survey, and increase the response rate\textsuperscript{12}.

Since I am unable to speak the same language as my study participants, communication constituted a barrier in several phases of the research process. On the one hand, using a survey translated into Latvian/Russian provides a convenient method of reaching a larger number of people, and is also relatively easy to analyse depending on its design and extent. The questionnaires also included mainly “closed” questions with a given set of alternatives, due to the limited possibility of translating and interpreting the answers. On the other hand, designing, translating and analysing the questionnaire may also in itself provide difficulties and challenges. The translation of the questionnaire from English to Latvian and Russian was done closely together with native Latvian and Russian speakers, in order to avoid the potential risks of misunderstandings and misinterpretations. Still, a translation process is never all neutral and always includes some degree of interpretation, where the initial meaning of the word may go through some transformation. Cultural differences, for example concerning the Latvian educational system and income variables were highlighted and discussed, which resulted in some modifications of the survey during the translation process. In total, 723 questionnaires were distributed, including 222 in the Cēsis district and 501 in Jūrmala, which together generated 256 replies (see Table 2).

\textbf{Table 2: Overview of the survey study in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala.}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Cēsis district</th>
<th>Jūrmala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of distributed questionnaires</td>
<td>222</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of tourism facilities</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of replies</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response rate (%)</td>
<td>72*</td>
<td>33**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Percentage of the total number of addresses.  
** Percentage of the total number of questionnaires.

In both case study areas, it was difficult to identify and estimate the size and characteristics of the population (such as age, family conditions, employment

\textsuperscript{12} In the Cēsis district, two respondents received day-tickets to Livu Aquapark in Jūrmala, and in Jūrmala, one participant was offered a weekend stay in the Cēsis district. In the Cēsis region, the winners were visited personally during the field work, and in Jūrmala, the winner was contacted by the rural tourism association, \textit{Lauko Celotajs}, who was responsible for the practical arrangements of the weekend stay.
etc.) for the survey due to the lack of statistics and previous studies. Thus, the survey became more explorative and served as a way of gaining an overview of employment and entrepreneurship within tourism, while making it difficult to analyse the responses in relation to the original populations. The response frequencies in the two areas will be discussed separately below.

The Cēsis district

In the Cēsis district, questionnaires were sent out by mail to addresses acquired from the tourist information centre in Cēsis, which consisted of their registered rural accommodation and other tourism-related activities in the district. It should be mentioned that there exist several more addresses of accommodation and other tourism-related services not included on this list, but these have not been a part of this survey. The survey covered 97 different addresses in 21 different rural municipalities, including different forms of tourism accommodation (hotels, guesthouses, holiday homes, country homes, youth hostels, camping and tent sites, holiday centres), tourism activities and sightseeing points of interest, tourist information centres and suppliers of crafts, arts and agricultural products. Employment in rural tourism is difficult to estimate since it often comprises both official and unofficial types of work, especially within more family-based businesses. Fourteen different addresses received four questionnaires each, which were estimated to have a larger number of employees, for example, hotels and tourist information centres. The other 83 addresses (including smaller guesthouses and other accommodation places) received only two questionnaires, since they were estimated to include mainly family businesses or those self-employed.

All distributed questionnaires were in Latvian since the Cēsis district constitutes a fairly homogenous population, with around 80 percent ethnic Latvians. The questionnaires were distributed in the last week of June 2005, and the last date for returning the questionnaires was set to 1 August. In the beginning of August, replies from 34 addresses had been received, comprising 50 different questionnaires. Due to the low response frequency, the initial contact was followed by personal visits to some of the addresses in the Cēsis district. These visits were conducted in August with the help of an interpreter, while travelling around the districts and interviewing women employed within rural tourism. A total of 37 addresses were visited, which brought 39 new replies. Some of the addresses turned out to be quite peripheral locations, and

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13 A return envelope together with Latvian postage was enclosed, marked with a Latvian address. The questionnaires were later collected and sent to Sweden.
the absence of road signs made them sometimes impossible to find. In other cases, bad road conditions, which included everything from loose gravel roads with the risk of car damage to over-flooded forest tracks, made it impossible to reach some of the addresses. Still, the extra time and effort was worthwhile; partly due to a higher response rate, and partly since the visits gave an added value to the study by providing an opportunity to meet personally the people involved in rural tourism, and to answer their questions about the research project. The personal visits also gave some insight into the low response rate. Those who had not returned the questionnaire claimed that it was due to a low personal interest in the topic, that the questionnaire was just one of many other surveys, a lack of time, the questionnaire was too extensive and time consuming, or that they had just forgotten about it.

Jūrmala
In Jūrmala, being a more densely clustered environment, 501 questionnaires were distributed by personal visits to 20 different addresses in Majori, which can be described as both the historical and contemporary tourism centre of Jūrmala. Here, a majority of the commercial activities has taken place, and where a number of hotels, restaurants and shops have been located along the pedestrian street Jonas iela. The background to why this particular part of Jūrmala was chosen was also due to that Majori has experienced the most rapid transformation in terms of large newly renovated and reopened spa hotels, which have a substantial number of employees. The delimitation for the survey was once again geographical and based on official listings of different tourism services from the local tourism information centres. The addresses included different forms of accommodation (hotels, guest houses, etc), tourist information centres, and tourism sites.

It was again difficult to estimate the given target population for the survey. The hotels and other accommodation places had between 2 and 500 employees, and at the larger hotels the staff often worked different shifts. Initial contacts were made of each of the hotels, mainly with the managers or directors at the hotels, asking if they were willing to participate in the survey. The questionnaires were then distributed among the different sections of the hotel, ranging from the restaurant, health and spa, and reception. Between two and 223 questionnaires were distributed at the hotels and collected within 4 days, and at the larger hotels the replies therefore comprised those people working

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14 One hotel actively chose not to participate in the study and claimed that the answers required confidential information, for example, about the staff’s salaries.
during a particular shift. Questionnaires in both Latvian and Russian were distributed since around 50 percent of the population in Jūrmala speak Russian as their first language.

Replies were received from 16 out of 20 addresses, constituting 164 questionnaires. This represents a low response frequency of only around 33 percent, which may have several explanations. First of all, it turned out to be much more difficult to get access into the different tourism establishments than what had at first been planned. Compared to the survey in the Cēsis district where the fairly large geographical area and more physical attributes set the limits for how many questionnaires could be collected, Jūrmala provided more social and cultural barriers. The interest for participating in the survey turned out to be low; people showed a fairly sceptical attitude, often due to lack of time or interest. The survey was not regarded as ‘business’ and therefore not very rewarding for the hotel or the employees. I became well aware of my role as an ‘outsider’ in this situation, partly due to my limited possibility to ‘read’ culturally and foresee the situation, and partly due to the language barriers which sometimes could create misunderstandings, especially in the smaller hotels. I did not use an interpreter when distributing the questionnaires, which would, when looking back, have created a bit more legitimacy as a researcher.

Secondly, the hierarchical structure within the organisations also set limits for the distribution of the questionnaires. It was difficult to get in contact with the “right” people, and the managers sometimes did not seem interested in forwarding the questionnaire to people employed in lower positions. However, I would think that the response rate would have been much lower if I had chosen to distribute the questionnaires, for example, only via regular mail.

**Analyzing the results of the survey**

A more quantitative analysis of the survey material has been conducted by using the statistical computer program SPSS, in order to handle effectively the relatively large data from the questionnaires. The returned questionnaires were coded, and data variables were created and structured based on the different questions included in the survey. A number of statistical tables and figures were then generated in order to create an overview of the results of the survey. The survey was used in two main ways: firstly, the statistical material constituted an important background for the interview study in terms of sex, ethnicity, age and family structure among the respondents. The large over-representation of women in the Jūrmala case study made it difficult to compare the statistics.

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15 SPSS is an abbreviation for *Statistical Package for the Social Sciences*. 


based on sex. Moreover, some questions had been given too many alternatives for answers, which also made it difficult to generate more reliable data.

Secondly, the results of the survey were narrowed down and related to the main themes of the interview study: for instance, the distribution of employment and entrepreneurship, income levels, and the division of household-related work. The analysis of the survey material also focused on the motives for work within tourism, which included partly different statements relating to why the respondents had chosen to work within tourism, and partly more open-ended questions. In the latter case, the results were analysed in relation to the interview material, which together provided the basis for analysing different motives and strategies of livelihood. Analysing the results of the survey was also made in collaboration with a Latvian/Russian-speaker, who translated the open-ended questions of the survey as well as additional comments into English.

Implementation of the interview study

The character of the interviews in the case studies can be described as qualitative and semi-structured. Kvale (1997) described this form of interview as something in-between a structured and unstructured interview; “(...) an interview which aims at receiving descriptions of the interviewee’s life world, with the purpose of interpreting the described phenomena’s meaning” (Kvale 1997:13, Author’s translation from Swedish). All interviews are not automatically qualitative in their form and design, and Svensson and Starrin (1996) describe qualitative interviews as a way of “finding out, discover, understand, figure out the character or quality of a phenomenon” (Svensson & Starrin 1996:53). The aim is usually to create a conversation or discussion between the researcher and the informant by letting people themselves tell about their experiences and lives. Another advantage with qualitative interviews is that the questions can be adjusted during the interview, and thereby create better pre-requisites for a two-way conversation.

Reflective interviews and feminist research

Feminist research has emphasised the need for dissolving the traditional dichotomy between the researcher and the object of study, and instead tries to make visible the researcher’s role and subjective experiences in the production of knowledge (Widerberg 2003; WGSG 1997). As has been discussed above, this raises questions of existing power relations between researcher and informant, and how the researcher himself/herself cannot be treated as a ‘neutral’
and disembodied agent in the search for objective knowledge. Feminist research has put high demands on *reflexivity* in the research process, as a way for the researcher to create awareness and reflect over how one’s own experience and “cultural baggage” affect the interview situation (Widerberg 2003). As a way of achieving a more transparent and reflexive approach, a research diary was kept throughout the field work, in which reflections over methodological dilemmas were made, as well as impressions of each of the interviews.

Falcon Al-Hindi and Kawabata (2002) claim that the advantage of reflexivity is that differences between the researcher and the informant need not necessarily be regarded as negative and restraining. Instead, what is important is to acknowledge how different *identities* collaborate in the production of knowledge (Falcon Al-Hindi & Kawabata In: Moss 2002). Thus, the researcher is visible in his or her role as a researcher, and both the researcher and the informant can use different identities in the interview situation, as a way of positioning him/herself in relation to the world. Feminist research acknowledges how the research process is a practice which expresses power relations between the researcher and the informant, based on personal traits, such as sex, class and ethnicity. The identities which are uncovered during an interview may be more complex, contradictory and changeable than first predicted. Emerging differences and similarities can also be undermined by misunderstandings and misinterpretations, as a consequence of both parts trying to ‘read’ each other and position themselves (Pini 2003; Valentine In: Moss 2002). In other words, a certain degree of “performance” takes place in the research process, where different identities collaborate and affect different contexts. This can, in turn, create possibilities for establishing a ‘common ground’ for discussions and interviews (Pini 2003; Falcon Al-Hindi & Kawabata In: Moss 2002). In the interview study, I tried to reflect over my position as a researcher, and my role as a Swedish and ‘Western’ European, well-educated woman in the interview situation, which indirectly may comprise different forms of power relations. At the same time, I could also identify myself as a ‘tourist’ or ‘guest’ when visiting people’s homes and discussing tourism as both a societal phenomenon and economic activity, which in turn could constitute a ‘common ground’ for the interview. This made it easier to establish an initial contact as a foreign ‘non-Latvian speaker’, and create a more ‘open’ dialogue in my role as a ‘guest’ rather than as a ‘researcher’.
Gaining access and insight to people’s lives in this study has been possible with the help of an interpreter. In a majority of the interviews, three parties have been present, which can affect the research process and its results. In other words, it is not only not the relation between the researcher and the informant which calls for attention in how knowledge is produced, but also the interpreter’s own experience, knowledge and performance has to be taken into consideration. The interpreter becomes, on the one hand, a crucial link to the respondents, but constitutes, on the other hand, despite his/her excellent knowledge of the language, a filter of the received information. There is a lack of literature, also within feminist research, which discusses the effects and process of working with an interpreter. Using a fieldwork assistant or interpreter/translator in research is a phenomenon mainly used in anthropological and ethnographic research, where extensive fieldwork is a crucial way of gaining access to foreign cultures and countries.

The choice of an interpreter for the fieldwork is an important issue, for example, in terms of his/her communication and language skills, and interpreting experience. Despite these right qualifications, it is difficult to know how well the cooperation between the interpreter and the researcher will work. I chose a native Latvian-speaker with good language skills in Swedish, English and Russian for the interview study, who had lived and worked in Sweden for a few years. Swedish rather than English was used in the interview situation, which I would claim became an advantage, since it was easier for me in my native language to discuss and explain language differences and problems in the interpretation process. The presence of a male interpreter for the interviews with female interviewees can be discussed as having both advantages and disadvantages. Still, a male interpreter has not been experienced as negatively affecting the outcomes of the interview study since a majority of the interviews was characterised by outspokenness and ‘openness’ in a dialogue among all three parties. As a foreign female researcher, having a male interpreter seemed to create more legitimacy for the research, and my interpreter also took on the role and identity as a ‘local’. On the other hand, it is also difficult as a ‘non-Latvian/Russian-speaker’ to fully ‘read’ and interpret the interview situation and possible tensions between the interpreter and interviewee.

During the interviews, the aim was to gain close a translation as possible of what had been said rather than a brief summary, in order to raise further questions, avoid potential misunderstandings and place the information within a larger context. Translating more word-for-word has its delimitations, since
language does not only merely reflect a given set of words or symbols; language has a cultural context and meaning, which makes the interpretation process more complex. Some words or expressions cannot be translated word-for-word and this calls for careful attention, since the translations have to be analysed and discussed together with the interpreter. Therefore, using an interpreter also changes the structure of the interview, which all parties have to get used to. On the one hand, the aim was to create space for the informant to discuss the questions and themes openly and in a more narrative form, but on the other hand, translating and interpreting also required the interviewee to make pauses. This sometimes created a fragmentation of the interviews, where it was difficult to keep a flow of the conversation. At the same time, the need for longer pauses also created time for further reflections on what had been said, and for me as an interviewer to make notes.

Interviews with employees and entrepreneurs in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala
Qualitative interviews with employees and entrepreneurs in the two case study regions have been the main focus in my study concerning women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism. In total, 20 interviews were conducted with female employees in both Jūrmala and the Cēsis district, and 11 interviews with female entrepreneurs in the Cēsis district (see Table 3). Additionally, 12 interviews (six in each case region) were implemented with representatives from the local municipalities and different tourism organisations responsible for tourism development and marketing locally or regionally.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>The Cēsis district</th>
<th>Jūrmala</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviews female employees</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16 (+2)*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews female entrepreneurs</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews with municipalities and tourism organisations</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In Jūrmala, interviews with three female hotel managers were conducted. One of them had also been selected for the interview study of female employees within the tourism sector. Therefore, only two of the hotel managers are presented within parentheses.

The selection for the interviews in both Jūrmala and the Cēsis district was based on the returned questionnaires. In the Cēsis district, the interview study was conducted in August 2005, and in Majori, Jūrmala, it took place in April 2006.
In the Cēsis district, 50 questionnaires were received, comprising answers from 30 women, of which 21 had registered their interest for an interview. Of the 132 female respondents in the Jūrmala survey, 63 had stated that they would like to participate in the interview study. The choice of interview participants was aimed at seeking and highlighting differences, for example, according to age, family, whether they worked as employees/entrepreneurs, work assignments, ethnicity, and place of residence. In the end, 15 interviews were conducted in the Cēsis district, including both employees and entrepreneurs, and 16 interviews with female employees were made in Jūrmala. The aim was not to reach a certain number of interviews, but to attain a ‘saturation degree’, or a point at which the interviews had provided enough rich and varied content (see Kvale 1997; Ryen 2004). Originally, the intention had been to interview a few female entrepreneurs within tourism also in Majori, but this proved to be difficult due to the low number of respondents who stated that they were active entrepreneurs. Interviews were also conducted with three hotel managers in Majori, in which a majority of the survey respondents worked, with the purpose of gaining an insight into the recruitment process to the hotels, the work policies and conditions for employment.

All interviewees were contacted by phone in order to make arrangements for the interview, but in Jūrmala, it proved to be more difficult to find those willing to participate in the interview study. This was related to the employees working in shifts, which could create problems in scheduling a time for an interview as well as finding a place where the interview could be conducted. In some cases, the interview took place at the workplace, in other cases at a local café or restaurant. The latter two cases often represented rather loud and ‘stressful’ environments, and some of the female interviewees stated that they only had time for a shorter (1-1.5h) interview. Meeting at their workplace also provided the possibility of gaining insight into their working environment, and usually a more ‘private’ place for the interview could be arranged. Apart from their work hours, the interviewees’ attitudes towards participating in an interview study were also rather skeptical, and reflected a degree of caution. When looking back after implementing the study, this may have been related to the use of unofficial wages within the tourism sector, which was considered to be a rather sensitive issue. Some of the interviewees turned down the offer for an interview even though they had specified their wish to participate on the questionnaire, and two interviewees did not even show up for the meeting or cancelled at a later time. Others had left their jobs at the hotels and did not work within tourism, reflecting the high turnover of staff.
In the Cēsis district, the interviewees chose the location for the interview themselves, which often represented a place for both work and home, since a majority were working as entrepreneurs within rural tourism. Therefore, the interviews could take place indoors at the kitchen table, or outdoors on a veranda or in the garden. Compared to Jūrmala, this provided a much more ‘relaxed’ atmosphere, and the interviewees were in a majority of cases willing to dedicate a lot of time for the interviews. In two cases, the women’s husbands were present during the interview, who also had answered the questionnaire and were actively involved in the family-run business. It is difficult to analyse what effect this had on the interview, but in both cases, the women took an active role in the interview. The interviews were often followed or preceded by a guided tour of the surroundings where, for example, accommodation facilities and other dimensions of the tourism activities were shown. If possible, accommodation was also provided for at the different locations. This was a way of gaining more insight into the tourism business, and also a way of showing gratitude for the respondents’ participation in the study. However, this was not possible in all cases; sometimes the accommodation was fully booked, and some of the locations did not offer overnight possibilities.

The interviews included open-ended questions based on different themes relating to the questionnaires, with the aim of gaining a deeper insight and understanding to their answers. The themes included personal background (education, family, work experience), the rural tourism business (structure, visitors, activities), motives behind starting the tourism business, current work within tourism, additional work, leisure time, income and livelihood, future plans (see Appendix 1 and 2). The questions were adjusted depending on if the respondent was an employee or an entrepreneur. All interviews in both the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala were taped and lasted between one and four and a half hours. The longer interview sessions (especially in the Cēsis district) were an effect of the need for interpretation from Latvian to Swedish. The longer interviews were also related to the interviewees’ interest in the different subjects and how openly they wanted to share information and stories of their work within tourism. In general, the respondents tended to respond openly to the questions, and were willing to share information about their everyday and personal lives. A few of the interviewees even expressed how the interviews served a ‘therapeutic’ purpose, giving them the possibility of discussing their everyday lives and concerns. Some of the themes of the interviews proved to be more sensitive, especially those relating to income, which often included issues of undeclared wages or profits. Questions relating to citizenship and language
laws were also regarded as being ‘personal’ for some of the Russian-speaking respondents in Jūrmala.

**Interviews with state representatives and tourism organisations**

Apart from interviews conducted with women working within tourism in Jūrmala and the Cēsis district, the interview study also included different state representatives on the national, regional and local levels, as well as representatives from different tourism organisations. The interviews with different official representatives can be categorised as *informant interviews*, unlike the above-described interviews with female employees and entrepreneurs, which may be labeled as *respondent interviews*. In the latter case, the aim is to gain insight into the interviewees’ individual relationship toward a phenomenon in question, while informant interviews include acquiring knowledge about a given research question through the observations of people as ‘witnesses’ (Kvale 1997:197). Thus, the informants can be said to represent the ‘official’ image and agenda of the municipalities and tourism associations, which may also affect the outcomes of the interviews in a less ‘critical’ direction.

On the national state level, the interviews have included representatives from the Latvian Tourism Development Agency, the Ministry of Welfare, responsible for labour market and gender policy, the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governance, governing questions of regional development, and The Latvian National Centre for Traditional and Performing Arts, a state institution governed by the Ministry of Culture and responsible for the organization and implementation of the national song and dance festival16. The interviews have had an open-ended and qualitative character, and have been conducted in English. Some of the interviews have been supplementary to the text analysis, in order to provide an overview of questions relating to tourism development and marketing in Latvia in general, according to different state aims and policies, but also to discuss more specific issues of tourism, such as, regional development and more controversial questions concerning sex tourism. Other interviews with the Ministry of Welfare have included questions about aims and structures of the contemporary labour market and gender equality policies.

In the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala, interviews were conducted with representatives from the local municipalities and different tourism

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16 The organization and implementation of the Latvian song and dance festival is regulated by law in the *Song and Dance Celebration Law*, which was adopted by the parliament in 2005. Other laws include the assignments and roles of the *Council of the Song and Dance Celebration*, as well as the *The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts* for the implementation of the festival. See the homepage of the Ministry of Culture, www.km.gov.lv for more information.
organisations. The aim was to place women’s work within tourism in a wider economic and socio-cultural context, including issues relating to women’s and men’s possibilities in the labour market, issues relating to regional development and the development of tourism in the given area. In Jūrmala, interviews were implemented with different representatives from the city council, including three interviewees working within tourism-marketing and development, and two persons responsible for labour market issues. Additionally, one interview was also conducted with a consultant who had completed a study of the labour market in Jūrmala, commissioned by the Jūrmala city council.

In the Cēsis district, interviews were conducted with four representatives from three different rural municipalities, as well as two representatives from regional tourism associations based in the town of Cēsis. The Cēsis district is one of 26 administrative districts (rajons) in Latvia and is divided into 21 different rural municipalities (pagasti). In the rural municipalities, interviews were conducted with the chairmen of the municipality council (2 men and 1 woman), as well as a female representative from a tourist information centre. The selection of the three rural municipalities was based partly on an interview with a public tourism organisation in Cēsis, which has a coordinative role for tourism development and marketing in the whole district and could provide a background for the development of tourism in the different municipalities. Municipality selection was also based on the size of the population, geographical location of the municipalities and the representation of interviewees within the given areas.

The interviews had a similar structure and design in both the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala, and included questions about the structure of the labour market, including employment and unemployment, how different municipalities worked with tourism development, what problems and possibilities they faced in this process, what support was given to tourism and local entrepreneurs, and what role tourism was given on their agenda. The interviews were taped and lasted one to two hours, and in the Cēsis district, they were conducted in Latvian with the help of an interpreter. In Jūrmala, a majority of the interviews were held in English, a choice made by the interviewees themselves.

Analyzing the interview material
All interviews were transcribed and analysed in their Swedish versions. Selected quotations for the thesis were later translated from Swedish to English. Due to the rather extensive material, I chose to do the transcription of the interviews myself. On the one hand, this allowed me to go through the interviews in a
more detailed manner which also facilitated the analysis process. On the other hand, using an interpreter for this process may have secured the translations of the interviews more closely, but this option was unavailable due to time and budget constraints. Translating the quotations firstly from Russian/Latvian to Swedish in the interview situation and later into English has its delimitations, and may risk that parts of the original statements are lost, both in structure and cultural meanings. In my study, I have weighed these disadvantages against the wish to highlight and make the interviewees visible as narrative subjects when discussing women’s livelihood and strategies within tourism, rather than merely summarising the main results of the interview study. My aim has been to treat the interviewees as anonymously as possible when presenting the results of the case studies. Therefore, I have used assumed names, and sometimes replaced other personal specifications, such as age.

Analysing qualitative data is a process which does not merely start when all the material has been collected, but is a constantly on-going and interactive procedure throughout the project. Conducting interviews may generate new questions in need for analysis or new theoretical angles of approach, which illustrates the interrelation between analysis and empirical work (Grønmo, 2004; Ryen, 2004). The coding process of the interview material can be described as having a more interpretative and analytic approach, aimed at distinguishing different meanings and understandings of the text, rather than merely describing its contents (Grønmo 2004:246). As stated above, I have used an abductive approach, which in the coding process included both conducting an analysis generated from the empirical material itself in order to gain new perspectives, as well as applying the theoretical framework to the findings. When analysing the interview material, different central themes were extracted from the material, which in turn were explored in more in-depth by looking for additional sub-themes, revealing both contradictions and parallels in the interview statements. Exploring and identifying the themes in the interview material have been conducted both in relation to the main theoretical approaches of the thesis as well as being more empirically generated. In other words, the aim has not been to merely ‘confirm’ theoretical statements and previous research, but to find and reveal alternative interpretations and knowledge based on the empirical material. The three ‘geographies’ which are central to this thesis have slowly emerged in the analytic phases of the research process, both when making the text analysis and when analysing the interview material. In the latter case, the aim has been to illustrate the complexity and diversity of the geographies as well as the relations between them, by not merely treating them as three static
categorisations, but as a way of opening up for multiple interpretations of women’s everyday lives and livelihood within tourism. One way of highlighting the variety and density of the interview material has been to put focus on different paradoxes of women’s livelihood, and thereby revealing contradictions between their livelihood strategies and everyday practices. It should be stressed that the analysis of women’s livelihood practices and strategies not merely revealed paradoxes, but also showed examples of how strategies and practices agreed. However, I have chosen to highlight the paradoxes in my analysis in order to emphasise the complexity of women’s everyday lives and livelihood, which was revealed in the interview study.

Issues of validity and reliability, as discussed above, are often raised as central issues when analysing texts in general and interview material more specifically. Still, the quest for validity remains complex, since my aim has not been to reach and confirm ‘truths’ in the interview narratives, but to treat them as multiple, ‘situated’, subjective experiences and statements. Thus, it may be more useful to speak of credibility rather than validity, since it does not presuppose an objective reality, and acknowledges the researcher herself/himself as part of the production of knowledge (see Kvale 1997: Ryen 2004). Kvale (1997) claims that validity includes more than merely examining the ‘right’ methods for the study, but also for the researcher to control critically and examine his/her analysis in a continuous manner, in order to open up for multiple and alternative interpretations and further observations. Moreover, Kvale also emphasises the need for contextualising the validity through theory, which put focus on how the results can be supported and made valid through a theoretical context (Kvale 1997). I would suggest that the aims of credibility in my case studies are reflected in a reflexive approach, which critically examines my role as a researcher as described above, as well as the use of in-depth and multiple methods through an abductive approach. In terms of reliability, my aim has been to document my research as closely and transparently as possible, for example, through taping the interviews and keeping a research diary throughout the project, as well as presenting rich and detailed examples of the empirical material in the thesis.

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17 Credibility is a concept introduced by Lincoln and Guba (1985), together with transferability, dependability and confirmability, aimed at replacing the traditional categories of validity (internal and external), reliability and neutrality (see Ryen 2004).
Part II
Setting the scene

From the top: (1) Song and dance arena in Mezaparks, Riga (2) Nightclub in old town Riga (3) Group of soldiers ‘War liberators’, part of the Victory monument in Riga. Photos by the author.
Chapter three
Geographies of neo-nationalism

If you walk eastward from the medieval center of Vecrīga (the old town center of Riga) along Kāķu iela, you will reach the start of Brīvības bulvāris (Freedom Boulevard) and encounter one of the main tourism sites in Riga, Brīvības Piemineklis, the Freedom monument. The monument is 42 meters tall, with a base made of reddish and grey granite, mixed with white travertine, while the top of the monument consists of a statue in copper of a woman holding three gilded stars between the palms of her hands over her head. The female ‘statue of liberty’ is commonly referred to as ‘Mīlda’. The freedom monument was designed by the Latvian sculptor Kārlis Zāle, financed by public donations and completed in 1934, during Latvia’s first period of independence, and dedicated to those who lost their lives during the struggle for independence from Russia between 1918 and 1920. The monument replaced a statue of Peter the Great, which had symbolized the previous Russian tsar regime.

Today, Brīvības Piemineklis has become a well known tourism site, a place visited and photographed by foreign tourists, and is often pictured on postcards from Riga, and described and represented in guide books and web pages globally. However, the monument still remains a central public place for the inhabitants of Riga in their everyday life, at the same time as it represents an almost ‘sacred’ place of historical, national and symbolic significance. When I visited Riga for the first time, I was surprised by the number of people placing flowers at the foot of the monument. The monument is attended by the guard of Honour, flanked by watchmen, and the change of guards is an hourly performed routine. During the Soviet regime, the monument was more strictly
controlled and its supervision took other forms. Placing flowers was a controversial and banned political act, and public gatherings were prohibited. The monument was ascribed a different symbolic meaning, which would meet the communist ideology of the Soviet state rather than the quest for Latvian freedom. Plans to abolish the monument existed during the Soviet period, but were never enforced. Instead, other meanings were given to its symbolism; for example, the female statue was portrayed as Mother Russia rather than ‘the statue of freedom’, and the three stars were interpreted as representing the Soviet Baltic Republics, rather than the traditional Latvian regions Vidzeme, Kurzeme and Latgale. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) also adds that the story says that tourists during the Soviet period were told by the official guides that the woman on top of the monument was Valentina Tereshkova, the first female Soviet astronaut (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:186). Thus, the monument came to symbolise the great progress, development and superiority of the Soviet state and the communist system. The monument still served as a reminder of the past and of the former Latvian nation (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002). The monument became a place for resistance against the Soviet occupation which escalated during the 1980s when the freedom movement and ‘the singing revolution’ began.

The monument contains a complex set of symbolism, closely related to Latvian history, culture and mythology. The site is also used, both in its symbolic and more physical form, in the construction and reimagining of the Latvian nation, creating a sense of belonging and identification of its population and a sense of ‘Latvianness’. The process of constructing nationhood is also expressed within tourism development and marketing. Tourism in Latvia and in other post-socialist countries has served as a tool for reclaiming and communicating cultural values, which earlier were marginalized during the Soviet regime. Hall (2004) emphasizes that tourism marketing in post-socialist countries reflects a wish to highlight a new national identity after long periods of cultural, political and economic turbulence. Tourism may therefore serve as a platform for recreating and/or reinforcing a national identity. This often includes a rejection of the immediate past, making the Soviet period invisible which will be discussed in upcoming chapters, and instead highlighting traditions and culture with roots in the period before the Soviet occupation. Moreover, these elements are used in order to create a common image of Latvia as a tourism destination in order to attract both tourists and foreign investments (see Hall 2004).
The land that sings - Music and tourism

This chapter will discuss how tourism development and marketing contribute in the reimagination, construction and manifestation of the ‘new’ post-socialist Latvian nation (as part of the Latvian common space), as reflecting geographies of neo-nationalism. I have chosen to illustrate this process by focusing on how the cultural and natural heritage of the ‘nation’ is used for tourism purposes, mainly with examples of how Latvian folksongs and the tradition of national song and dance festivals are highlighted, which often are described as constituting central parts of the Latvian culture and representing the ‘heart and soul’ of the nation. The national importance of the cultural musical heritage embodied in the Latvian folksongs, Dainas, is also reflected in the current official Latvian tourism slogan, *The land that sings.*

The purpose of the present chapter is to analyse the relationship among tourism, place and music, in how the Latvian musical heritage is used within tourism marketing to highlight ‘local’, ‘genuine’ culture and history, in order to reimagine Latvia as a nation as well as create and communicate an image of Latvia as an international tourism destination. The reimagination of the Latvian common space will be analysed as including two parallel processes, firstly, how tourism marketing becomes a channel also to create an image of Latvia inwardly, in terms with an overall project of nationalism. In this case, identity and nation become two central and interrelated concepts. Tourism becomes a tool for establishing a newfound national and ‘ethnic’ identity, in this case in terms of a common musical heritage of the Latvian nation. This is not a neutral process, and I will discuss how this can be analysed as a gendered process, with a focus of how different identities of femininities are constructed in the manifestation of the nation state. Secondly, presenting and communicating the musical heritage raises the question of commodification of the musical and cultural heritage, and how tourism may serve as a tool for regional development. Connell and Gibson (2003) describe music both as a commercial commodity and a cultural expression. The mutual relationship between culture

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18 This chapter is based partly on the results of a text analysis study, including printed tourism brochures (LTDA 2004 Discover Latvia, LTDA 2007 *The land that sings*), and material published electronically at the LTDA website (www.latviatourism.lv), and by the Latvian Institute, including themes such as “Music in Latvia”, “Society”, “Culture”, “History”, and “Nature”, which also are available as printed fact sheets. The text analysis has also included information material about the song and dance festival, such as the *Multi-national candidature file* and *The phenomenon of the Latvian Song festival*, as well as information published on the official song festival homepage www.dziesmusvetki2003.lv (2003 version), and www.dziesmusvetki2008.lv (2008 version). Partly, the chapter is based on an interview with a female representative from The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts. For more details, see “Brochures and reports”, “Internet sources” and “Interviews” in the list of references.
and economy is illustrated partly in how music is dependent upon financial means for its existence and development. Partly, the economic dimensions have a social and cultural context, for example, in the use of symbols and trademarks, such as is evident in the tourism slogan *The land that sings.* Therefore, a central question is how the Latvian traditional musical heritage is commodified and commercialized, and how the relation between culture and economy is expressed and balanced⁰⁵.

**The relations between music and place**

The national significance of the Latvian musical heritage is manifested at the site of the Freedom monument. The staircase leading up to the monument is flanked by two travertine reliefs, on the left side the relief *Latvju tanta - dziedātāja* (The Song festival march), and to the right *Latvju strēlnieks* (Soldiers’ march). The terrace became an important place for both cultural and political marches during the 1980s, which included singing and resistance against the Soviet regime (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:61). Thus, Latvian music has had a political charge and significance and served as an element of solidarity during periods of foreign rule. *The singing revolution* became a way of making a peaceful resistance against the Soviet regime, both through traditional folk music and through the development of rock music which was highly contested and opposed by the regime (see Zvejnieks 2001).

Connell and Gibson (2003) emphasize how music highly participates in the construction of place, in how images of conceptions of places are created. They adopt a relational but also social constructive perspective in the interpretation of the concept of place and illustrate how places are constantly created by people themselves, and their conceptions of places. Moreover, the development of music interacts with physical, socio-cultural and economic place context, and the relation between music and place can be analysed as mutually interrelated, in how music shapes place and how place form the character of music. Places are not analysed as isolated units, but stand constantly in relation to other places, in the connection between the local and the global, for example, through different flows of capital, people or in this case in the development and spread of music. How different actors create and

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⁰⁵ This chapter is partly based on the publication Möller, Cecilia “Det sjungande folket. Musik och turism i Lettland” (The land that sings. Music and tourism in Latvia) In: Aronsson et al. (eds) (2007) *Kulturell Ekonomi. Skapandet av värden, platser och identiteter i upplevelsesamhället* (Cultural economy. The making of values, places and identities in the experience society) Poland: Studentlitteratur. See the introductory chapters of the publication for a more in-depth discussion of how culture and economy can be analysed as intertwined in today’s ‘experience economy’.
communicate different images of places bears also traces of power and negotiation processes, which often leads to that one actor's conception of a place becomes dominating (Connell & Gibson 2003).

Connell and Gibson illustrate further how the relationship between place and music may take both ‘fluid’ and ‘fixed’ forms. In a more ‘fluid’ form, music is characterized by its global flows, reach, and spread, creating partly a more standardized or homogenized music supply, and partly an arena for change and cultural hybridity. Music in a more ‘fixed’ or static sense may be an expression of local culture and identity, in a wish to ‘reclaim’ one’s roots and heritage and thus distinguish oneself to other groups within the society (Connell & Gibson 2003). The latter form, promoting a more ‘fixed’ view of the relationship between music and place is a common feature within contemporary Latvian tourism marketing. A recurring ingredient in the Latvian tourism brochures published during the last few years is the colorful portrayal of people dressed in folk costumes, compiled with texts portraying Latvia as a center for folk music and song festivals. The folk songs are described as an ancient tradition, but still as a vivid and natural part of the Latvian everyday life.

Latvians seem to be born singers and musicians. Almost everyone sings in a choir (LTDA 2004:28).

Latvians are highlighted in exotic words as committed to their traditional culture and customs, with a high awareness and respect for the historical and cultural heritage, compared to other parts of the European population.

Live out ancient traditions. Nobody celebrates Midsummer Night the way Latvians do. Many ancient traditions that have disappeared in Europe are alive and well in Latvia (LTDA 2004:23).

Here, the text refers to Jāņi, the Midsummer Night celebration, which is closely related to traditions of lighting bonfires and singing traditional Līgo folk songs.

**The creation of authenticity within Latvian folk music**

Folk music is an example of how authenticity is created in cooperation between tourism and music, in a wish to highlight a ‘genuinely’ and ‘locally’ rooted musical heritage, often illustrated by oral traditions with close parallels to a place’s history and culture. Connell and Gibson describe the relationship between music and concepts, such as, authenticity and tradition, as examples of music in its more ‘fixed’ and place-specific form, in how the distinctive and ‘unique’
character of place is brought into light. Still, authenticity in the sense of what is perceived as ‘genuine’ should in this context be interpreted as a process of social construction rather than a fixed objective reality described in scientific terms. In other words, it is mainly about how ‘authenticity’ is created, interpreted and defined by different actors from their specific interests and context (Connell & Gibson 2003).

The collection of folk songs, Dainas, is regarded as a common source for national pride and cultural abundance, which have survived the centuries of foreign powers and occupation (Female representative, The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005).

To the Latvian the dainas are more than a literary tradition. They are the very embodiment of his cultural heritage, left by forefathers whom history had denied other, more tangible forms of expression. These songs thus form the very core of the Latvian identity and singing becomes one of the identifying qualities of a Latvian (Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga, Journal of Baltic studies 1975. Quote from www.latinst.lv 2004-09-13).

The above quotation emphasizes the meaning and importance of folk music for Latvian culture and identity, expressed by the former Latvian president Vaira Vīķe-Freiberga. The uniqueness of this literal and musical heritage is further underlined by The Latvian Institute, describing it as having a thousand year history, and including 1.2 million texts and more than 30,000 melodies, which together form the base of the collection of folk songs. Dainas reflect both the historical Latvian everyday life, and the more traditional celebrations, but also contain mythological and astronomical elements, in a mix of both pre-Christian and Christian traditions. Still, it is important to emphasize that the folk song heritage by no means is unique solely for Latvia; the tradition is strong in all three Baltic countries, illustrating its common cultural origin, but has during history developed in different directions (www.latinst.lv 2004-09-13).

Folk music as a source for national awakening
The folk songs became an important tool in the national awakening during the middle of the 19th century when Latvia remained under the rule of Tsarist Russia, which eventually culminated with the first independence of Latvia in 1920. The aim of the national awakening was to distinguish the Latvian people and their cultural heritage from the ruling German and Russian elites. The manifestation of a national Latvian language became one of the main priorities in this movement, but also included reclaiming the Latvian cultural roots. As elsewhere in Europe, the nationalistic currents involved an ethnographic
movement, aimed at collecting and preserving a traditional heritage, which in Latvia was manifested in the collection of folk songs. Krišjānis Barons (1835-1923) became one of the leading characters, commonly referred to as ‘the father of the Dainas’, who devoted his life to the collection of Dainas, and his work resulted in a publication containing more than 200,000 folk songs. The folk songs were hence given a literary status, showing the significance and uniqueness of the Latvian language (Schwartz 2006).

It was also during the 19th century that the first song festivals were arranged, as a result of the increased number of choirs. The choirs became more formal meeting points for practicing folk songs, which also had parallels to the development of the educational system. The very first song festival in the Baltic countries took place in Estonia in 1869, and four years later was followed by a festival in Riga, with 1003 participating singers, a phenomenon which in 1998 has reached the number of 13,400 singers. Traditional dance has constituted a part of the song festival since 1948 (Multinational candidature file 2002; Lejiņa et al. 2002). The song festivals have been described as the Baltic state’s version of the Olympic Games and have as a rule been arranged every five years. The preparations and rehearsals before the national festival takes place all year round and have a cyclical design. The work for the festival can be illustrated by a pyramid, where the national song celebration constitutes the top and aim for the activities in local choir and song groups. There exist around 400 registered amateur choir groups in Latvia, and around 1000 children’s choirs. Additionally, folk dancing involves around 700 adult groups and 1300 dancing groups for children. The choir tradition is incorporated in the Latvian school system, each school has at least one choir, and there is also a selection of choirs administrated by the local municipalities. The choirs and dance groups rehearse before the national song and dance festival from a common repertoire and program, and qualify gradually for the festival. The grand act of the festival is the joint a-cappella performance by all choir groups, dressed in traditional folk costumes, in front of thousands of spectators (Female representative, The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005).

Music and culture in Latvia during the Soviet occupation
Latvia, together with Estonia and Lithuania, were incorporated into the Soviet Union by the end of the Second World War. The Soviet occupation involved a conscious ‘Sovietisation’ of the Latvian society by Soviet economic and administrative control, colonization of Russian speaking immigrants as additional labour force for the industrial development, and, by the domination of Soviet
culture and political ideologies (Strods In: Caune 2005). Many Latvians fled the country, as the second Soviet occupation began in 1944, and the remaining population was constantly put under surveillance, control and threats of deportation. The communist ideology permeated the society and left little space for Latvian influence and cultural expression. Russian culture and language were given superiority, while Latvian cultural life and its institutions were supervised or closed. The Latvian language was given a more secondary role in public life, and became the means for adjusting the communist propaganda to more national forms (Zvejnieks 2001; Strods In: Caune 2005).

Despite the regime shift, the song festivals continued to be arranged, but in a more modified and ‘Sovietised’ version. The Soviet regime forbade many Latvian pieces of music, composers and traditional folk songs, as well as Latvian poetry and art. Instead, contemporary Soviet music was brought into light, which also became evident in the development of the song festival. The program was revised, and the Latvian folk songs were given a much less significant role and were replaced by songs from other Soviet republics or works of Soviet composers. For the Soviet regime, the song festivals served as a political instrument, with the purpose of creating a Soviet state and fellowship. The songs were sung in honor of Lenin and the communist rule. Large arenas for the song festivals were also constructed, for example, one in Mežaparks in the outskirts of Riga, to manifest the magnitude of the festivals and the underlying political messages (Female representative, The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005). For the Latvian participants, the song festival continued to have another symbolic but ‘hidden’ significance, and the tradition of singing was perceived as a way of keeping and preserving the remains of the Latvian culture. The folk songs also became an important tool in the struggle and resistance against the Soviet regime during the 1980s, which culminated into ‘the singing revolution’ from 1987 and onwards, which involved mass demonstrations and choir concerts with the aim to manifest the claims for freedom. The more liberal climate during this period, paved the way for a peaceful but effective critique against the Soviet authorities, when music and the previously forbidden songs were used as a provocation and weapon against the occupation power (www.dziesmusvetki2003.lv 2004-12-16; female representative, The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005).
Folk music as a contemporary national manifestation

The collapse of the Soviet Union made it possible for Latvia’s aims of independence to be realized. The new slogan for the nation was formulated in the ‘Western’ spirit in the creation of a nation state, introduction of democracy and a gradual transition to a market economy (O’Connor 2003). The song festivals were considered as having a strong social, symbolic and cultural function in the manifestation of independence. The folk song tradition is also described as a way of increasing the awareness of the Latvian heritage and reclaiming a Latvian identity. 

(…) for Latvians song festivals are not just festivals for singing, not just choral music concerts with opportunities to show themselves and to view others. For Latvians the song festivals are a symbol of national unity and identity. They are national rituals that are awaited with love, prepared for with respect, executed with full commitment and performed with honour. In this way they are analogous to the ancient seasonal rituals that marked the mythical cycle of time (www.li.lv, 2005-01-04).

Folk music is in this context used in order to highlight a common history, which includes attempts to maintain a recreation of myth of bygone times and traditions. Connell and Gibson (2003) point out how music may contribute to creating, enhancing and challenging both collective and individual identities, often related to perceptions of a specific place. The emphasis on folk music is also an example of how a spirit of belonging and fellowship within the borders of the nation state is created. The Latvian president Valdis Zatlers formulated the importance of singing as part of the Latvian ‘soul’ during the Song and Dance celebration closing ceremony in 2008, by saying, 

(…) The Song Festival awakened Latvian national self-confidence. The Song and Dance Festival writes Latvia’s history. The Song and Dance Festival unites our nation for the future. 
(…) Each and every Latvian keeps three things in the heart: knowledge, courage and love. Latvians always aspired to be an educated nation. Knowledge includes the upbringing of children, the wisdom and traditions of the nation. It includes the ability to create one’s own future. 
Courage means a strong voice against absurdity or injustice. Courage means believing in one’s ability to change things for better, to fight, to withstand and to win. With knowledge and courage we are able to love. To love ourselves and the world around us. To love our Latvia. The song both hides and expresses all these qualities. There is a love in the songs since we are so united tonight. The song is courage for each and every singer to open the soul to the world from this stage. The song is force (www.dziesmusverki2008.lv, 2008-08-24).
Here, the emphasis is on how the tradition of singing constitutes an uniting element for Latvians, and how it contributes to the process of making Latvia into one strong nation, which also requires dedication and active participation of the Latvian population through the motto “knowledge, courage and love”. As discussed earlier, folk music as a national manifestation, was already evident during the first period of Latvian independence, which in a post-socialist context had been ‘reawakened’ in the establishment of the ‘new’ Latvian nation state. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) claims that ideologies of nationalism reflect a wish to establish a sense of *temporal normality*. Here, the focus is on Latvia’s wish to acquire ‘a place in time’, by looking back in history to the first period of independence, as symbolising a period of normality which came to end at the time of the Soviet occupation. Thus, this narrative is also concerned with a break with the immediate Soviet past, reflecting a wish to reclaim more traditional values from the past in order to develop Latvia as a nation from *within* rather than with the assistance of outside influences (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).

**Reimagining the ‘ethnic’ nation**

The aim of re-establishing a Latvian nation state communicated through activities such as the national song and dance festival, as well as tourism promotion, raises the question of how the idea of the nation state and its character should be defined and analysed. Anthony Smith (1999) identifies four different approaches to how nations and nationalism have been interpreted in a more historical and academic context; the primordialist, perennialist, modernist and ethno-symbolic approaches. The first, primordialist approach regards nations as ‘elements of nature’, and as having more ‘organic’ forms, and thus constantly being present throughout history as a way of organising mankind (Smith 1999:4). The perennialist approach bears similarities to these ideas, but rejects the emphasis on nations as part of nature, and stresses the formation and development of nations through time in a historical and political perspective. Smith emphasises that the modernist approach has come to represent the dominating view of nations and nationalism, which describes them as “a product of the processes of modernisation” (Smith 1999:6), starting with the events of the French revolution. Thus, this objects to the idea that nations have pre-modern cultural roots, and instead regards them as both result and the basis for industrialisation, capitalism, and the idea of nationalism as serving more rational and political aims.

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20 Smith (1999) underlines the diversity of the primordialist, perennialist and modernist paradigms and identifies, for example, three different versions of primordialism and two approaches to perennialism, which I will not go into detail with here. See Smith 1999:4f for a more detailed discussion.
Smith is critical towards the modernist approach as failing to take into account the pre-modern roots of nations and nationalism, as well as their cultural dimensions and functions. Thus, he advocates ‘continuity’ with the past through the ethno-symbolic approach, in how previous cultural ‘ethnic’ heritages are rediscovered and used as part of the nationalist project.

(...) what gives nationalism its power are the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritages and the ways in which a popular living past has been, and can be, rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias (Smith 1999:9, emphasis in original).

The idea of the ‘reborn’ and ‘normalized’ Latvian nation state has close parallels to more ‘primordialist’ and ‘ethno-symbolic’ approaches to nationalism, which Budryte (2005) claims have guided many research scholars studying nationalism in the Baltic States since the 1980s. Smith (1999) recognises nations as being formed on an ‘ethnic basis’, having a ‘core’ or ‘navel’ (termed ‘ethnie’), that is, certain uniting cultural values, and ‘a feeling of kinship’ shared by the ethnic community (Smith 1999). In the case of Latvia, its traditional and ethnic traditions, which may involve both social and material dimensions, are considered to have a common natural ‘essence’, going back much longer than merely the period of ‘nationalistic awakening’ during the 19th century. Thus, the roots of contemporary nationalism are to be found in historical and pre-modern mythology and culture. Moreover, the cultural nation is believed to have an ‘eternal’ continuation, present even in the period of foreign powers and rule, until it was allowed to rise again during the 1980s (Budryte 2005).

I would claim in line with arguments put forward by Budryte (2005) and Stukuls-Eglitis (2002), that there is a need for a more critical social-constructivist and post-modern approach for the analysis of Latvian nationalist currents evolving since independence (see Budryte 2005; Stukuls-Eglitis 2002). This approach denies the existence of a ‘core’ or ‘essence’ of the nation or people and focuses on the political and ideological expressions and mobilizations made ‘in the name’ of nationalism. This does not mean that I support the idea of the nation as a merely ‘modernist’ project, without historic roots in ‘ethnic’ culture. However, it is important to raise the question of who defines the historical ‘essence’ of the nation, in order to avoid that the nation as such is perceived as something culturally ‘pure’ or ‘deterministic’. Nationalism may take different

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21 Smith defines an ‘ethnie’ as; “a named human population with myths of common ancestry, shared historical memories and one or more common elements of culture, including an association with a homeland, and some degree of solidarity, at least among the élites” (Smith 1999:13).
and diverse forms and may also serve interests of other groups apart from the dominating ‘ethnic community’. Maybe the most cited example of this approach is Benedict Anderson’s (1983) concept of the community and nation as ‘imagined’ and socially constructed, to create a sense of belonging within the borders of the nation state. By acknowledging nationalism as a socially-constructive process, describing and defining the nation is regarded as a constantly ongoing process, which involves a negotiation among different actors. Moreover, this process entails power, and evolves around who are given the right and the tools to provide an ‘image’ for the nation (see Anderson 1983)22. Additionally, the approach also emphasizes the economical, social and historical context in which nationalism arises. With references to Graham (2000), Young and Light (2001) highlight that nationalism includes the redefinition and renegotiation of identities.

(...) nations and nationalisms are constructed within discourses, discourses of belonging constructed around place remain important, and these discourses frequently rely on particular constructions of the past, of history, culture and identity (Young & Light 2001:943).

**Gendering the nation**

Returning to the site of the Freedom monument as a marker and symbol of the values of Latvian culture and traditions, the statue also bears clear genderised symbolism, in how the nation and its people are imagined. The reliefs and sculptures of the monument are arranged into different groups and sections, containing both female and male figures, but represented as holding different roles and functions within the traditional Latvian community. Men are portrayed as the protectors of the nation, as soldiers in battles, evident in the group ‘Guards of Fatherland’, or as ancient folklore heroes, as in *Lāčplēsis*, the national epic of the Bearslayer (see Stukuls’Eglitis 2002). Apart from being a symbol for freedom,  

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22 See also Smith’s (1999) critique of Andersen’s description of nationalism as a ‘modern cultural artifact’ (Smith 1999:8).
embodied at the top of the bronze statue, the statue ‘Milda’ is accompanied by two other female figures. Firstly ‘Mother Latvia’, the true embodiment of the Latvian nation, represented by a woman holding a shield and a sword to the ground in front of her, flanked by a son and a daughter in the background. The statue group is placed just above the inscription of the monument Tēvzemei un Brīvībai (For Fatherland and Freedom), facing the same direction as the above located ‘statue of liberty’. Secondly, the section of sculptures in reddish granite below include the ‘family’, which portray a standing woman figure flanked by her two kneeling sons, emphasising her child-bearing role as the symbol for life, and her mission to raise the future heroes and protectors of the nation (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).

Research of the genderised nation state is extensive and well documented, but with few empirical examples from Central and Eastern Europe, including the Baltic countries (see Stukuls-Eglitis 2002). Within feminist geography, research has contributed to challenging the construction of the nation state as ‘gender neutral’, as described by Anderson (1983) and other researchers. As McDowell points out,

(…) the nation-state itself is often rendered as gendered, embodying images of masculinity or femininity in its representations and symbols (…) gendered language, imagery and artifacts are drawn on to construct a particular vision of nationalism and national identity (McDowell 1999:194).

Sharp (1996) argues that the invention of the nation involves a process of constructing and imagining its citizens, who become gendered subjects (Sharp In: Duncan 1996). Yuval-Davis (1997) also objects to the tendency to treat gender and nation as two different categories and emphasizes that they are mutually interrelated and constructed, consisting of “Nationed Genders and Gendered Nations” (Yuval-Davis 1997:20). Sharp concludes that “Women are not equal to the nation but symbolic of it” (Sharp In: Duncan 1996:99). Women tend to be invisible in the establishment and manifestation of the nation state in a more ‘public’ sense, and are mainly given the roles as reproducers of the nation, in terms of their biological functions, closely associated to nature and fertility, due to their role as mothers, and family caretakers. Thus, the focus is on women’s roles and significance in the private sphere (McDowell 1999). Women are not ‘soldiers of the nation’, but belong rather to the group in need of protection, often grouped together as ‘womenandchildren’, symbolizing the family (Yuval-Davis 1997:45). Consequently, women are portrayed both as ‘the Same’ and as ‘the Other’, giving women complex but also contradictory roles. Women may,
on the one hand be regarded as the very base of national culture and traditions, but may also on the other hand be viewed as ‘deviant’ from the imagined (masculine) community, if they somehow break against cultural codes and norms, or too actively engage in the ‘public’ space (Yuval-Davis 1997). Below I will highlight the genderised Latvian nation state based on three interrelated dimensions of the genderised nation state as presented by Yuval-Davis (1997): (1) Volknation (2) Kulturnation (3) Staatnation. This division does not represent a ‘fixed’ set of categories for analysing the nation state from a gender perspective. My intention is that it will serve as a way of problematising the nation as such from different perspectives, by focusing on its diverse and multiple genderised political and socio-cultural characters.

The ‘Volknation’

The first concept ‘Volknation’ raises the question of the national population’s origin, and involves the perception and construction of a ‘nation’ as sharing a common background and history, and thereby sharing the same blood and forefathers. In this case, the continuous reproduction of the nation is in focus, expressed in what Yuval-Davis terms the discourse of ‘People as power’. Here, women are given the roles as child-bearers, by reclaiming more traditional norms and values of the family. As reproducers of the ‘Volknation’, women become parts of the nation state through the debates of their bodies, of birth rates and laws regulating abortion. Thus, in some sense, the private sphere of reproduction becomes a public concern, to give birth to more children for the sake of the nation’s survival. This has become a pressing issue in many post-socialist countries, including Latvia, where low fertility rates are considered to generate a demographic ‘crisis’, a trend which is used as an argument to reclaim more traditional and conservative gender roles. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) emphasizes that the ‘survival’ and further existence of the Latvian nation state and its ‘ethnic’ population is considered as being under threat, partly due to the declining fertility rates and partly due to deportations and an increase of Russian speaking immigrants during the Soviet regime. Moreover, contemporary migration abroad for work within the European Union further contributes to a declining ‘ethnic’ Latvian population (see chapter six for a more in-depth discussion of the reemergence of more traditional gender ideals).

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23 The concepts are derived according to Yuval-Davis from the division between nation-states (German Kulturnation) and state-nations (German Staatnation), discussed by for example Anthony Smith (1971, 1986), Neuberger (1986) (see Yuval-Davis 1997:20).
I would argue that the ideas and construction of the ‘Volknation’ in a Latvian context also can be analysed in relation to the importance of nature and ‘homeland’, as two central ingredients in the formation and imagination of the Latvian nation state, both in a historical and contemporary context. The Latvian population is not merely believed to have a common background and history, but also to be rooted in a particular (rural) Latvian landscape, which also becomes a common definer of the nation. Schwartz (2006) emphasizes how the relations between the Latvian population and its territory and landscapes become crucial through the establishment of the idea of the ‘homeland’:

Homelands are constructed by infusing physical terrain with national meaning, transforming landscape into “ethnoscape”. Through a wide range of practices – school curricula, the arts, heritage tourism, public spectacles – historic sites and monuments are naturalized and natural features historicized by national entrepreneurs seeking to inculcate a profound identification with an ancestral homeland (Schwartz 2006:3).

Schwartz defines ‘ethnoscape’ with reference to Smith (1999) as “a physical landscape invested with ethnic meanings” (Schwartz 2006:3). Schwartz identifies the ideology of ‘homeland’ as containing inward looking elements, based on what she terms ‘an agrarian nationalist discourse’, celebrating the agricultural heritage with a closeness to nature as the main distinguishing feature for the Latvian identity. The creation of an agrarian society was realized during the first independence, perceived as ‘the golden age’, which after independence in the 1990s has resurfaced as an ideal in the establishment of the ‘new’ nation state. The ideas of ‘Homeland’ can be traced back to the concept Heimat, which was introduced by German geographers during the end of the 19th century, as part of a conservative movement spreading through Europe and the Russian empire, as a reaction against the forces of industrialization (Schwartz 2006).

Among its diverse philosophical underpinnings were environmental determinism and its counterpart, völkisch nationalism: the belief that nature shapes the character of the nation – das Volk – as much as people shape nature (Schwartz 2006:33).

Heimat represented the intersection of both the natural and cultural landscape, which called for the preservation of nature as well as traditional culture and customs. Homeland studies were introduced and offered at the universities in the Baltic countries, and focused on a local and regional geography, with the undertone to get to know the traits and origins of the native country. The aim was to reawaken the ancient Latvian traditions and customs, as well as the
closeness to nature, and the folk songs became important tools for discovering and exploring the ‘true’ sources of ‘Latvianness’.

When discussing ‘authenticity’ of the Latvian folk song tradition, contemporary tourism marketing tends to portray Latvians as a people living close to their cultural heritage, but also to nature. The *Dainas* bear close associations to a pre-modern agricultural Latvian society, with roots in the countryside and rural landscapes. The folk songs reflect a Latvian mythology, in which the interaction between Latvians and nature plays a central role. The German geographer J. G. Kohl described in 1841 the heritage of the *Dainas* as the following,

Today it would be truly difficult to find another nation in Europe that so rightfully deserves to be called the nation of poets; it would be equally difficult to find another country that deserves to be called the land of poetry as much as the homeland of the Latvians… Every Latvian is a born poet, they all compose verses and songs, and they can all sing these songs (www.li.lv 2008-01-21).

The quotation clearly illustrates how the folk songs are considered to be not only connected to the Latvians themselves as a people with a common history and common blood, but also dependent on the Latvian soil and landscapes which are believed to have nurtured the traditions of poetry and folk songs.

*The genderised ‘homeland’*

The celebration of nature as an essence of the Latvian nation state can also be analysed as having genderised dimensions. Firstly, as stated in the beginning of the section, women tend to be defined in their ‘natural’ roles as child-bearers, responsible for the biological continuation of the ethnic Latvian nation and its future. Thus, not realizing their ‘natural’ duties might result in a demographic crisis, and undermine the aims of welfare and economic progress. Secondly, nature is often given feminine attributes as in relation to more masculine definitions of culture. Rose (1993) emphasizes how nature has been associated with mysterious and uncontrollable forces and treated as separate from humans in a more ‘enlightened’ cultural context. Dualisms associated with the separation of the masculine and feminine have become evident in a historical context, in which the feminine has been represented by the passive, emotional and irrational (Nature) in contrast to the active, calculating and rational male (Culture). The feminine characteristics have been applied to both a bodily and mental framework, in how women have been suited for work and activities different from men’s, but also have had a symbolism related to gendered perceptions of
nature in a more physical sense. Rose points out that nature in both a historical and scientific context has become the object for the male gaze and aims of conquest, for example, through geographical expeditions searching for ‘virgin territory’ (Rose 1993, see also Lewander In: Schough 2002).

I would suggest that the conceptions of femininity discussed by Rose can be applied to a Latvian context, in terms of how nature serves as a base for the definition of the borders and the contents of the nation state. Here, in the traditional conception of nature, humans, culture and nature are perceived as interrelated rather than separated, with parallels to the Latvian folklore and mythology. Nature is considered to include more ‘mysterious’ elements, embodied in tales, songs, folklore and pagan symbolism, as part of the Latvian culture. The feminine attributes of nature become evident in the potential threat to its existence, either as a demographic crisis, or as during the Soviet regime, the threat of ruining the essence of the ‘homeland’. Schwartz (2006) underlines that the Soviet occupation in some ways was perceived as a way of colonizing not only the former independent state of Latvia, but also its nature and ‘ethnoscape’. This was evident in the process of nationalization of land and property, collectivization of agriculture and a change of the ‘traditional’ Latvian landscape, including the building of Kolkhozes and destruction of traditional Latvian farmsteads. This process was implemented in the name of industrialization and modernization, connected to the ideologies of the communist ideology which viewed nature more as a source of raw material and expansion (Schwartz 2006).

Schwartz does not apply a gender perspective to the analysis of the aims and effect of the colonization of the ‘homeland’, but I would claim that the Soviet occupation bore clear masculine symbolism in contrast to the feminine conquered rural landscapes as the very core of ‘Latvianness’. The Soviet power represented in some sense the ‘modern’ rational society, expressed through industrialization and urbanization, with clear masculine characteristics of domination and occupation. However, the destruction of the countryside triggered large protests among the Latvian population, for example, in what was termed the ‘Great tree liberation movement’, which mainly focused on the rescue and protection of large trees from destruction. Caring for trees was considered as an important part of the Latvian mythology, and trees such as oaks and lindens had a symbolic and ‘sacred’ meaning. The oak tree has traditionally had a masculine connotation within Latvian mythology, while linden trees are considered to bear a feminine symbolism.
Thus, the process was described as ‘the occupation of beauty’, which reveals clear gendered representations of nature and nation state as feminine, fragile and aesthetic on the one hand, threatened by external forces, but also as strong, masculine and protective on the other, symbolized by how the great trees should serve as ‘soldiers’ to defend the remaining nature and landscape.

**The ‘Kulturnation’**

The second concept, ‘**Kulturnation**’, included in Yuval-Davis’ analysis of the gendered nation state is defined as follows;

(...) the cultural dimension in which the symbolic heritage provided by language and/or religion and/or other customs and traditions is constructed as the ‘essence’ of the nation (Yuval-Davis 1997:21).

In this case, culture is interpreted as constituting more ‘traditional’ elements, in terms of customs such as folklore and other forms of heritage which are considered to be uniting a specific nation and people. Thus, the meaning and definition of culture is different from what has been discussed above, in the dualism between nature and culture, which relies on more ‘modern’ definitions of culture, emphasizing societal progress, development and enlightenment, for example, in terms of science. The ‘Kulturnation’ on the other hand, is perceived as being based on cultural practices and traditions in everyday life, and its borders may be symbolical rather than strictly political. People may manifest and participate in the ‘Kulturnation’ for example in voluntary organizations, church activities, etc., arranging festivals and other activities (Hurd In: Asztalos Morell et al. 2005). The ‘Kulturnation’ highlights women symbols and guardians of a common and ‘authentic’ national culture. Yuval-Davis claims, with reference to Armstrong (1982), that women become “symbolic border guards” of the nation and collectivity (Yuval-Davis 1997:66). In this way, women may both symbolize and embody the boundaries of the collectivity, involving norms and behaviour of what is considered as ‘normal’ and ‘deviant’ in terms of cultural customs, clothing and looks (Yuval-Davis 1997:45).
Chapter three - Geographies of neo-nationalism

The construction of the Latvian nation bears close parallels to the ‘Kulturnation’, especially in the emphasis of the Dainas as the ‘soul’ of Latvianess. As has been mentioned earlier, the folk songs were very much a voice in the everyday life of the Latvian farmer. The songs were sung throughout the course of life, for example, at weddings and funerals, festivities, but also portraying the ‘ordinary’ life within the family and the private sphere, which traditionally has been a female-coded sphere.

The singers and connoisseurs of Latvian folk songs were mostly women, and the world depicted by the folk songs is largely a woman’s world. Latvians also have war songs, but they are not eulogies of bravery and do not contain battlefield depictions or bloody spectacles (www.li.lv, 2008-01-21).

It is also evident that the tradition of singing and preserving the heritage of the Dainas has remained a ‘women’s domain’, also within a more contemporary context. While men have historically been regarded as the main actors for protecting and acknowledging the national heritage of the folk songs and thereby making them into a ‘public’ concern, it is women who have continued to practice their content in a more ‘hidden’ and private context;

In several regions of Latvia one can still encounter singers, mostly women, who have orally inherited this tradition. Often they sing in folklore ensembles side by side with others who have taken an interest in folk songs as a result of the folklore movement (www.li.lv 2008-01-21).

The organizers of the national Song and Dance festival state that the event includes a majority of Latvian female choirs, and that the problem of generating more male choirs is especially evident in the schools, where it is difficult to form boy’s choirs, and thereby raise men’s interest for choir and folk songs. Another explanation for women’s overrepresentation is described as follows by a female representative from the The Latvian National Centre for Traditional and Performing Arts.

One reason is the economic situation for many families. Men must work more and women take care of the family and have more time for singing and dancing (Female representative The Latvian National Centre for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005).

Here, the public-private distinction is made evident; cultural manifestations such as folk songs and choir practices are still associated with the private home and family environment. Women are responsible for raising the children to be-
come ‘cultural’ citizens, and to pass on and preserve the cultural heritage for future generations through day to day practices (Yuval-Davis 1997). On the one hand, women tend to take part in much of the ‘invisible’ work for cultural preservation through child care and participation in choir and dance practices on a regular basis. On the other hand, the role of women in this process can also be analysed as manifested and celebrated in a more public context through the organization of song and dance festivals both nationally every fifth year and in smaller locally arranged performances and competitions. In the latter case, women become visible actors on different public stages by performing more traditional ideals of nationalism and femininity, expressed through songs and dance, as well as in a more material sense by dressing up in women’s traditional dresses, and placing garlands of flowers in their hair.

The Staatenation

The third dimension of Yuval-Davis’ analysis of the genderised nation is the Staatenation. The previous discussion has largely suggested that the formation of the Kulturrnation is a strongly female-coded project, with an emphasis on the nation in a more symbolic sense. Still, in the case of the Staatenation, the focus is mainly on the nation state, and its functions from a more political sense, which has been a male-coded project, for example, in terms of leadership. Here, questions of citizenship are being raised, borders are being drawn, defended and manifested. Moreover, the establishment of the nation state also concerns men and women’s participation in the public sphere, both politically and as workers (Wilford In: Miller 1998). Hurd (2005) claims that men have traditionally held a prominent position within the development of the Staatenation, in their roles as politicians, economic supporters and protectors of both family and nationhood. Women have, on the other hand, by entering the public sphere, been perceived as a threat to men’s rights and obligations and to the ‘true’ mission and roles of women (Hurd In: Asztalos Morell et al. 2005). The strife towards establishing a Staatenation has been evident in Latvia since the period of National awakening. Hanovs (2002) emphasizes that the Latvian nationalist movement during the 19th Century was an urban middle class phenomenon, mainly dominated by men, as in other European countries. In accordance with the ideals of the Enlightenment, men represented ‘culture’ and thereby Reason, while women were considered more close to nature, and therefore not having the same functions as men within society. However, Hanovs argues that women were not ‘victims’ of the nationalist movement, but middle class women also actively engaged in the ‘women’s question’ in the
Chapter three - Geographies of neo-nationalism

public debates. Even though women’s contribution to the nationalist movement was considered as assigned to the domestic arena, the private sphere became a site for developing awareness of Latvian culture and tradition, and an arena for resistance against the dominance of the German elite in the public sphere. Within the private realm, women were portrayed as ‘teachers’, guiding the way in which children should be raised in a ‘Latvian’ manner. This became also an argument from the standpoint of middle class women to have the right and access to higher education, in order to fulfill their mission (Hanovs In: Goloubeva & Hanovs 2002).

Hurd (2005) emphasizes that the ‘woman-as-nation’ reveals both passive and active roles for women (Hurd In: Asztalos Morell et al. 2005:45). On the one hand, women serve as the symbol for the nation, and as a source for inspiration for men in their work and duty towards the nation (military and day to day work). In this case, women are given a passive role in the nation building project, as an ‘icon’ or even as an ‘object’ of the nation. On the other hand, women are given active roles and assignments, while caring for the private realm and the family and children, and thereby safeguarding the national traditions and language. Hurd identifies potential tension between the aims of the Kulturnation and the Staatnation. In short, women should not be too active or ‘take over’ too much of men’s obligations and assignments in the public sphere, which might create conflicts (Hurd In: Asztalos Morell et al. 2005).

If women do not take care, in short, the publicly active angel of the struggling Kulturnation risks conversion into the Staatnation’s whore, the emasculating witch, the woman whose public presence is a fundamental threat to the national male community (Hurd In: Asztalos Morell et al. 2005:64).

Thus, women might become a convenient group to blame in the potential failure of the Staatnation or Volksnation. This symbolism and ‘backlash’ for women is harsh, but has parallels to the development of the communist and post-communist period. The calls for a more ‘passive’ woman-as-nation are often heard once the Staatnation is in place, and the political aims set. This was evident for example during the Soviet regime when the official agenda proclaimed equality between the sexes and high employment rates, but the public presence of women was also criticized, for being conflicting to their ‘purely’ womanly mission which also threatened the reproduction of the society, and eventually paved the way for more conservative approaches during the 1980s. The upcoming chapter six will discuss the genderised public/private relations in more
detail, with a focus on gender, livelihood and work in both a communist and a post-communist context.

**From ‘local’ to ‘global’ heritage**
The restoration of nationalistic ideals and values evident in the post-socialist Latvian society can in some respect be analysed as a process of ‘re-territorialisation’. Young and Light (2001) claim that the attempts to establish and construct identities based on the idea of the nation state have continued to have a significance alongside the ‘European project’ of borderlessness. Massey (2005) identifies the continuous superior position of the nation state as a “geography of border discipline” (2005:86), which divides the world into imagined ‘fixed’ and ‘enclosed’ units, in need of protection. Massey criticizes the over-emphasis of the boundaries of the nation state, which identifies the ‘local’ or the ‘home’, with reference to culture and place as superior to a more ‘global’ relational context. Here, the ‘local’ is sometimes perceived as becoming the ‘victim’ of globalization and external influences, rather than actively constituting and reproducing the global (Massey 2005). I will here argue that the latter tendency becomes evident in the discussion of the future development of the Latvian cultural heritage, as part of the ‘Homeland’, which faces new challenges in the post-socialist period. Tourism is here perceived as having an ambivalent and conflicting role. On the one hand, tourism might serve as a tool for protecting the national cultural heritage and the Dainas, while on the other hand, tourism is perceived as a threat in terms of the possible exploitation and commercialization of its core elements.

**Commodifying culture**
A range of researchers have argued how different forms of cultural heritage have become increasingly commodified and commercialized in a contemporary context, in how cultural sites and activities are experienced and consumed through the development of tourism (see Braunerhielm 2006; Urry 1990; Aronsson et al. eds. 2007; Meethan 2001). Consumption has become an integrated part of the contemporary society and culture. Different authors also underline that this process involves how culture and economy have become gradually more interwoven, in how culture and economy interact within consumption, production and processes of identity-making, in collaboration between the local and global (Aronsson et al. eds. 2007; Du Gay 1997; Connell & Gibson 2003). Local cultural heritage is in general perceived as a source of regional development and economic growth in order to attract tourists as well
as inhabitants to different places and destinations. Thus, cultural heritage as part of place marketing has become crucial in order to create an image for the destination which can be used for competing for tourists in an international context (Braunerhielm 2006; Morgan & Pritchard 1998). Cities and regions have started to transform from having their roots in traditional economic sectors, such as industry or agriculture, to adopting strategies oriented towards the development of tourism in general and cultural tourism more specifically. Braunerhielm (2006) underlines the importance of an actor approach in the analysis of how cultural heritage is commodified, and emphasizes how the definition of culture in general and the experience of cultural heritage more specifically vary depending on whose perspective is being acknowledged. Moreover, the development of tourism and the commercialization of the cultural heritage may also be controversial. How the cultural heritage should be used and commodified is a complex issue, and in this case, the opinions of the local population, tourists, public actors and the private sector might take different expressions (see Braunerhielm 2006).

The development of cultural tourism in all three Baltic States has been prominent during the last few years, and has for example been conducted in cooperation with international organizations such as UNESCO. The purposes have been to both preserve and use the countries’ cultural heritage for economic purposes in a sustainable manner, and also to create regional identities and images. A report made in collaboration with UNESCO from 2003 emphasises the potential for developing cultural tourism in the Baltic States, but also identifies a number of obstacles, for example, in terms of how to communicate the cultural heritage due to poor language skills, insufficient infrastructure and a lack of previous experience within this field. The report also points out organizational and political problems in how the development of cultural tourism may fall between two departments, as it is based on a shared responsibility between the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Economics (UNESCO 2003). Thus, questions relating to culture and economy risk to being treated as two separate phenomena in the post-socialist period in Latvia, which relates to the wish to reimagine the nation state and treat culture as associated with pre-Soviet traditions, customs and the struggle for independence and in need of preservation and protection rather than commercialization.

The development of the national song and dance festival has claimed increased status on the state’s political agenda in pace with the manifestation of national and cultural values after the Latvian independence. The organizational
work with the event is financed by state contributions and supported by a particular national legislation, which for example regulates the organizational framework (see www.km.gov.lv). The financial contributions are distributed partly as economic means for central organization and planning before the festival, and partly in terms of state contributions for the participants’ expenses in connection to the festival, for example, accommodation and transportation to Riga. The state has started to acknowledge the festival as contributing to a local and regional development, attracting domestic and foreign visitors to both Riga and the countryside, for both the national festival and smaller more locally arranged events (Female representative, The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005).

Another motive for the state’s prioritization of the song and dance festival is the fact that in 2003 the Latvian folk musical heritage together with the Estonian and the Lithuanian qualified to be places on UNESCO’s international list of Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. The program highlights traditional ‘intangible’ cultural expressions, such as dance or oral heritage, as well as places which become arenas for such manifestation, such as the Latvian national song and dance arena (www.unesco.org, 2005-09-10). One purpose with the Baltic application to UNESCO was to preserve the oral cultural heritage and its traditions in the song and dance festival, which were considered to be essential parts of the national identities and bearers of important symbolic values. Qualifying to be on the list also constituted toward highlighting the uniqueness of the cultural heritage in an international context, which is an important tool in the development and marketing of tourism (Female representative, The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005; Multi-national candidature file 2002). Moreover, the UNESCO application describes the national cultural heritage as threatened due to extensive economical, political and cultural changes taking place in Latvia since independence.

The everyday lives as well as mental and cultural space have become vulnerable to commercialization, which has negative effect on the maintenance of local traditions under the overwhelming globalization (Multi-national candidature file, 2002:15).

One ‘risk factor’ identified as contributing to the vulnerability of the cultural heritage is the decreased standard of living among the population and state financial straits as a result of a negative economic development in the beginning of the 1990s (Multi-national candidature file 2002:15). The gradual transition to a market economy experienced a series of setbacks and resulted in increasing
social and economic gaps within the Latvian society, due to a high inflation and unemployment (see O’Connor 2003). In the application, the youth and the senior share of the Latvian population are identified as especially vulnerable segments, while at the same time constituting “the core groups of tradition-carriers” (Multi-national candidature file 2002:15). Another issue brought into light is the globalization process, and new cultural influences which are perceived as eventually watering down the traditional Latvian culture and contributing to the loss of significant national values. In this case, the Latvian society is considered too fragile and vulnerable to resist the new influences. Therefore, one of the aims with the UNESCO appointment is to protect these cultural values against new influences and processes of commercialization (Multi-national candidature file 2002). The Multi-national candidature application file states that:

(…) this cultural expression has never been and could not ever become a commercial enterprise (Multi-national candidature file, 2002:15).

Thus, the question remains of what strategies will be used to reach the aims of preservation and protection of the cultural heritage in the future, and how tourism may be a part of this process. In some sense, the song and dance festivals are already being ‘commercialized’, marketed on an international scale to attract thousands of paying visitors and tourists to Latvia, requiring a range of services for its implementation, including private enterprises within the tourism sector. The state’s responsibility for financing the song and dance festival is regulated in the Song and Dance Celebration Law from 2005, including “the preparation and organization of the Nationwide Latvian Song and Dance Celebration, as well as for the covering of lodging and catering expenses for Festival participants during the Festival” (Song and Dance Celebration Law 2005 www.km.gov.lv 2008-08-24). In the 2008 version of the song and dance festival, part of the overall budget governed by the Ministry of Culture also included income from the private sector, partly from the use of the song and dance festival logotype and trademark as well as from selling tickets to different events, and partly from sponsoring from a range of private companies, which aimed at “realization of the Celebration artistic concept”. In total, the financial income from private sources was estimated to 1,250 000 Lats (www.dziesmusvetki2008.lv 2008-08-24). The contents and program of the festival are constantly negotiated, as organizers are forced to balance the proportions between the ‘traditional’ oral heritage and new, modern and commercial influences. During the song and dance festival in 2003, these new influences became evident when Latvian rock and pop musicians were invited
to the gala concert and made a performance together with a number of youth choirs. The event is described as successful by the organizers, but the popular music was considered to take too much space.

What kind of tradition did we keep with the youth concert? The same festivals can be found in all parts of the world. There was no point of it. No acapella music, the choir was not the main performer, but only background singers for pop musicians or soloists. This could be a small part of the festival, but not the way how to perform. It was very popular, but our task is to keep a tradition (Female representative, The Latvian National Center for Traditional and Performing Arts, August 2005).

The quote clearly illustrates how folk music and popular music are considered to have their own particular place and form of expression, and are not part of the same ‘heritage’. The modern popular music is considered to represent a more homogenized and watered-down type of music, controlled by external, commercial forces. The choir music on the other hand, is perceived as representing more a ‘professional’ and ‘advanced’ musical performance, more closely associated with a Latvian identity. Here, a tension between music in its ‘fluid’ and more ‘fixed’ form can be distinguished, in how the state’s official role has been to regulate and protect the oral heritage of the Latvian Dainas, thus promoting more ‘fixed’ expressions of music as locally rooted and as an instrument for encouraging national awakening. Even though this so far has been the most prominent discourse, the development of more ‘commercial’ elements of the festival, for example, through sponsorship and the presence of ‘popular culture’, might also challenge the ‘static’ version and aims of the festival. Music is inevitably a part of the contemporary post-socialist transformation process, which develops, brings in influences and inspiration from different places around the world, and melts together with the ‘traditional’ cultural heritage and paves the way for new forms of Latvian musical expressions.

Conclusion
The aim of this chapter has been to discuss ‘geographies of neo-nationalism’ based on how the Latvian nation is (re)imagined, constructed and manifested in a post-socialist context through tourism development and marketing. The focus has been on how public tourism actors promote Latvia as The land that sings, which relates to the cultural heritage of Latvian folk songs (Dainas), as well as the development and promotion of the national Latvian song and dance festival, arranged every fifth year. The purpose of the chapter has been to highlight the relation between music and place, in this case how tourism development par-
Chapter three - Geographies of neo-nationalism

ticipates in reestablishing a national identity by promoting local culture and traditions, while also being a tool for commodification and commercialization of the cultural heritage. Moreover, it has also been discussed how this process is genderized, in how different ideals of femininity are being used in the construction of the nation state, based on Yuval-Davis’ (1997) concepts of the Volknation, Kulturnation and Staatsnation. The Latvian tourism marketing can in general be described as a tool for highlighting a local musical heritage where historical traditions and culture become two central components. The emphasis on folk music represents an ambition to create an ‘authentic’ national identity and a sense of ‘Latvian-ness’ shared and valued by all inhabitants. The aim has been to identify a ‘core’ or ‘soul’ of the Latvian nation, which has clear parallels to more ‘primordialist’ ideals of nationalism, in how the Latvian culture is believed to have survived many years of occupations, and finally reawakened after the Latvian independence. Thus, the focus is on a continuation with the past, and the pre-Soviet period of national awakening, when a majority of the folk songs were collected and made into a ‘national cultural heritage’, as well as when the first song and dance festival was initiated. Moreover, the longing for the pre-Soviet past also includes the celebration of rural Latvian landscapes as the main setting for the inspiration and performance of the Dainas, which portrays Latvians as living close to nature and agricultural activities in contrast to the modified Soviet industrial landscapes.

I have focused on the nation state as something socially constructed, and not ‘fixed’ in neither its borders nor contents, but constantly made in accordance to different actors’ specific aims and values. I have also argued that the process of reimagining the nation state is not a gender neutral process, but that women and men have been given different roles in its manifestation both historically and today. Women tend to be both visible and invisible actors in this process. On the one hand, women have become symbols for the nation state, evident in how ideals of femininity are celebrated, for example, within the tradition of the Dainas, and how women are considered to be responsible for passing on traditional cultural values within the family, and actively engaging in cultural activities such as the song and dance festival. On the other hand, femininity is often ascribed a more ‘mystical’ meaning with roots in nature rather than culture, which promotes women in their ‘biological’ roles as mothers of the nation in need of protection rather than visible within the public sphere.

The image of Latvia and its population as a ‘nation of singers’ is manifested on a state level by public tourism actors, as well as by other state institutions responsible for the organization and implementation of the national
song and dance festival. I would argue that the main purpose of the festival event still tend to be to contribute to a sense of ‘togetherness’ for the Latvian population within the borders of Latvia, and to make up for the cultural oppression evident during the Soviet regime. This raises two important questions. Firstly, the issue of how to balance aims of preservation of the cultural heritage on the one hand, and the aims of promoting tourism development and commercialization of the event on the other. Even though it is a ‘local’ event, it also serves as a tool for international recognition and image creation, and may attract thousands of foreign tourists. However, the commercialization of the event still remains a controversial question, and the aim of the state actors is still to keep it as ‘pure’ as possible, with little influences from external musical influences and private interests.

The second question which I would like to raise is related to the process of identity-building within the project of the ‘new’ nation state. As has been discussed above, this is a clearly genderised process, providing and using ideals of femininity, which tend to celebrate women in rather ‘traditional’ roles compared to men. This is not merely an innocent symbolic process, but is reflected within politics in Latvia as well as in other post-socialist countries. The effects of the rise of these ideals will be further discussed in chapter six. Moreover, the construction of the nation state also raises the question of who should be included in the national project as a ‘Latvian’ and who should not. In some ways, reimagining the nation state tends to draw lines between Us and Them, and the question is who should be included in these two categories. In Latvia, issues relating to citizenship and language policies still remain controversial due to the large Russian speaking minority, but have been part of the process of how the nation state should be built, and by whom. A more in-depth discussion of questions relating to the Latvian minorities and their roles in the Latvian national project will be discussed in chapter five.
Chapter four
Geographies of Europeanisation

If you continue eastward from the Freedom monument along Brīvības bulvāris, until it intersects with Elizabetes iela, you will find Hotel Reval Latrija to your left. The glass-covered façade extends 27 stories, which makes it one of the tallest buildings in the center of Riga. Building the hotel was started in the 1960s, during the Soviet occupation, and was finished in 1978. After a complete restoration during the beginning of the 21st century, the architecture bears more traces of Western capitalism than of communist ideals.

The hotel illustrates the fast growing tourism sector in Riga, and how the capital is finding its way into the global economy through the development of tourism, with the aims of attracting tourists as well as foreign investment capital to further boost the national economy. Reval Latrija has been owned by a Norwegian real estate company since 1998, which has invested in hotels, shopping centers and resorts in Eastern Europe, including the Baltic countries and Russia (www.linstow.no 2008-02-14). The company owns the Reval Hotel group, including hotels in the larger cities in the Baltic States and describes itself as “the leading hotel chain in the Baltic countries - constantly expanding and developing”. The hotel is being marketed as “Riga’s main landmark and the largest
Chapter four – Geographies of Europeanisation

business and conference hotel in the Baltics”. Other common terms used on the official homepage of the hotel are ‘trendy and stylish’, as well as ‘international’, with an emphasis on ‘Scandinavian design’ and ‘modern service’ (www.revalhotels.com 2008-02-14).

To a foreign tourist, Riga may appear to have some of the ‘ordinary’ features of a European capital in how the international influences have become striking part of the city scene; global restaurant chains, bank offices reflecting Scandinavian and European investments, large billboards covering housing facades, that advertise the latest models of cell phones and subscription rates, newly built car sale showrooms and gas stations, and shopping malls and arcades both in the centre and in the outskirts of the city. Riga has in this sense become a node in a global web of social, cultural, economic and political relations, which is reflected in the everyday life of local inhabitants and visiting tourists. Moreover, Riga is a city reflecting an ‘economy of signs’, containing multiple images, symbols and brands, communicating and reflecting new consumer ‘lifestyles’ and cultural identities. The economy is just as in other European countries becoming more ‘culturalised’, in how different products carry different culturally-charged meanings and values (see DuGay 1997).

The period following the Latvian independence has involved rapid societal changes. A range of researchers have highlighted how the post-socialist transition process includes a reorientation from a centrally-run command economy to a more liberal market economy, which has also meant a refocus towards Western and global markets for trade and mobility, in contrast to the previous relatively isolated situation within the borders of the Soviet Union. This process also includes the transition from large-scale industrial production to more flexible and service-oriented sectors, including tourism. The economic and political dimensions of the transition process are also described as being further spurred by the membership in the European Union, which has included reducing the borders and barriers for trade, resulting in a more intensive flow of capital, investments, goods and arriving tourists. Latvia is in this context often portrayed as one of the most expansive and fastest growing economies in Europe, with reference to the stable GNP growth since the end of the 1990s (see e.g. Smith et al. 2002; Pabriks et al. 2002).

The aim of this chapter is to analyse how the development and promotion of tourism, as part of the transforming ‘Latvian common space’, reflects a genderised ‘Geographies of Europeanisation’. I will discuss how tourism is promoted as an important part of the ‘transition’ process, both as a symbol and an economic activity manifesting the reorientation and reimagination of Latvia as a
part of the European and global economy with emphasis on the positive effects of globalization and in terms of the ‘new’ political paradigm of regionalism. In the latter case, the borders of the nation state are given a secondary function, while providing Latvia a more active role in the formation of the ‘new Europe’, and embodying a diversity of Latvian political and cultural regions. The quest for ‘Europeanisation’ will be analysed as related to classic ‘modernisation’ theories, which advocate that post-socialist countries follow the same paradigms and paths of development as Western European countries. This approach also tends to include an adoption of neo-liberal ideologies and strategies in order to reduce the role of the state as well as potential barriers for trade and mobility, in favour of the open and free market within the borders of the European Union.

Tourism is often analysed as an example of how post-socialist countries adopt to the rules of the Western European market economy through entrepreneurship, privatization, increasing Western tourist arrivals, as well as tourism marketing and image promotion for a more Western clientele (see Hall 2004; Young & Light 2001). In this case, tourism development and marketing is considered to symbolise a ‘return to Europe’, and the shift from a more ‘Eastern’ identity to a more ‘Western’ belonging, based on the political and economic reforms conducted in the transition process. Still, I would suggest that the Europeanisation of tourism is far more complex than a transitional shift from East to West. In the latter part of the chapter, I will discuss examples of gendered effects and outcomes of the Europeanisation process, based on an analysis of how Riga struggles with an ‘image’ of being a sex tourism destination. In Latvia, sex tourism is debated and identified as a negative effect of the open borders to Western Europe, which has resulted in an increased inflow of Western tourists. I will discuss sex tourism as also being related to how tourism marketing tends to reproduce a continuous genderised East/West divide, as well as how the neoliberal ideologies contribute to a ‘normalisation’

24 This chapter is based on the results of a text analysis study, including printed tourism brochures (LTDA 2004 Discover Latvia, LTDA 2007 The land that sings), and material published electronically at the LTDA website (www.latviatourism.lv), and by the tourism organisation Inspiration Riga (www.inspirationriga.com), which includes both public and private actors. The text analysis also includes tourism marketing material from the private sector: printed free tourist magazines such as Riga This Week, Welcome! and Guide for Enjoying and websites containing information about Riga’s nightlife, such as www.nightliferiga.com and www.partyinriga.com, as well as private tour operators such as www.rigaoutthere.com. The text analysis has also included national and EU-policy documents such as the National Development Plan 2007-2013 and A renewed EU Tourism Policy: towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism, as well as On-Line newspaper articles from The Baltic Times relating to issues of sex tourism and information provided through the campaign “Stop sex-terrorism” (www.alfacentres.lv). For details, see “Brochures and reports” and “Internet sources” in the list of references.
of sex tourism as an integral and natural part of the new Latvian market economy. My intention is not to portray sex tourism as the main outcome or example of processes of Europeanisation or to reinforce the dualistic division between the ‘East’ and ‘West’, which should not be regarded as two homogenous units or ideologies. Rather, my objective is to examine critically examples of the Europeanisation of tourism and make visible how genderised perceptions of the East and the West interact within tourism marketing, in order to question them.

Tourism in transition
‘Geographies of Europeanisation’ will here be analysed as reflecting classic ‘modernisation theories’ and approaches to development and transition (see Blokker 2005). From this perspective, the transition process is perceived as following a logical and linear development phase, which indicates that the aims of the transition process are predetermined and that the models applied for development are universal in their character, meaning that they should be applied to all post-socialist countries. The modernization theories advocate an abandonment of the past, to put an end to the Soviet history and its legacies, while embracing modern capitalist models of change and development. The economic ideals of progress and growth tend to portray more ‘mature’ Western economies as the role-models for the transition process, symbolizing the ‘victory’ and success of capitalist ideologies and societies over the fall and failures of the communist system. The communist system itself could also be analysed as representing another version of modernity, which for a long time was regarded as the single alternative to capitalism. Thus, from this perspective, transition would imply moving from one set of modernity to another (Blokker 2005).

Pickles and Smith (1998) claim that ‘shock-therapy’ or other political and economic reforms in post-socialist countries have been regarded as ‘the only possible strategy’ after the collapse of the Soviet Union, due to the distrust against the previous communist system, and other socialist models. In Latvia, ‘shock-therapy’ was implemented including measures for market liberalisation such as the release of prices and the new Latvian currency, privatisation and the decrease of state subsidies. The economic aims of the transition have involved giving free reign to the market and increasing the distinction between the state and the market, while opening the borders for foreign investments and for international investment funds, such as the IMF and the World Bank. This reflects a more neo-liberal approach, in which the role of the state is renegotiated.
in favour of the free market, privatisation and individualism (Pickles & Smith 1998).

The transition process in Latvia and other post-socialist countries has taken place within overall processes of *globalisation*, which include increasing flows and interactions among nations and regions on a global scale, of products and people as well as symbols and information. Young and Light (2001) illustrate this process and argue for the need of a geographical approach and analysis of the post-socialist transformation process.

(...) these countries now find themselves occupying particular spaces in the international division of labour, flows of capital and investment, and in trading relationships, which involve an internationalisation or *globalisation* of their economic activities (Young & Light 2001:942).

The academic discussions of the definition and effects of *globalisation* have been extensive and diverse. It should be emphasised that the *globalisation* process takes multiple forms, including economic, technological, political and cultural dimensions (Taylor & Flint 2000:3). Its outcomes may be both positive and negative and reflect power relations between among groups of people, including which actors benefit from its development and how *globalisation* is used as more political and economic discourse and for what purposes (see Johansson & Molina In: Berglund, et al. eds 2005).

Latvia’s quest for economic reforms as well as the quest for membership in Western European political unions, such as the European Union, may be analysed in relation to what Massey (2005) terms the “Geography of borderlessness and mobility” (Massey 2005:86), reflected in the emphasis on *globalisation*, neo-liberalism and free trade. Massey claims that both historical and contemporary modernization projects, which tend to embrace the positive effects of *globalisation*, reflect a view of different societies and places as being part of a ‘single temporal development’, sharing one history, one universal space and one single temporal phase. Consequently, *globalisation* becomes ‘evidence’ of how the world is fully integrated, but Massey argues that it involves a world of ‘depthlessness’, presenting it as one closed homogenous system. Moreover, *globalisation* is portrayed as something inevitable, meaning that all societies will eventually be part of the global economy, and thereby, of modern Western culture. All societies will thereby eventually reach the same

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25 Taylor and Flint claim that *globalisation* in fact has a long history, and that its contemporary forms could be described as plural ‘*globalisations*’. The authors identify eight different but interrelated dimensions of *globalisation*; financial, technological, economic, cultural, political, ecological, geographical and sociological *globalisation* (see Taylor & Flint 2000:30).
standard of living and development, and even though Eastern Europe may seem to be ‘lagging behind’ in its development, they too will ‘catch up’ when implementing the reforms required and joining political unions such as the EU. From this perspective, the aims of progress and development are already set and fixed in both time and space, and based on a Western model of progress. Thus, Massey claims that there is still a quest for ‘taming space’ (Massey 2005).

The aims and outcomes of the transition as promoted by ideologies based on a classical liberal ‘modernisation paradigm’ can be discussed and criticized from a range of perspectives, including questioning how it does not take into account the historically-rooted structures from both the socialist and pre-socialist period. I will not go into a more in-depth discussion of the critique against the modernisation approach here, but return to these issues in the next chapter.

*Promoting economic growth through tourism*

The transition of the Latvian economy is often described as completed in regard to the privatization process and the market economy reforms implemented (see The World Bank 2002; Nordregio 2000; Nissinen 1999). The Baltic States have, despite the unstable economy during the 1990s, been regarded as the most expansive economies in Europe. Latvia has had an annual GNP-growth of more than 7 percent since the end of the 1990s, but the development and growth should also be analysed as taking place in an economy which had to be rebuilt from scratch after the second independence. The Latvian GDP is low compared with that of the ‘old’ EU-countries, and the regional differences within the country in terms of economic growth and standard of living are still clearly evident (Tiirinen et al. 2000; State Regional Development Agency 2007). The Latvian economy has gone through an extensive structural transformation, which has included a decline of the manufacturing industry and an upswing for the service sector. This shift is especially evident in the capital Riga, where services constitute the dominant sector, including trade (21%), transportation and communication (19%) and commercial services (18%) (Riga City Council 2006:15). The growth of the Latvian economy has been spurred by foreign investments and companies, for example, in assistance with production.

26 The stable economic growth in Latvia has been challenged by increased inflation during the last few years, creating an increase of consumer price levels, which has made basic products more expensive for the population. See Vanags and Hansen (2007) for a more in-depth analysis of the causes and potential solutions for the inflation in Latvia. The causes of the inflation are described as the following; “we observe overheated labour, goods and property markets all of which interact to generate accelerating inflation” (Vanags & Hansen 2007:2).
technology, infrastructure and research and development. The investments have, been placed within the food, tourism, finance, energy and communication sectors, which have further contributed to Riga’s dominating position within the Latvian economy as a ‘growth pole’ (see Riga City Council 2006).

Hall (2004) and Worthington (2001; 2003) claim that tourism has both reflected and contributed to the economic transformation processes in many post-socialist countries. Tourism has been a way of achieving a positive balance in the national economy through the access to foreign currencies, and has served as a solution to the challenges and problems related to the transition process. Hall (2004) concludes that tourism in post-socialist states can be viewed as “an integral part of the global expansion of capitalism”, with effects such as an increase and privatisation of the service sector, promotion of entrepreneurship as well as foreign investments (Hall 2004). Tourism’s share of the Latvian GDP has increased since independence, but is still relatively low in a European comparison. The activities within the hotel and restaurant sector contributed with 1.9 percent of the total gross value added in 2007, which is an increase from merely 1 percent in 1995 (LCSB database www.csb.gov.lv 2008-08-26). It is difficult to estimate the economic effects of the tourism sector due to its diverse character, which includes other activities apart from those within hotels and restaurants. The economic effects must also be analysed in relation to the supply of new jobs and business start-ups. In terms of visitor numbers to Latvia, the number of foreign tourists has showed a significant increase, both in terms of the number of non-resident border crossings and in the number of foreign overnight stays. From around 1.5 million border crossings

27 The European Commission estimates tourism’s contribution to the overall EU GDP to be around 4 percent when applying a ‘narrow’ definition of the tourism industry, and 11 percent when taking into account relations to other sectors (Commission of the European Communities 17.3.2006 A renewed EU Tourism Policy: towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism http://ec.europa.eu 2008-08-27).

28 The estimations of the GDP are based on LCSB’s definitions and calculations. From a production perspective, GDP can be described as “the sum of gross value added of various institutional sectors or various industries plus taxes and less subsidies on products” (Statistical yearbook of Latvia 2004:9). Tourism’s share of the GDP could also be estimated as larger since the definitions used merely include the category “hotels and restaurants”, and no other parts of the tourism sector. It may also be difficult to separate the expenditures and income from domestic tourists and foreign tourists.

29 Border crossings are measured through a national survey of persons (aged 15 years and over) crossing Latvia’s borders. The statistics include departures of resident and non-resident travellers. One problem in the analysis of the border crossing statistics is the fact that they include both same-day and overnight visitors and are merely estimations of the numbers of travellers. Due to the membership in the EU, the borders with other EU countries have been opened up, creating a greater flow of visitors to and from neighbouring countries, such as Estonia and Lithuania, who may not fall within the categorization of a tourist or a traveller.
in 1995, Latvia had approximately 5.2 million border crossings in 2007, of which 32 percent were estimated to be foreign overnight visitors. In terms of the number of overnight stays in hotels and other accommodation establishments, the numbers of foreign tourists have also increased significantly. From around 220,000 foreign overnight visitors in 1993, Latvia had just over 844,000 foreign tourists staying overnight in 2007. The total expenditure of foreign visitors is estimated to have increased from 66 million Lats in 1999 to around 338 million Lats in 2007, which also includes a rise of the average daily expenditure per traveller from 19 Lats to 47 Lats\(^{30}\). As for other parts of the economy, the growth of tourism in Latvia has been concentrated in the urban region of Riga, in the development of infrastructure such as accommodation, services, restaurants, and reflected in the number of visitors. In 2007, the city of Riga supplied 44 percent of the total number of beds in hotels and other accommodation establishments in Latvia.

**Figure 3:** Number of foreign overnight stays in hotels and other accommodation establishments in Latvia and Riga 1993/1999-2007

When including registered beds in tourist accommodation establishments also in the greater Riga region (Pieriga) and Jūrmala, Riga’s dominance becomes

The statistics of overnight stays in registered hotels and other accommodation provide more detailed information of the number of registered tourists staying overnight, but exclude those staying over at friends and families, and rely on an accurate system for reporting the incoming tourists to the state authorities.

\(^{30}\) The estimations of the traveller’s expenditure are based on the LCSB survey of non-resident persons crossing Latvia’s borders. 1 Lat = approximately 1.40 EUR.
even more striking, constituting 79 percent of the total number of tourist accommodation facilities. A substantial share of the overnight visitors stay in Riga compared to other parts of Latvia. Riga’s share of international overnight stays in 2007 was 74 percent (ibid; LCSB Tourism in Latvia in 2007) (see Figure 3). When analysing the origin of the foreign tourists in the registered accommodation establishments in 2007, there is an overrepresentation of tourists from Germany (13.2%), and the neighbouring countries, Lithuania (9.8%) and Estonia (9%), as well as Finland. Comparing the 2007 statistics with numbers from 1993, there has been an increase of tourists from countries in the western part of Europe, such as the UK (2.8% in 1993 compared to 7.4% in 2007) and Norway (not represented in the 1993 statistics, but constituted 7% in 2007), which may be related to the development of low-cost airline routes (LCSB database www.csb.gov.lv 2008-08-25; LCSB Tourism in Latvia in 2007).

Towards regionalism
The economic and political aims of the ‘modernisation’ paradigm and the quest for ‘Europeanisation’ as described above were manifested and fulfilled through Latvia’s membership in the European Union in May 2004. Latvia was not merely incorporated into the legislative and institutional framework of the European Union as a nation state, but also as containing a multiplicity of regions. Consequently, the period of independence does not merely include a process of nation building as discussed in the previous chapter, but also involves aims of region building. The administrative borders between the different nation states are thereby perceived as having secondary importance, while establishing stricter borders between the European Union and the rest of the world takes emphasis. This signals an increasing decentralization process in post-socialist countries, from being part of a centralized command economy, towards renegotiating the role of the state, both in relation to the market, but also in connection to different geographical scales of governance; thereby more power is provided to the supra-national levels as well as autonomy for the local and regional levels. The process of region building is also implemented within the development of tourism. As discussed in the previous chapter, there is an increasing need for marketing different regions in order to attract tourists, which involves a more pronounced commercialization of tourism resources such as cultural heritage. This will be further discussed below.
Chapter four – Geographies of Europeanisation

‘Old’ and ‘new’ forms of regionalism

The contemporary ‘renaissance’ of the regions is commonly referred to as the development of regionalism (see MacLeod 2001; Johnston et al. 2006; Syssner 2006). Josefina Syssner (2006) discusses the concept of regionalism as a political and territorial ideology, and distinguishes between ‘new’ and ‘old’ forms of regionalism. The ‘older’ approach of regionalism was particularly evident during the 1960s and 1970s, reflecting a more ‘ethno nationalistic movement’ in more peripheral regions in Europe, advocating a less centralized government and an increasing role for the communities. From this perspective, external forces of change in terms of ideals of modernization were perceived as something negative. This movement was also a reaction against a more traditional view of regions and regional development as a ‘top-down process’, viewing regions as ‘objects’ in planning and policy making (Syssner 2006:14f).

The ‘new’ regionalism, on the other hand, focuses more on the economic dimensions and advantages of establishing regions as the ‘centers’ of economic development. Syssner claims that aims of economic growth constitute the ‘core value’ within the ideology of regionalism, with an emphasis on the positive outcomes of globalization and Europeanisation. The ideologies of new regionalism started to emerge during the 1980s with increasing calls for cooperation over the national borders for the EU structural funds (Syssner 2006). In this context the regions have been given a more active role and responsibility, in establishing contacts and networks on different levels. MacLeod (2001) discusses how regionalism reflects how the local level respond to and participates in global processes of transformation in a post-Fordist era, which includes strengthening and collecting local assets in terms of human capital, cultural resources as well as capital (MacLeod 2001). Syssner states how the regions should use their local strengths in order to reach a positive regional development and ‘competitive advantage’, together with established strategies of collaboration with other regions, both nationally and within the European Union (Syssner 2006).

The emerging ideology of new regionalism is also reflected within the policies set up nationally in Latvia to guide the economic development, through a poly-centric rather than mono-centric model, requiring more active responsibility of the regions31. In Soviet Latvia, a region was considered as merely a political level subordinated to the central government in Moscow. Latvia as a republic constituted one ‘political unity’, but was also divided into

different political administrative regions. Today, new centers and peripheries emerge within Latvia, defined as potential ‘growth regions’, attracting capital, investments and tourists, while establishing networks with other core regions within an enlarged European Union. Despite the emphasis on regional diversity, Riga is still portrayed as having a prominent position as the Latvian ‘growth centre’.

Riga is the capital of Latvia and the centre of a large region whose influence reaches beyond its administrative and national borders. Facilitation of development of Riga as an excellence centre of business, science and culture in the Baltic Sea region is essential for strengthening Latvia’s competitiveness on a global scale (The Ministry of Regional development and Local Governance 2006:33).

Foreign investments are a high priority for the Latvian state, and the economic guidelines contain directives for creating favorable and competitive business environments for both foreign and domestic companies. The Latvian National Development Plan32 (LNDP), comprising the period 2007-2013, describes the aims of development as follows:

Latvia has achieved one of the highest rates of economic growth in the European Union. It is important to continue this development and to rapidly bring the inhabitants’ level of welfare and quality of life up to the level of the developed countries. Latvia has to create such conditions for the economy that would provide a possibility to take advantage of the new political reality and the favourable geographic location for the increase of the level of welfare for Latvia itself as well as for its partners, undertaking the role of efficient gates on the road of transactions between West and East (The Ministry of Regional development and Local Governance 2006:12).

The intentions of the LNDP are based on a ‘national growth model’, which reflects the aims of a ‘growth scenario’. Competitiveness is identified as one of the main aims, with the growth and development of technology, innovation, research and knowledge being the main guiding principles in striding towards a ‘knowledge-based economy’ (The Ministry of Regional development and Local Governance 2006).

Tourism and ‘new regionalism’
I would claim that the emergence of new regionalism can be analysed as having rather paradoxical and ambivalent characteristics. On the one hand, the process

32 LNDP is a national planning document which relates to the Regional Development Law of the Republic of Latvia (The Ministry of Regional development and Local Governance 2006:6).
of region building could be described as a wish to portray the diversity of Europe in terms of culture, history and heritage, as well as a way to provide each and every region the tools to guide and control its own development. On the other hand, the process of regionalism tends to follow a rather homogenised pattern, based on key words, such as economic growth and competitiveness, which could be analysed as reflecting a general modernisation ideology set up by EU directives and adopted on the local level. Blokker (2005) argues that the expansion of the EU should be regarded as a symbol of diversity and not merely as a way of seeing how the Eastern member states adopt to Western criteria and models of democracy and political rules of the game.

The ostensible reproduction of West European norms, transition culture and discourses of Europeanization by East European elites should be understood as potentially entailing a two-way relationship between the Western centre and the Eastern periphery, thereby acknowledging space to manoeuvre for the latter (Blokker 2005:518).

Thus, this two-way relationship would involve cultural, political and social exchange in both directions, not only in how the enlargement process has effects on the new membership states, but also in how their participation in the overall European project contributes to the transformation of the EU in such a way which may serve also Eastern European interests. Consequently, the division between ‘Western’ and ‘Eastern’ Europe may eventually be challenged, due to this exchange and collaboration.

In terms of tourism, Syssner points out that the ideology of new regionalism promotes the use of local resources as a ‘means for mobilization’, in order to reach the aims of economic growth (Syssner 2006:186). This may include aims of developing tourism businesses and entrepreneurship, as well as marketing cultural resources and regions as new destinations, reflecting a more commercialized approach. Both rural and urban regions are increasingly promoted and branded as tourism destinations, a process which involves both cultural and economic processes as discussed in the previous chapter (Syssner 2006). I would also argue that the processes of regionalism make the identities of different regions more flexible and less ‘fixed’ compared to identities based on the idea of the nation state. This is evident in the development of different tourism projects involving cooperation between different regions in Latvia. In some projects, regions of Latvia are identified as belonging to ‘the Baltic Sea region’, for promoting rural development and tourism, infrastructure, etc., or are perceived as constituting a different part of the ‘Baltic States’ when
marketing tourism for foreign markets, as well as when establishing networks for rural tourism networks in the three Baltic countries.

Despite the arguments that tourism through the ideology of regionalism may be a way of strengthening and mobilizing different regions, it is difficult to ignore the fact that the development tends to take rather homogenized forms. Different regional tourism projects tend to be financed by the EU, following policies which tend to reflect ‘Western’ European models of growth and development, making the priorities and aims rather similar. When analyzing the official EU tourism policy from 2006, the emphasis is on both diversification and homogenization. Tourism is regarded as having a prominent role for the development of regions within the EU, in terms of increasing competitiveness and as a tool for transforming regional economies from the traditional sectors to more service-oriented activities. On the one hand, the uniqueness of regional destinations in the new membership countries is reinforced.

The recent enlargement of the European Union has increased the diversity of European tourist destinations and products, opening up numerous natural and cultural attractions often unknown to many European citizens (Commission of the European Communities 2006b:3).

On the other hand, the EU is portrayed as one unit and tourism destination, which needs to keep its position as “the No1 world tourist destination” (ibid:3), and become more competitive in order to compare with other destinations on a global scale. In this case, the aim of tourism is also to form a sense of a common ‘European identity’.

Thanks to tourism, those visiting European destinations are brought into contact with our values and our heritage. Tourism contributes to a better understanding amongst people and helps in the process of shaping the European identity (Commission of the European Communities 2006b:3, my emphasis).

Here, the emphasis is on common ‘European’ values and heritage communicated through tourism, indicating how all regions and membership countries together constitute the basis for implementing the ‘European project’.

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33 See e.g. the projects Euroregion Baltic and Seagull (www.euroregionbaltic.eu), EU-funded projects which include tourism activities in collaboration between regions in Sweden, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Denmark and Russia (Kaliningrad). See also the Latvian rural tourism association Lauku celotājs and their cooperation with rural tourism associations in Estonia and Lithuania (www.celotais.lv).
Manifesting the ‘return’ to Europe through tourism marketing

Blokker (2005) highlights that the incorporation of the ‘Eastern’ membership states into the European community has served as the ultimate proof of success of the transition and breaking free from the Soviet past and meet the demands of the new market economy (Blokker 2005). Denisa Kostovicova (2004) with examples from Serbia emphasises how the process towards membership in the EU has had a symbolic meaning for the country’s wish to belong to a ‘new Europe’ after the fall of Milosevic. The aim of re-orientation towards Europe means becoming part of the Western world, while challenging the ‘Eastern’ identity and culture. Kostovicova describes this process as claiming Europe as identity, which relates a common past history and a ‘European’ cultural heritage (Kostovicova 2004). The identification with Western rather than Eastern Europe tends to be based on cultural values, for example, by promoting a Western European cultural heritage within tourism, but has increasingly been based on aims of economic and political progress. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) discusses the ideals of Europeanisation as an example of spatial normality. She highlights that Latvia’s way towards the European Union has reflected a wish to find “a place in space” (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:17). Thus, the focus has been to become a territorial and spatial part of the map over Western Europe, based on ideas of inclusion and adaptation, and finding safety in both political and economical terms, for example through alliances such as the EU and NATO (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:16). This illustrates attempts to adopt already existing models of change, expressed in ideals of modernisation, rather than new and alternative pathways following the Latvian independence.

Parallel to the wish to highlight the ‘authentic’ elements of the reestablished nation state as described in the previous chapter, Latvian tourism marketing also reflects a struggle to reestablish Latvia’s Western European identity and belonging. Within this context, Riga has led the way in the process of new regionalism as discussed above, representing a modern Western European metropolis, as the national centre for economic growth. Riga is portrayed as the melting pot between the West and the East, in the borderland between ‘traditional’ Latvian culture and modern, global influences.

Riga is a living museum where modern life and comfort goes hand in hand with picturesque charm of the Middle ages (Discover Latvia 2004:10).

Riga is described as “On the crossroads of Europe” (Discover Latvia 2004), reflecting its former historical role as a centre for trade and economic development in a North European and Nordic context. The parallels to other Euro-
pean cities are also emphasised, in terms of the cultural heritage, architecture and history. The tourism marketing reflects a wish both to compete with other cities in terms of which city is the ‘oldest’ or has the most ‘well-preserved’ heritage, but also to point out to the similarities between Riga and its European neighbouring capitals. Thus, the desire is to accentuate both more homogenized, common features as well as the Riga’s ‘unique’ character. The uniqueness of the city is marked by underscoring the Old town of Riga as being on UNESCO’s world heritage list. However, the medieval heritage is packaged with more ‘Western’ preferences, lifestyles and tastes, which mark a desired reorientation to Western markets. The creative features of the ‘new’ city are further acknowledged as “the city of inspiration”, bearing a comparison with cities such as Paris, which has inspired many writers and artists.

In the Old City of Riga there is a mixture of the bohemian cosiness of Prague, the cool elegance of Paris and the cosmopolitan atmosphere of Berlin. Riga is the uncrowned capital of the three Baltic countries (Merian, German travel magazine, September 2003, www.inspirationriga.com 2008-01-16).

Riga is promoted as a city which has been ‘reborn’ since the fall of communism, and which has reclaimed a more European identity.

Riga is the Sleeping Beauty of Europe. Fortunately she did not have to sleep for more than 50 years. Now she – the Grand Lady - has woken up, shaken off the dust and revived the radiant colours and unique beauty of her youth. She is the cream and dessert of European cities. Always exceeding expectations (www.inspirationriga.com, 2008-01-16).

The transformation of the Latvian society is embellished with positive characteristics, and the Latvians themselves are depicted as modern, trendy European citizens with one foot in the past and the other in the future.

Constantly connecting with the future. Latvia has the fastest growing economy in Europe (...). Latvians are keen on preserving tried and true traditions as they step into the fast-paced, high-tech world of globalization and instant communication (...) In Latvia you’ll find high-speed Internet links in cozy wooden farmsteads and grandparents chating with their grandchildren on the latest mobile phones (Discover Latvia 2004:3).

Riga as a ’sex tourism destination’
The identification of Latvia with Western Europe through tourism promotion and development has in general had positive connotations. Still, the fast growth of tourism from Western Europe, for example following the introduction of
low cost airlines, has sparked a public debate over the more negative effects of ‘mass tourism’. Latvian media, politicians on both the local and the national level, as well as groups among the local population have raised warnings of Riga’s ‘deteriorating image’ as a sex tourism destination, associated with wild nightlife and cheap alcohol (Female representative LTDA, February 2007). A representative from the Latvian Tourism Development Agency describes the image as a problem affecting the overall promotion of tourism in Riga, since tourism as a phenomenon is largely associated with sex tourism.

In the society, people are not supportive of tourism. In Riga, a lot of people think only of sex tourism. When you say tourism, that means sex tourism. If you stay here and walk around in old Riga, you see those tourists, and there is a negative image which we are fighting with. Because there is a visible number of male tourists from England who only come to Riga for partying (Female representative LTDA, February 2007).

In 2005, the Latvian president Vaira-Vike Freiberga called for action and control of “the spread and obtrusiveness of prostitution”, as well as the need for presenting alternative entertainment and cultural activities for tourists (The Baltic Times 2005-08-08, www.baltictimes.com 2008-01-16). Sex tourism is no doubt a very controversial and delicate question in Latvia, and raises questions of destination marketing within both the public and private sectors, as well as the role of the state in regulating prostitution, and how images of Riga are constructed and perceived in the ‘West’.

Issues relating to Riga as a ‘sex tourism destination’ are complex and open for multiple interpretations. Within my own research of tourism development in Latvia, I have regarded sex tourism as one of the most difficult topics to approach, mainly due to the question of methodology, in how to approach a sector which tends to exist in a ‘grey zone’ within society (see Ryan & Hall 2001). Even though sex tourism has not been the main focus of my project, questions relating to it have constantly been calling for attention. Questions of sex tourism have emerged in different interviews, as well as in more informal discussions with my Latvian interpreter and my Latvian friends. As a tourist, I have also been approached in the streets of Riga by people handing out information sheets about strip clubs, or I have come across ads and sections of ‘adult entertainment’ when browsing through Riga’s city guides or searching for information about Latvia on the Internet. My aim here is not to discuss whether or not sex tourism exists in Latvia, or to describe its scope and extent in more quantitative terms. Rather, I would argue that sex tourism does exist in Latvia, just as in other countries in Central and Eastern parts of Europe, in Asia.
or in other parts of the world, including Western countries. Moreover, sex tourism as a phenomenon cannot merely be explained by the emergence of Western ‘mass tourism’, but has to be analysed in relation to other socio-cultural and economic issues, such as human trafficking, poverty, gender inequality, human rights, etc. Due to its complex character, there is also a need for delimitation. In the remaining part of the chapter, the aim is to discuss critically the genderised and sexualized ‘image’ of Riga as a sex tourism destination, which is closely related to the efforts to promote Riga as a ‘modern’ and ‘Westernised’ capital. As Ryan and Hall (2001) argue,

Sex tourism is an integral part of the commodification of the body, culture and place on which the tourism industry is based. However, the commodification of sexuality is wider than just individuals. It has also to be seen in relation to places. Sites of seduction are created where the tourist and the investor are to be seduced (Ryan & Hall 2001:148).

The quotation illustrates how the development of sex tourism is a relational process, involving different perceptions of space and place, which in turn are genderised and sexualized and contribute to the commodification of different destinations. I will discuss sex tourism from two different interrelated perspectives. Firstly, I will argue that the image of Riga as a sex tourism destination is constructed on a relational basis, based on the visitors’ expectations and perception of the tourism destination, as well as on the marketing and image-making of Riga. This involves genderised power relations between the country of origin and the destination, between the ‘West’ and the ‘East’. Secondly, the image is also affected by both local and international legal and institutional frameworks, reflecting socially and culturally rooted attitudes towards prostitution, which are closely connected to norms of gender relations and sexuality. In this context, I will discuss a local campaign introduced in Riga during the summer 2007, in order to combat the issue of sex tourism.

Sex tourism and the East/West divide

The existing relations between sex and tourism are multiple and complex. There exists no ‘simple’ definition of sex tourism34 or of the ‘sex tourist’ him/herself. Even though much of research about sex tourism has focused on

\[34\] One definition of sex tourism would be “(...) tourism where the main purpose or motivation of at least part of the trip is to consummate sexual relations” (Ryan & Hall 2001:x).
prostitution\textsuperscript{35}, it includes other forms of sexual services such as visits to strip clubs or the use of escort services. Oppermann (1999) argues that sex tourism must be analysed in a continuum, and that the stereotypical sex tourist rarely exists in ‘real life’. Rather, he/she may have very diversified features, which include both those travelling with the outspoken aim to buy sexual services and those that originally did not have those intentions. Few tourists would regard themselves as ‘sex tourists’, as in the more literal meaning of the word. Sex tourists may include female sex buyers or ‘holiday romance’ seekers, or include homosexual relations (Oppermann 1999).

Moreover, sex tourism cannot be analysed in isolation, as merely originating or having ‘local’ effects at the given tourism destination or as an exchange between two individuals. Sex tourism evolves within a ‘globalised’ society, connected to an international division of labour and inequality between countries and regions, including countries in the ‘West’ and the ‘East’. Kuus (2004) argues that countries in Central and Eastern Europe hold ‘dual’ roles following their EU membership, searching for identification with the ‘West’, but still being identified as the ‘East’. Thus, the dichotomy and orientalist view of the ‘East’ as the ‘Other’ is maintained, even though in a more fluid and contested form (Kuus 1994). As Wolff (1994) stresses; “The iron curtain is gone, and yet the shadow persists” (Wolff 1994:3). Thus, even though the more formal and physical borders between the East and the West have disappeared, the perceptions of the ‘East’ still prevail, even though in a more imaginary form\textsuperscript{36}. The contemporary division between East and West tends to be based on economic development and modernization, and the new EU-accession countries are officially a part of Europe, but still portrayed as lagging behind and in need of help from the more ‘Western’ European member states. Kuus claims that the Eastern membership states were being ‘coached by the West’, adjusting to a degree of ‘Europeanness’ in the enlargement process. In this process, the EU countries have constituted the ‘ideal’ template to follow and copy in terms of development, which includes maintaining or even ‘re-inventing’ perceptions of ‘the East’ (Kuus 2004:475ff).

The division and dichotomy between the East and the West can also be analysed as genderised and sexualised. In economic terms, the West is described

\textsuperscript{35} The definition of prostitution used here is “(...) the use of a woman’s body as a commodity to be bought, sold, exchanged not always for money” (Barry 1995:327, cited in Jeffreys 1999:193).

\textsuperscript{36} Wolff (1994) traces the historical roots of the East/West dualism back to the Enlightenment period, when perceptions of the ‘East’ were reproduced through travel writings and the works of western philosophers, providing an image of the ‘East’ as barbaric, and the West as civilized and enlightened (Wolff 1994).
as active, progressive and rational, while the East is perceived as deviant but reliant on the Western norms, still being passive and irrationally lagging behind (Asztalos Morell et al. 2005). Thus, the East is given more feminine attributes while the West is given more masculine characteristics. Within tourism, Marttila (2005) describes how Western sex tourists seek the ‘Eastern’ feminine and ethnic ‘Other’, but also how their actions at the given destination become ‘normalized’ while they are in another time and space, in a foreign country and territory. She argues that since the memberships in the EU, the open borders between Western and Eastern Europe have increased the flows of sex tourists to the Baltic States, due to its proximity compared to other ‘traditional’ sex tourism destinations such as Asia and due to the stereotypes of ‘Eastern’ women fabricated by Western media. Marttila claims that sex tourism in Estonia and Finland works in a two-way process. On the one hand, Finnish tourists are travelling to Estonia in order to buy sex, and on the other hand, Estonian prostitutes travel to Finland to work, which has contributed to a boom in the Finnish sex industry since the 1990s (Marttila 2005).

**Gendered marketing**

Morgan and Pritchard (1998) point out that different forms of media actively take part in the construction of gender relations within tourism, by emphasising a connection between the tourist and the landscape and thereby establishing an appealing image of a place or a destination, which results in highly genderised representations (Morgan & Pritchard 1998). Tourism marketing of Riga involves material which more directly and ‘openly’ promotes Riga as a sex tourism destination, and advertising which more indirectly provides different genderised and sexualized images. Here, I will focus mainly on two different sources: examples of public tourism marketing material provided by official state institutions such as the Latvian Tourism Development Agency, and examples of different ‘city guides’ published several times a year by private companies in both printed and online versions.

A central feature in the attempts to market Riga as a ‘modern’ and European city is the emphasis on nightlife and entertainment within public tourism marketing. Nightlife and entertainment are considered to be important parts of the tourism product and services offered especially in the urban environment of Riga. In this case, Riga is described as the ‘Hottest city in the North’.

Hotter than hottest. Riga never sleeps at night (...) While outside temperatures in Riga can get quite chilly during the winter months, the climate in Riga’s entertainment establishments is
sizzling hot all year long (...) What interests you? Want to feel the pulsating rhythms and dance all night long? Strut your stuff with other clubbers? Meet a new friend? Or just have a drink and watch the show? In Riga, the show isn’t just on stage – it fills the clubs and spills into the street. The possibilities are only limited by your imagination (LTDA Discover Latvia 2004:19).

Even though the images and texts do not directly relate to sex tourism, they still contain gendered symbolism and representations. Riga is hot, portrayed as fulfilling every need of entertainment for the visitor. Riga is also portrayed as exotic and sensual as ‘The Dessert of European cities’ (www.inspirationriga.com 2008-02-08).

A majority of the marketing made by the private sector includes more ‘open’ associations to Riga as a sex tourism destination. The most outspoken ‘erotic’ tourism representations are found in different free ‘City guides’ such as Riga This Week, Welcome!, Riga in Your Pocket and Guide for Enjoying. The guides are distributed to several locations in the city, hotels, restaurants, tourist information centers, and the airport. According to information in Riga This Week, which has been around since 1992, the guide is distributed to 130 different tourism sites. (Riga This Night March/April 2006). The guides are not merely distributed locally, but Riga becomes part of a much wider international network comprising the other destinations in Central and Eastern Europe. For example, The Welcome! guide is distributed in Riga, Kiev, St Petersburg, Tallinn and Vilnius (www.welcomeguide.lv 2008-03-05). The guides contain information mainly in English, and contain a broad range of basic tourist information; lists of accommodation, the main tourist sights, dining, museums, shopping, events, guides and tours, etc. The more ‘nightlife-oriented’ tourism products and services are classified into different categories, for example ‘casinos’, ‘music clubs’, ‘night clubs’, ‘striptease shows’, and ‘sex shops’. Here, the advertisement tends to be more pronounced and images of women cover a majority of the pages. Ads for different ‘escort agencies’, which are not actually part of the ‘official’ contents of the guides and do not include an official address, are also included, offering “Visit in your hotel” (Riga This Night 2006:22).

Even though public tourism organizations such as the Latvian Tourism Development Agency (LTDA) themselves participate in the construction of Riga as a genderised tourism destination as described above, they actively take a stand against the more sexualized marketing found in magazines distributed by the private sector. Active lobbying on behalf of the LTDA resulted in the nightlife and entertainment sections of some of the magazines being separated from
other services on a temporary basis as with Rīga by Night. A representative from the LTDA describes the dilemma of the public sector as follows:

We cannot forbid these ads in the magazines. We can talk to them, agree with them, that they separate the ads, but cannot forbid it (...) There are many people going around spreading leaflets of nightclubs; we would like to regulate that. What we want to do is that even though there is a person coming to Riga for sex, he will only find it by searching for it, but not that he comes here and people are freely giving it to him. When he walks the streets, that kind of information would not be available. Not that everyone can access it, that it is accessible in every corner or in every magazine (Female representative LTDA, Februray 2007).

The city guides rely on advertisement from local restaurants, hotels, etc., which are also described in terms of price range, standard and type of services. Just as the dining in Riga is reviewed and commented upon by the publishers, so are the nightlife and entertainment establishments. The “Jockey Club”, classified as a 'striptease show’ has the following review in Rīga This Night.

This small, intimate night club offers some of the hottest girls in town. Sit back in the comfortable couches and watch these girls swing and sway enticingly before your eyes. After staring at the girls working the pole, a private dance is recommended (Riga This Week March/April 2006:25).

The nightclubs and other sites are also continuously reviewed on a more ‘free’ basis on the homepage of Rīga This Week, by tourists who have visited Riga. In this case, it is possible to grade the striptease show or night clubs from 1-5, and to make written comments which tend to include tips of where to go to meet girls, and where “the most beautiful girls” are found. The reviews on the night clubs also include comments of where to avoid, or to find, “working girls”, and underage girls (www.rigathisweek.lv 2008-02-15). Chow-White (2006) discusses the role of the Internet in the development of sex tourism and claims that the Internet becomes a platform for sex tourists who actively participate in reproducing and constructing established and newly genderised and racialised perceptions and ‘myths’ of destinations, cultures and people. The Internet discussions contain several themes such as the market for sex, where to buy “cheap” sex, comparing prices between destinations as well as with the home country, as well as perceptions of gender, race and sexuality. Through the use and access provided by the Internet, the tourists and consumers themselves increasingly have access to the destination directly, and its products and services, without any physical ‘intermediaries’ such as travel agencies, printed brochures and personal contacts, even though these may be an important
complement. Thus, the image of the destination is not merely produced by the place marketing agencies or other more ‘public’ actors, but also by the tourists themselves (Chow-White 2006).

Riga by night
The city guides include a ‘nightlife map’, where the services are marked in both the old town of Riga and the eastern part of the city. Here, a geographical pattern of the entertainment industry becomes evident, forming centers and agglomerations in streets such as Brivibas iela. Here, the guides create new tourism ‘centers’ and attractions by separating maps of Riga by day and Riga by night. In this case, Riga’s image becomes ambivalent, having multiple faces and identities. The city is described as having different rhythms, encompassing both the ‘normal’, everyday life of work and routine, which transforms into a more active nightlife. One of the ‘city guides’ describes the transformation of the city as the following:

Our city lives! Its rhythm is fast and never-ending, like a heartbeat, it does not stop even at night. When the daily rush and hurry ends and the bright lanterns are lit, a completely different life may begin. Girls fly out in the darkened streets of Riga followed by men’s excited eyes... The pubs are full of people, music fills the streets of the city and the air is filled with the taste of sin. Life is running like a wild stream. All you need to do is to follow the pace or just watch. The choice is up to you... (Guide for enjoying Winter 2007:40).

Here, the night becomes a sphere of feelings, pleasure and bodies, which are normally hidden during the day, thus transforming into ‘the Other’, with more pronounced female characteristics. Another image provided by the public tourism authorities, gives the city rather ambivalent characteristics.

She is not only a noble and somewhat old-fashioned lady. She is also a naughty and merry teenager who walks down the street in her modern high-heeled shoes (LTDA The land that sings 2007:4).

Thus, the identity of Riga is fluid and hybrid; she becomes both ‘noble’ and ‘naughty’, old and young, traditional and modern. The ‘traditional’ and ‘modern’ symbolism may both be interpreted as having feminine attributes, but the latter embodies a more sexualized image.

On the one hand, the city by night is described as tempting, attractive and sensual for the visitor. On the other hand, the city is described as potentially dangerous for the visitors, who need to be aware of the risks of the city by night. The tourist her/himself is portrayed as a potential target, standing out in
the crowd, and may be ‘out of place’ in certain areas of the city. The safety tips provided in the guides include looking out for pick-pocketing, keeping track of drinks, choosing established taxi companies, not carrying too much cash, but also to “use condoms if you decide to have sex” (Riga This Night March/April 2006:27). The guide also includes a ‘mini dictionary’, including the translation of phrases such as, “Are you alone?”, “You are beautiful” and “I want to take you home” into Latvian (ibid p. 4). Even though the general safety information may be relevant for both women and men, the guides are clearly targeting a foreign, male, heterosexual tourist, looking for adventure and entertainment and for whom the potential risks of nightlife may be part of the travel experience.

The ‘dangers’ of Riga’s nightlife have been discussed in Latvian media, with reports of tourists having been swindled for money in nightclubs and strip clubs. A special tourist 24-hour phone ‘hotline’ was also opened by the Latvian Tourism Development Agency in 2007 for tourists to call if they had been victims of crime (Female representative LTDA, February 2007). The calls for nightlife safety have also evolved into a business idea among different tour operators, offering guided ‘Nightlife tours’. The tour companies are listed in the city guides, and the homepages of the companies warn the tourists not to get ‘ripped off’ at different tourist bars and night clubs, or by potential ‘prostitutes’ on the street (www.rigaoutthere.com; www.partyinriga.com; www.nightliferiga.com 2008-02-20). The Baltic Guide describes the company Riga Out There as “experts in safe tourism”, by stating the following:

This could happen to any tourist here: you wake up late morning and find yourself in a strange apartment on the outskirts of Riga with no money, no documents, and no dignity. The last thing you remember was you met a gorgeous girl at a Riga bar, and you took a sip of free beer. That scenario is unlikely to develop if you have a trusted guide by your side, if you have someone who knows cultural differences, and who is able to sift through many bars, clubs and dance places to be able to tell you which ones are good and safe and which ones have a questionable reputation (www.balticguide.ee 2008-02-20).

Nightlife packages, tours and excursion programs are offered alongside spa packages, sport and weekend trips. In these cases accommodation in Riga and visits to night clubs are combined with different activities such as limousine tours, shooting, bobsleighing etc (www.rigaoutthere.com 2008-02-20). The company Riga Out There offers the nightlife package “Steak and striptease”, including food, drinks, VIP-visits, and live striptease, with the following slogan.

A feast in every sense of the word! Steaks, striptease and beer - what more could a man want! (www.rigaoutthere.com 2008-02-20).
Another tour company, Nightlife in Riga offers ‘VIP Adult Nightlife’ packages, ‘Playboy Limo party’ as well as ‘The Ultimate Bad Boy weekend’, which include “VIP nightclub access and drinks, Vodka Drinking School, a different sexy girl each night, one of the day packages, lunch, a box of 10 different types of beer, a bottle of vodka and whiskey, security and an English-speaking attendant” (www.nightlifeinriga.com 2008-02-20). In this case, the more organized forms of ‘nightlife tours’ can also be analysed as emphasizing ‘privacy’ and sophistication, as they increasingly target foreign tourists (see Askola & Okolski 2001).

Regulating sex tourism in Latvia
Zarina (2001) argues that the officially legal ‘Sex and entertainment industry’37, as described in the city guides above, tends to exist in a grey zone in the Baltic countries, which has become more of a façade of the development of more organized forms of prostitution, parts of which are forbidden by law in Latvia. Street prostitution, usually organized by pimps, is not considered being the most common form of prostitution in Latvia. Rather, prostitution in nightclubs, strip clubs and bars or other ‘legal’ parts of the entertainment industry is believed to be more widespread. Clubs with foreigners are also considered to be more ‘profitable’ for prostitution activities compared to other clubs and bars. The clubs themselves may also profit from the prostitution activities, either by offering services within their own premises, or through different types of escort services to the clients’ apartments or hotels (Zarina In: Askola & Okolski et al. 2001). The debates of prostitution and sex tourism, their causes, effects and solutions are too complex to be discussed in detail in this chapter. However, the next sections will analyse attitudes towards sex tourism and prostitution, which also involve perceptions of gender and sexuality, as well as the legal framework, which also affects how Riga as a ‘sex tourism destination’ is perceived and how the image can or should be changed.

‘Normalisation’ of prostitution and sex tourism
The support for a ‘normalisation’ of prostitution in the Baltic countries is discussed in the Estonian study from 2003, in which a majority of the respondents

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37 Okolski (2001) defines the Sex and Entertainment Industry (S&EI) as the following; “Services rendered within S&EI range from relatively “innocent” telephone sex, performances in night bars, variety shows, discotheques or casinos as bartender, waitress or dancer, and playing a role of hostess, escort or companion, to posing in pornographic acts/films or participating in live sex shows, to services offered in massage parlours and brothels. A key factor in the selection of immediate service provider is her (sometimes, his) sex appeal, and a key profession within S&EI is prostitution” (Okolski In: Askola & Okolski 2001:106).
argued that prostitution has had a long history and will constitute a ‘natural’ part of both the contemporary and future society. In this case, prostitution was not considered to be a ‘real’ problem, compared to other social and economic questions which the state and society had to deal with in the transition period. Thus, questions relating to prostitution were given a marginal role, and the Latvian respondents claimed that the Latvian state was not yet ready to interfere and deal with stricter regulations concerning prostitution. Rather, the state should have a ‘neutral’ approach and not act as a moral intermediary. From this perspective, the laws and actions of the Latvian state were considered to be sufficient, since they signaled a more ‘neutral’ approach and golden ‘middle way’, which neither supported nor banned prostitution as such. Prostitution was recognized as a part of the new market economy, which then could be regulated by the state by fighting the ‘real’ problems such as the rise of criminal activities, the spread of diseases and health risk issues, and increased use of alcohol and narcotics. Thus, prostitution was considered to be a ‘private’ concern, and the state should not interfere in the buying and selling of sexual services between people. Here, arguments that people were free to choose how to use their bodies became evident, which was described as an issue of integrity, of ‘choice’ and human rights.

According to Pajumets et al. (2004), the system used to deal with and control prostitution in Latvia since 1998 can be classified as an ‘neo-regulatory system’, in which the state does not recognize prostitution as such as a criminal offence, but aims at regulating its activities (Pajumets et al. 2004). Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) argues that the Latvian state has had a liberal approach towards the development of the sex industry, which reflects economic interests and ways of how money and profits can be made within the new market economy. In short, the modern economy has become an arena on which trade is open for

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38 The study was based on qualitative interviews with ‘opinion-leaders’ in Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania and Russia, working within media, NGOs, politics, and the private sector (see Pajumets et al. 2004).

39 According to the “Regulations to limit prostitution” set by the Latvian government in 2001, all Latvian prostitutes must obtain a ‘health card’ from the authorities, and go through regular obligatory medical examinations. Latvian law criminalizes brothels, pimping and “compelling engaging in prostitution”, which involves ‘forced’ or ‘involuntary’ forms of prostitution. Child prostitution, comprising minors under the age of 18, is also prohibited by law (Askola et al. 2001:66ff; Regulations to limit prostitution 2001). Despite the regulations, official statistics from 2000 show that only 200 prostitutes had registered for the health cards, a number which is not considered to correspond to the actual number of active prostitutes. The actual number of prostitutes may range around 2500, as reported by the local police in Riga; while some research studies indicate that there might be as many as 35 000 prostitutes in Latvia, including both those working full-time and part-time or on a seasonal basis (Okolski 2001:127).
almost everything, including women’s bodies, which are commodified and objectified within this process (see Stukuls-Eglitis 2002; Pajumets et al. 2004). Prostitution is perceived as something “voluntary”, as a deliberate choice for women to make a living just as any other profession or business in the market economy (Kase et al. 2006). Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) argues that the debates of prostitution in Latvia mainly have concerned the legalization of prostitution, making it to merely a juridical question, motivated by the right of women to express their ‘sexual freedom’ (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:220). Liljeström (1995) stresses that sexuality within the Soviet Union gained wider expressions mainly during the 1980s, and can be compared to the sexual revolution in the Western world during the 1960s. This was an effect of the more liberal political climate, and increasing Western influences. From one perspective, sexual liberation was regarded as expressions of democracy and freedom. These views also reflected a male public discourse, which promoted an increasing focus on women’s bodies and sexuality (rather than men’s), which were increasingly exposed and commercialized through the spread of pornography (Liljeström 1995).

Prostitution and ‘morality’
In the summer of 2007, a month-long campaign against sex tourism, called STOP sex-terrorism, was carried out in Riga by the NGO Re!Action together with the advertising company Alfa Centrs. One of the aims was to “challenge the opinion that Riga is a place for cheap debauchery” (www.alfacentrs.lv 2008-01-16). Spokesmen of the campaign emphasised the importance of erasing the image of Riga as a sex tourism destination, since it contributed to the idea that everything and everyone could be bought cheap in Latvia. The campaign initiators claimed that women who were not involved in the actual sex business were often harassed by foreign tourists, while other women actively sought contact and sexual relations with foreigners. The latter group of initiatives was described as a contributing factor to Riga’s image as a ‘sex tourism destination’.

One could think that such image of Riga has been established with the introduction of the cheap airlines in Latvia, which increased the flow of foreign tourists to our country. However, the source of the problem is not the increase in the number of tourists, but rather the freely-available sex services that girls in Latvia offer in nightclubs, bars and other venues (www.alfacentrs.lv 2008-01-16).

The Baltic Times described the background to the campaign as the following.
Numerous local women encourage sex tourism by sleeping with these hedonistic visitors, thereby exacerbating the number of stag parties and soiling the reputation of Latvia. Another worry is that this practice will quickly lead to Riga gaining the reputation of a city of sin, which would only damage the city’s cultural prestige, but could lead to increased prostitution and a host of other problems (The Baltic Times ‘Stopping sex ‘terrorism’ in Riga, 2007-08-01, www.baltictimes.com 2008-01-14).

Thus, the campaign was targeted mainly to young Latvian girls, not merely those actively involved in the sex business as prostitutes or as other ‘sex workers’, but those indirectly affected and participating, to make them avoid sexual relations with foreign tourists. The main mission was to spread information among the public through advertisement campaigns and raids in the Old town of Riga, directed at “young and successful girls”, and media publicity through channels such as television and support from established artists, celebrities and private businesses. The campaign included around 20 different sponsors, including Riga Airport (www.alfacentrs.lv 2008-01-16; www.baltictimes.com 2007-08-01). The goal of the campaign was to raise the debate and awareness about sex tourism as a problem.

(…) stopping the nonchalance towards this problem, as well as raising the self-esteem of the society and younger women in particular, by making one think about whether it’s worth to have a one-night stand for a glass of cocktail (www.alfacentrs.lv 2008-01-16).

The STOP sex-terrorism campaign can be analysed from different perspectives. On the one hand, it may represent an effort to empower women to make a stand actively against the sex tourism industry, and to reject the exploitation and commercialization of women by foreign tourists. In this case, women are given a more ‘active’ role, by encouraging and supporting women to say ‘no’ to both unpaid and paid sex, and not merely become ‘passive’ sexual objects of the male gaze. On the other hand, it is difficult to ignore the fact that women are being blamed for Riga’s deteriorated image as a sex tourism destination, since it is local women’s behaviour rather than the (male) tourists’ acts that are judged as ‘immoral’ and not accepted by the society. In some ways, the campaign reflects a wish to save women’s dignity and morality, and prevent them from being ‘victims’ of a behaviour and sexuality which is considered as being harmful.

The rather ambivalent message of the campaign is also reflected by the images used for marketing on websites, posters and information folders. One of the main images portrays an inflatable (sex) doll dressed in a sleeveless short dress and a blond wig, face anonymous, masked eyes, and the mouth merely a hole. The doll holds a lit dynamite cartridge in her hand, and the image also
contains the Latvian text: “Sekss turisms? Sekss terrorisms?” (Sex tourism? Sex terrorism). The campaign was completed with the unveiling of the “monument of the Fallen Girl”, a large graffiti painting in the Esplanade Park in Riga (www.alfacentrs.lv 2008-01-16). The monument was created by local young artists, and according to the campaign activists, the monument was “dedicated to a symbolic ‘Fallen Girl’ who engages in unsafe one-night stands” (The Baltic Times 2007-07-27, www.baltictimes.com 2008-01-16). One graffiti images published in The Baltic Times shows a row of girls in bikinis, and the Latvian word ‘razosana’, meaning ‘production’. A number of arrows point out the direction of the girls, aimed towards a number of darker skinned figures, with ‘macho’ written on their foreheads. The image was described as the following by The Baltic Times; “a production line of similar-looking beautiful women coming out of Latvia, only to fall off the belt and into the arms of pawing, demon-like sex tourists” (The Baltic Times ‘Stopping sex ‘terrorism’ in Riga, 2007-08-01, www.baltictimes.com 2008-01-14).

Images of the ‘fallen woman’
Both the marketing images and the monument of the ‘Fallen Girl’ further reinforce the message of the campaign as illustrating the delicate balance between on the one hand Latvian women as ‘Madonnas’ or ‘Mothers of the nation’, and on the other hand, the image of women as potential ‘Prostitutes’ or as embodying the role of the ‘Magdalen’. The latter became a representation of ‘the fallen woman’, which traditionally and historically has had different meanings. The expression may refer to women having sex before marriage, acting out a female sexuality, seducing men and therefore living in ‘sin’ and shame, and not gaining much respect from society. The ‘fallen’ woman represents she who breaks against the norm of female, passive and controlled sexuality (Nead 1984). The identity of the girls portrayed in the campaign is rather ambivalent. The women are perceived to have the power to tempt men (and sex tourists); they are beautiful and attractive as ‘ethnic’ Latvian women, but by ‘seducing’ or by being seduced, women become the ‘fallen girls’, the inflatable dolls.

Even though the market economy has called for more liberal views on sexuality as discussed above, including more ‘Western’ gender ideals, it also threatens more traditional norms of society, including ‘rules’ of women’s sexuality. The more ‘conservative’ approaches to sexuality have roots in the Soviet period. Liljeström (1995) argues that sexuality during the Soviet period, and especially women’s sexuality, was something that was hidden and perceived as a potential threat for societal order and control by the state (Liljeström 1995).
Between 1987 and 1995, prostitution was illegal and considered as an “administrative offence” in Latvia, based on the regulations introduced during the Soviet regime (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002). However, the approach towards prostitution changed significantly during the later part of the communist period, and placed the moral responsibility on the women themselves rather than on societal inequalities, making prostitutes sinful and therefore degenerating for the Soviet society (Liljeström 1995). These opinions still linger in the post-socialist Latvian society. Even though women are considered to be forced into prostitution due to economic hardships, it is still perceived as an ‘immoral choice’ for women, constituting a threat to people’s fundamental morals and values. In the Estonian study of prostitution discussed above, some respondents claimed that the existence of prostitution was a symptom of a deteriorating society, as women were viewed as ‘parasites’, living on and infesting the moral grounds of society (Pajumets et al. 2004).

The (in)visible sex tourist

The STOP sex-terrorism campaign as illustrated above was mainly targeting the destination (her)self, and not the sex tourist visiting Riga. Some of the images used in the campaign used headlines, “Wanted sexterrorists”, together with a puzzle of overlapping (male) facial images, forming an indistinguishable identity of the tourist (www-re-action.lv 2008-02-21). Thus, the tourist was depicted as potentially dangerous, but impossible to identify (or to convict), being every man (but no specific man), with multiple faces and features. The identity of the sex tourist visiting Latvia or other post-socialist countries also remains invisible in research. Eespere (2005) argues that the main focus of research about prostitution in the Baltic States has been on the prostitutes themselves rather than on their clients, in attempts to map the development of prostitution. Few analyses have been made to research different features of the clients’ role within the sex industry, including foreign tourists (Eespere 2005). Pajumets et al. (2004) claim that placing little or no focus on the sex buyer himself/herself, makes prostitution a ‘women’s problem’, with few parallels to questions of gender inequality, and men’s and women’s different positions within society and on the labour market (Pajumets et al. 2004).

So far, there are few countries other than Sweden which has introduced a neo-abolitionistic system to control and regulate prostitution. The Swedish system has criminalized the pimps and the sex buyers rather than the prostitutes since 1999, making the state largely protecting women as ‘victims’ of prostitution. In the Estonian survey of prostitution, a majority of the
respondents in all Baltic States and Russia expressed widespread skepticism against the Swedish legislative approach introduced in countries such as Sweden. Some respondents even claimed that it would be a threat to the ‘normal’ order of society to punish the sex-buyers themselves, which would have serious consequences and eventually result in increased male-related violence since it would deny men’s biological needs. Some respondents even suggested, with references to Sweden, that criminalizing sex buyers would turn men into either homosexuals or ‘pedophiles’, and thereby threaten the ‘natural’ heterosexual gender order. Estonian respondents also expressed concern that the neo-abolitionistic laws, which have been discussed as an alternative in Finland, would have effects for the development of prostitution and sex tourism in Estonia. The critics claimed that such laws would force men to search for sex elsewhere, and that Tallinn and other ‘Eastern’ tourism destinations would suffer from increasing social problems due to the high number of sex tourists. This development was also considered to be a problem as an effect of the upcoming membership in the EU (the study was conducted in 2003), which was considered to further open up the borders for sex tourism, and for other sex workers coming to, for example, Latvia to work as a ‘transit’ country to the West (Pajumets et al. 2004).

Conclusion
The aim of this chapter has been to discuss the development and promotion of tourism in relation to a transforming genderised ‘Geographies of Europeanisation’, in how Latvia is actively manifesting its reorientation from ‘Eastern’ towards ‘Western’ Europe, economically, politically, but also symbolically. Moreover, the purpose has been to analyse examples of how the effects of this process are genderised, by critically examining the image of Riga as a ‘sex tourism destination’. The transition process is often described as the post-socialist countries’ search for a more ‘Western’ identity, based on the implementation of different economic and political reforms. Thus, by making the necessary adjustments required to fulfill criteria for being termed ‘market economies’, and by accessing organizations and institutions such as the EU, Latvia and other former Central and Eastern countries will automatically become ‘Westernised’. Still, I would suggest that this process is far more complex than a simple shift from East to West, and that debates of Riga as a ‘sex tourism destination’ illustrate how different Western and Eastern ideals become both intertwined and challenged. The identity of Riga as a tourism destination becomes ‘caught in-between’ East and West as emphasized by Kuus (2004). Riga is not yet part
of the West, and is still struggling with its Eastern heritage, which is both re-
jected and highlighted.

Reclaiming a more Western identity in the transition process is perceived
both as an opportunity and a problem. On the one hand, the identification with
the West is believed to have positive characteristics, and almost as inevitable in
the post-socialist period. Latvia wants to ‘return’ to Europe, be a part of the EU
as a unit for security and economic reasons. In this case, the aim is to ‘follow
the same tracks’ as other countries in Western Europe in order to reach
economic growth and modern living standards. Tourism is perceived as a tool
and possibility in this process, in generating jobs and income as well as in
contributing to a positive identity, manifesting this return and belonging to the
European context. Thus, the identification with Europe becomes part of the
Latvian identity, emphasizing the common values. Part of the aims of this
European project is not merely attempting to reconstruct the nation state, but
also tends to downplay the role of the state in favour of the market as well as
more local forms of governance and reliance of supra-national organizations
such as the EU. This is illustrated in the process of regionalism, which provides
more power to different regions, for example, for tourism development and
promotion. In this case, regionalism may serve as a way of challenging the
dualisms between East and West, since the focus is on how Latvia and its
regions may actively take part in diversifying Europe, with the result that the
East is now a part of the West, which would imply that East and West no
longer should be treated as separated or as homogenous units.

Turning towards the West is also perceived as a ‘problem’, which is
reflected in the assumed negative effects of tourism and debates of sex tourism.
Joining the European project includes not merely a symbolic belonging but is
manifested through a greater inflow of Western tourists, which is considered as
having unwanted effects such as a rise in crimes and sex tourism. Thus, Riga as
a tourism destination does not only merely become a part of the West, but is
also regarded as being affected by problems originating in Western European
countries, expressed through the behaviour of male Western tourists. Conse-
quently, Riga’s reborn Western identity may be challenged, revealing power
relations between the East and the West, as how the destination is portrayed as
a playground for Western tourists. Despite the efforts to ‘westernise’ Riga
through tourism promotion and market economic reforms, the city as a tourism
destination remains a part of the Eastern feminine ‘Other’, as deviant from
Western Europe. Riga tends to be constructed and commercialized as an ‘ex-
otic’ and ‘erotic’ tourism destination; dangerous, unexpected and sinful. In this
case, the focus is on how the prices of nightlife and entertainment in Latvia are lower, as well as on how the looks and behaviour of the girls are different from those in the West. This image is upheld through marketing activities within the public and private sector as well as among tourists, partly by visiting Riga, and partly by discussing their experiences on-line on the Internet.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the construction of the nation state includes a positive image of women as embodying the base of the nation state through their roles as Mothers and in their practices for preserving cultural elements associated with the nation state. In the debates about sex tourism, women become deviant symbols of the nation state, portrayed as sinful, unwanted elements. The idea of the nation state has Western European origins, but in this case, women as symbols of prostitution are related to more modern Western ideals of sexuality. The new market economy is perceived as making women ‘irrational’ and ‘immoral’, turning them into both ‘victims’ and ‘opportunist actors’. However, women’s adjustment to more Western ideals of sexuality and femininity also remains to be controversial due to the continuation of more ‘Eastern’ socialist norms of sexuality, which works together with more traditional and conservative ideals of femininity and motherhood. Thus, women as potential prostitutes engaging in a too outspoken sexuality are regarded as ‘fallen women’, since they challenge the ideals of ‘the Mothers of the nation’. The responsibility of the state remains unclear in regulating sex tourism and prostitution, in how this industry is considered to be a ‘natural’ part of the new Western market economy, making sex tourism and prostitution a ‘women’s problem’ rather than dependent on the demand generated by Western and local men.
Chapter five
Geographies of relic-communism

During the Soviet regime, the intersection at the former Intourist Hotel Lātriņa (today hotel Reval Latvija) became a central site for the symbolic manifestation of communistic ideology in Riga. Here, a statue of Lenin was placed, facing the east, and thus turning his back on the Freedom monument and ‘Milda’ who faces the west. Lenin’s right arm was raised in the direction towards Moscow, along the street Brīvības iela which at that time had been renamed Lenīna iela (Lenin street). Unlike the restrictions applied to the Freedom monument, loyal communist sympathizers among the citizens of Riga were encouraged to lay flowers at the base of the Lenin statue. Shortly after independence, the statue of Lenin, just as other physical symbols and relics of the communist regime, was removed from Riga’s urban environment (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002; Grava 1999). Consequently, for a foreign tourist today, it is difficult to find traces of the Soviet period in Riga, just as in other post-socialist countries.

A place which is marked on the tourist map and still bears the remnants of the Soviet past, in both a material and narrative sense, is the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia. The museum is located centrally in the Old town of Riga, on the banks of the Daugava river. If you walk towards the river along Kalku iela, you will arrive at the Town House square and find the museum located to the right of the House of the Blackheads. The black, windowless façade consists of squared reliefs and bears resemblance to a large container or a bunker, placed on two large pillars, making it possible for pedestrians to pass under its body. The museum was opened in 1993, but the building was inaugurated in 1970, an event which also celebrated Lenin’s 100th birthday. Originally, the building constituted the Latvian Red Riflemen’s museum, built in red copper and designed by the architect Gunārs Lāsis-Grīnbergs. Until the time of independence, the aim of the museum was to manifest communistic values and ideologies, especially through educational activities among the younger part of the population. The Latvian Riflemen was originally a unit within the Czarist Russian military, formed in the beginning of the 20th Century, which fought German troops during WWI. Still, some soldiers also supported Lenin’s uprising against the Czarist regime and fought together with the Bolsheviks, efforts which were honoured during the Soviet period. A red marble statue of the Latvian Riflemen still stands next to the occupation
museum at the Latvian riflemen’s square. The statue has been an object for some controversy; some claim that the statue upholds communist ideologies, while others interpret the monument as a dedication to those riflemen who served Latvian interests during WWI (www.occupationmuseum.lv 2008-02-23).

When the museum was opened in the 1990s, its purpose was to interpret the Soviet and Nazi history in Latvia. The funding of the museum was based on public donations, for example by exile Latvians, and has remained a private institution, receiving around 106,000 domestic and foreign visitors in 2006 (www.occupationmuseum.lv, 2008-02-23). The aim of the museum according to the home page is:

(…) to portray life during the three occupation periods suffered by Latvia and Latvians. The items of the exhibition tell about Latvia during the fifty+ year-long subjugation: about power politics, about Soviet and Nazi terror, about the destruction of Latvia’s economy, about Soviet and Nazi totalitarian ideologies, about the opposition to the regimes, and finally how Latvians regained their freedom in 1991 (www.occupationmuseum.lv 2008-02-23).

As the name of the museum indicates, the focus is on rewriting and reinterpreting Latvian history, to tell the stories from a Latvian rather than Russian point of view, underlining that Latvia was occupied rather than voluntarily annexed into the Soviet Union at the end of WWII. The question of whether or not the invasion of Soviet forces actually constituted a formal reoccupation of Latvia or liberation of Latvia from Nazism is still alive and debated in Latvia.
The latter version is mainly supported by groups of the Russian-speaking minorities, while the reestablishment and reconstruction of the Latvian nation state has been based on the former scenario, indicating that Latvia and Latvians became victims of an occupation implemented on an invalid basis. Thus, the past still remains controversial and is constantly being negotiated and contested. In some sense, the occupation museum can be said to represent the Soviet past as being encapsulated into a ‘black box’ or container, isolated from the public and everyday life, while the space between its walls calls for remembering, mourning and recognising the loss of Latvian independence and the death of ethnic Latvian citizens.

The example from the occupation museum illustrates how tourism may become a way of communicating, interpreting and negotiating the Soviet past and its heritage, which has both material and ‘intangible’ social and cultural dimensions. The aim of this chapter is to analyse tourism development in Latvia as reflecting ‘geographies of relic-communism’, representing a continuity with the past, and as being influenced by previous structures and relations anchored in the Soviet past. My approach involves questions of how Soviet ‘relics’ or heritage, in both material and socio-cultural forms, take their expressions within tourism, with a focus on tourism marketing and commodification of the communist past. I will also discuss how the process of highlighting the past may be complex and controversial, involving a tension between the efforts of making the past invisible due to the wish to ‘normalise’ the Latvian society, and the continuous and inevitable visibility of the Soviet heritage, which takes multiple forms. As noted in previous chapters, tourism has become a way of manifesting a newfound national identity, with references to a ‘unique’ Latvian cultural heritage. Thus, the quest for promoting a Latvian identity through tourism raises questions of who is given the right to define and interpret the past as part of the contemporary ‘national common space’, and shared by both ‘ethnic’ Latvians and Russian-speaking minorities. This process may include conflicting interests between different groups of inhabitants on the one hand, rooted in questions of citizenship and minority rights, as well as the tourists’ demand and fascination of the ‘East’ on the other.

The chapter will start by discussing more ‘continuity oriented’ approaches to the transition process, emphasising the need for a more diverse and ‘situated’ analysis of the post-socialist period which recognises the legacies of the Soviet period. I will then give an overview of the historical development of tourism during the Soviet period, and illustrate how the orientation towards ‘Eastern’ markets and Russia have continued since independence in terms of tourism
arrivals, trade, capital and investments, alongside with the Europeanisation process. The remaining part of the chapter includes an analysis of how tourism participates in negotiating the past Soviet heritage; firstly, how tourism has been affected by a process of ‘normalising’ the Latvian space in a more physical and material sense, secondly, how the remaining heritage is commercialised and what effects this process involves, and thirdly, I will discuss how the Russian socio-cultural heritage is made (in)visible within tourism marketing, and relate it to issues of ethnicity, language policies and integration40.

The transition as continuity with the past

The modernization approaches and theories of transition discussed in Chapter four have been criticized from different perspectives. Here, alternative theories advocating a continuous and historicist approach to the analysis of the post-socialist transformation process will be discussed, constituting the basis for how geographies of relic-communism can be understood41. Unlike modernization theories, which promote a discontinuous approach and a radical break with the past political and economic system, the continuous and historicist approach underscores that the structural legacies of the Soviet past have to be taken into account when analysing the development in post-socialist countries. From the latter perspective, the structure and organisation of the Soviet institutions are considered to have effects for the outcomes in the post-socialist societies despite numerous economic and political reforms. David Stark (1996) emphasizes that the transformation process includes

(…) rebuilding organizations and institutions not on the ruins but with the ruins of communism (Stark 1996:95 In: Williams & Balaz 2000, my emphasis).

The continuous approach highlights how post-socialist countries choose multiple and diverse pathways in their transition, and are both restricted and enabled

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40 This chapter is based partly on the results of a text analysis study, including printed tourism brochures (LTDA 2004 Discover Latvia, LTDA 2007 The land that sings), and material published electronically at the LTDA website (www.latviatourism.lv), and by the Latvian Institute, including themes such as “Music in Latvia”, “Society”, “Culture”, “History”, and “Nature”, which also are available as printed fact sheets. The text analysis has also included national policy documents concerning questions of integration (The National Programme The Integration of Society in Latvia 2001), as well as as well as Internet based information and marketing provided by private tour operators such as www.rigaouthere.com and www.argonauthotel.com, which offer tours with Soviet heritage themes. Newspaper articles published in the Baltic Times and Dagens Nyheter regarding the events surrounding the Bronze soldier in Tallinn have also been analysed, as examples of the ‘normalisation of space’ in a post-socialist context.

41 See e. g. Smith & Pickles 1998; Stark & Bruszt 1998; Herrschel et al. 2006.
by their communist past. This also opens up for more diverse local outcomes of the transition, which avoids treating the post-socialist countries as one homogenous group or region, as well as dismissing claims that they would follow the exact same stages in the transition process. The ‘transitional’ ‘Eastern’ countries comprise in fact 27 different states and include a population of 270 million people (Pickles & Smith 1998:10). Gal and Kligman (2000a) criticize the attempts to rank different post-socialist countries depending on their degree of ‘development’ and transition, which includes analyses of which countries have been the most “successful” in terms of democratic or economic reforms (Gal & Kligman 2000a). Thus, a more diverse and heterogenous approach would be needed in order to analyse the process and outcomes of the transition, on the basis of the countries’ multiple social, cultural and political contexts. In other words, different countries choose different ‘paths’ or ‘trajectories’ when encountering transition. Each country had a different role and function within the Soviet Union, which also affects the period following independence. The process of transition is also affected by external influences and processes, in which global processes interrelate with the local setting. Therefore, neither socialism nor capitalism can be treated as two homogenized ideologies and structures (see Gal & Kligman 2000a, Pickles & Smith 1998; Herrschel et al. 2006).

Recognising the structural legacy of communism also rejects the idea that post-socialist countries constitute a tabula rasa for the inscription of western models of development, and highlights how the socialist heritage actively takes part in shaping the future society in the post-socialist period (Young In: Herrschel 2006:76). Young (2006) emphasises that each of the post-socialist countries develops its own ‘hybrid’ version of ‘post-communist capitalism’, which is a mixture between old socialist political and economic structures and Western market economy (Young In: Herrschel 2006:97). I find this statement being of crucial importance for understanding the transformation process from a more geographical perspective, since it underlines the significance of place and the ‘situatedness’ of the local context. Here, parallels can be made to Massey’s (2005) discussion of relational space as “the sphere of possibility of the existence of multiplicity” (2005:9), which rejects the existence of a single homogenous space and instead advocates a view of space which recognises multiple and alternative stories and ‘trajectories’. Just as Latvia was not a ‘tabula rasa’ upon the arrival of the Red Army and Nazi forces, nor did development ‘start over’ at the time of independence. Massey stresses the constant continuity
of space, in both a social and material sense, in which the future is open rather than constrained.

Loose ends and ongoing stories. ‘Space’, then, can never be that completed simultaneity in which all interconnections have been established, in which everywhere is already (and at that moment unchangingly) linked to everywhere else (Massey 2005:107).

Path-dependency and neo-classicism

The historicist approach can be divided into two different approaches: path dependency and the neo-classical approach. In the first case, focus is put on the role of the institutional framework and legacy for the development of post-socialist states, which requires an acknowledgement of the past in order to encounter the present and future. Thus, the legacies in terms of institutions and prevailing social relations regulate both the opportunities and the restrictions for the transition process. Here, the focus is on the relationship among different actors, and how they together interact and contribute to the transition process (Blokker 2005; Stark & Bruszt 1998). The path-dependency approach has been criticised for being too ‘deterministic’ and limiting of the future outcomes of the development in post-socialist countries due to its strong emphasis on past structural influences as restricting rather than enabling the transition. Hence, the structural legacies would imply limited action space for people, making them into passive respondents to structural change, rather than active subjects controlling and affecting the outcomes of the transition process (see Joosse 2007).

The discussion of structure versus agency is complex but central in order to recognise the character and outcome of the transformation process. I will return to these issues in chapter seven, when discussing livelihood and work within tourism from a theoretical perspective. The second version, the neo-classical sociological approach, has many similarities to path-dependency since it also emphasises the historical context and how the results of transition are diverse and multiple. However, capitalism is viewed as ‘capitalism without capitalists’, which illustrates the lack of social groups and classes responsible for realising the aims of the transition. The importance of different forms of capital and agency is stressed, for example, the superiority of economic capital in the

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42 Path-dependency as a concept has been used in a range of different disciplines, including economics and social sciences from the 1980s onwards. Here, I refer to how path-dependency has been highlighted within research in post-socialist countries, which emphasizes the role of institutions in the transition process. See e. g. Stark & Bruszt (1998) for a more in-depth discussion of path-dependency, and Eyal et al. (1998) for an analysis of the neo-classical approach.
Chapter five – Geographies of relic-communism

West, while cultural capital (knowledge, technology) is considered as being more important in the East (Eyal et al. 1998; Ghodsee 2005).

Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) emphasises that the political narrative which argues for continuity with the past rather than a radical break with the Soviet legacy and history, has been weak in Latvia since independence. This evolutionary narrative has been more prominent within questions of citizenship, integration and rights for the Russian minority, but also including questions of welfare. Development and change are important dimensions of the narrative, but may include both a focus on developing the eastern relations as well as the western collaborations in terms of politics and trade. Stukuls-Eglitis also points out that the evolutionary narrative to some extent carries tendencies of nostalgia, glorifying the past socialist welfare system in contrast to a contemporary system based on individual rather than collective success (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:229). She identifies a related political narrative, the reactionary narrative, which she claims had less significance in the initial period of Latvia’s independence, but which has been more evident in other post-socialist countries such as Ukraine. In this case, the narrative advocates a return to the Soviet past rather than stressing the continuity with the past, for example, by raising claims to be incorporated within the Russian state. Stukuls-Eglitis does not dismiss this narrative as being unimportant for the future development of Latvia due to the large Russian speaking minority and the proximity to other post-socialist countries which may also advocate a more reactionary narrative (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).

Tourism during the Soviet regime
I would claim that a more continuous and historicist approach is crucial in order to understand the development of tourism in Latvia since independence. The contemporary ‘capitalist’ tourism sector did not emerge from a vacuum, but was built with the ‘ruins’ of the former Soviet recreation system, including infrastructure, social networks and previous tourist flows within the Soviet Union. The ‘Eastern’ orientation of tourism in Latvia is rooted in the historical development of modern tourism since the 19th century, when Latvia was under the rule of Russia. Just as in Estonia, or other European countries such as Sweden and Germany, sea-bathing became fashionable in Latvia at the turn of the century. The development of tourism was driven mainly by the urban middle and upper classes, escaping the industrialised cities and finding alternative envi-
environments for leisure in the developing seaside resorts. Travelling was also made possible through the development of infrastructure such as railways (see Löfgren 1999; Worthington 2003). Riga became a destination for travellers from the Russian empire during this period, attracting both Western and Russian tourists. In the interwar period (1920-1940), tourism was recognised as an important source of national income by the independent Latvian state, and the development of tourism was organised and governed as part of the state institutions. During this period, the emphasis was on developing domestic rather than international tourism, also as a consequence of the decreased number of Russian visitors following the isolation within the Soviet Union. Significant numbers of tourists also arrived from neighbouring Baltic countries as well as Germany (Rozite 1998).

The organisation and character of tourism transformed drastically during the Soviet regime. After WWII, Latvia was incorporated into the overall Soviet recreation system, which had several implications. First of all, the aims of tourism changed, from being part of a capitalist economy to constituting a way of supporting and promoting socialist ideals and ideologies. Tourism was believed to be a tool for contributing to a positive image of the vast Soviet territory, creating a sense of belonging both nationally and regionally. Parallels can be made to more nationalistic ideals emerging in the 19th century in Europe, including Sweden, to influence the population to get to know the country, its nature and culture (see Löfgren 1999; Sandell & Sörlin 2000). However, in the Soviet Union, the state was in control of what information and what image should be promoted to the citizens, and tourism was aimed at telling the tale of Soviet history and patriotism, while manifesting the superiority of the communist system compared to Western capitalist economies. In other words, tourism became a tool for propaganda rather than a means for individual freedom and consumption (Hall 1991; 2004).

The form in which tourism was developed also served socialist ideals. First and foremost, travel and recreation were regarded to be a social and collective activity aimed at regenerating the labour force. Tourism became a part of the welfare system, in which the workers’ holidays were heavily subsidised by the state and arranged by the trade unions and state enterprises. The subsidies made travel and accommodation inexpensive, and available for most workers. The main aim was to develop domestic tourism within the Soviet Union, with destinations being the Black Sea and the Baltic Sea, and Latvia.

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43 The development of seaside resorts in Latvia during the interwar and Soviet period will be discussed in more detail in the upcoming Jūrmala case study.
received an increased flow of visitors from different parts of the Soviet Union\textsuperscript{44}. Tourism within the Soviet Union was highly centralised, and involved a large bureaucratic apparatus, relying on the five-year planning system rather than on tourist demand. All types of tourism infrastructure were owned by the state, as part of the overall nationalisation process, including land, private property and former private businesses. A network of destinations for recreation was established, including state-owned hotels, sanatoriums and other accommodation places (Hall 1991; 2004). In Latvia, domestic tourism was organised through the Republican Tourism and Excursion Board. Tourism was a monopoly run by the Soviet state, and the tourism organisations in the Baltic republics had no economic independence, and the income from tourism was generated to the central authorities in Moscow. All investment and planning for tourism were governed by the central level, but the service sector was not prioritised since tourism was considered as being unproductive, and therefore its income was not part of the state budget (Rozite 1998).

Thirdly, and as an effect of the isolation within the Soviet Union, international tourism to and from Latvia and other Soviet republics was strictly regulated. International tourism was controlled through a Latvian branch of the state institution “Intourist”, and the international arrivals were very limited, especially in the early period of Soviet rule. Regulating the flow of foreign visitors became a way of avoiding too much Western influence and capitalistic ideology. The international visitors were assigned different ‘tourist guides’, who in reality worked as government officials and supervised the tourists’ movements, commissioned by the state. In Latvia, the foreign visitors were restricted to certain areas, including Riga, Jūrmala and Sigulda, and were accommodated in special “Intourist” hotels, such as the Intourist Hotel Latvija described in previous sections. According to official Soviet statistics, international tourism to Latvia increased especially in the 1980s, reaching around 50,000 visitors (Rozite 1998). The outgoing tourism from Latvia was subject to restrictions and control and it was difficult for an ‘ordinary’ citizen to obtain a Visa for travelling to Western countries, and international travel remained an arena for the Soviet elite. The low wages and standard of living also made it hard for the average Soviet Latvian citizen to afford travelling abroad. Travelling to other socialist countries was possible through package tours. A liberalisation of tourism within the Soviet Union became evident from the 1960s and onwards, following the end of Stalin’s regime. During this

\textsuperscript{44} The scope of tourism arrivals is difficult to estimate, since official statistics from the Soviet period did not separate Latvian tourists from tourists from other Soviet republics.
period, the standard of living also increased, making individualised travel more available for the Soviet population. The economic significance of western incoming tourism increased during the 1960s, which became the start of more international mass tourism to the Soviet Union, for example, to Bulgaria. In this case, tourism was acknowledged as a way of gaining western currency in order to pay debts to western institutions and make investments in technology to the stagnating Soviet economy. These initiatives continued into the 1980s when the Soviet Union further opened up its economy, following reforms such as Perestroika and Glasnost (Hall 1991; 2004).

Tourism and the Russian market
Despite Latvia’s quest for ‘Europeanisation’ and the wish to redirect the flows of capital, goods and tourists in a more western direction, Latvia’s economy and tourism sector has continued its relations with Central and Eastern European countries in general and Russia in particular, even though they have shown signs of a slow decline (see Dombrovsky & Vanags In: Muiznieks 2006). The statistics of border crossings of foreign overnight travellers from 2007 show that Russian residents are the second largest group, constituting 13.3 percent, following Lithuanians (16.6%)\(^\text{45}\). The number of Russian overnight travellers also shows a significant increase, from around 102,000 in 1999 to 220,000 in 2007 (see Figure 4).

The border crossings continue to be very regional in their character, and still based on mobility between neighbouring countries. One important factor for explaining the continuously high number of Russian border crossings is the presence of the Russian-speaking minorities in Latvia, who have social networks of friends and families stretching over the national borders of Latvia. Firstly, this is reflected within the travel patterns of the Latvian population, where Russia remains to be a popular destination, comprising 11 percent of all border crossings, and constituting the third most visited country for both same-day and overnight trips in 2007, after the two neighbouring Baltic States. Secondly, this is also evident when analysing statistics for incoming visitors to Latvia. According to surveys of persons crossing Latvia’s borders, visiting friends and relatives was the most common purpose for Russian residents in 2007, constituting 30 percent of the total number of Russian same-day and overnight travellers (LCSB Tourism in Latvia 2007).

\(^{45}\) The number of border crossings are measured through a national survey of persons aged 15 years and over crossing Latvia’s borders, separating non-resident and resident travelers, as well as same-day and overnight travelers.
The number of Russian overnight visitors in registered accommodation establishments shows a slow increase, but experienced a sharp decline from 1993 onwards, from around 65,000 overnight visitors to merely 22,000 in 2000. In 2007, the number almost reached previous levels as in the beginning of the 1990s, constituting 60,000 Russian overnight visitors. The slow recovery could also support previous suggestions of that a majority of Russian tourists visit friends and families, which may include staying the night in private homes rather than in hotels. The decline in the number of Russian tourists has also been a result of different Visa-regulations in the 1990s, as well as the fact that Russia just as well as Latvia experienced economic hardships during the 1990s, making people more reluctant to travel abroad (ibid).

Figure 4: Russian overnight travellers and overnight visitors in accommodation establishments 1993/1999-2007.


Tourism and the negotiation of the past
The aims of the transition process have largely comprised different attempts to restore the Latvian society in relation to pre-communist ideals and ‘European’ values, which have been discussed in the two previous chapters. These attempts have been reflected within tourism, in how tourism has been a tool for communicating neo-nationalist ideals as well as a reorientation towards Western Europe. Tourism also constitutes an arena for the negotiation of the past, in how Latvia should handle and interpret the Soviet heritage, in both a material
Chapter five – Geographies of relic-communism

and immaterial sense. As has been suggested earlier, today it is difficult to find direct traces or ‘relics’ of the previous regime in the streets of Riga, which constitute sites or tourist attractions for foreign visitors. Within tourism, it is easier to find remains of the old tourism system, in how old sanatoriums or hotels are rebuilt and remodelled from ‘communist’ to ‘capitalist’, in terms of design, marketing and access by a new Western clientele. Moreover, the traces can also be distinguished by the continuous importance of inflows of visitors from ‘Eastern’ markets, who visit Latvia due to personal contacts or nostalgic memories of former Soviet resorts and activities.

The question of how to highlight and portray the Soviet past remains a controversial issue. Light (2000) states that the post-socialist renegotiations with the past within tourism may include “the desire to deny – even to erase – memories of the recent communist past” (Light 2000:158). Some physical elements of the Soviet history may be relatively easy to combat, for example, communist statues or symbols of the previous regime, but other, larger buildings and architecture may remain to be part of the contemporary city scene. The memories of the past may be even more difficult to come to terms with, and conflicts may arise between the efforts to eliminate as much as possible of the Soviet past, and to interpret history through the development of tourism. Light claims that the interpretation of the past may have diverse meanings and effects for different actors involved in tourism. Highlighting Soviet ‘relics’ may be more controversial for the local population as well as national state authorities, while they may serve as ‘attractions’ for foreign tourists. The controversy is related to the fact that countries such as Latvia still struggling with questions of identity and belonging, as a way of coming to terms with the past (see Light 2000).

In the next sections I will analyse the visibility and invisibility of the Soviet heritage in Latvia, and its controversy within tourism development, based on three interrelated perspectives. Firstly, I will discuss the ‘normalisation of space’ following the Latvian independence, which has involved restoring a pre-communist material and symbolical urban landscape in Riga. I will analyse how this process may also be controversial as it stirs up conflicts among the local population, by drawing parallels with recent developments in the Estonian capital Tallinn, where parts of the Russian minority objected to the removal of a Soviet monument in the central parts of the city in 2007. Secondly, I will discuss attempts to commercialise the Soviet heritage in Latvia and other post-socialist countries. Thirdly and lastly, I will examine how Latvian tourism marketing portrays the Latvian people and its culture, raising questions of ethnic
diversity and heterogeneity, in relation to questions of citizenship and language laws affecting the Russian-speaking minority.

‘Normalising’ space
In Latvia, independence became an opportunity to ‘restore’ Latvian features and symbols of the urban space of Riga, recreating what Stukuls-Eglitis terms a “normal” symbolic landscape (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:130). By redefining buildings, streets and other parts of the physical environment, Latvian history could be rewritten, and the presence of communistic ideology replaced with traditional Latvian artifacts and symbolism (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002). During the Soviet regime, the totalitarian state did not merely control and manifest its power through terror and political action, but also through symbols and other manifestations as a part of the citizens’ everyday life. James (1999) points out how ideology does not merely constitute a set of ideas and ways of thinking, but also has more material dimensions and expression. The process of redesigning a city, both in a socialist and post-socialist context, may have larger effects than implementing political laws and guidelines. The communist icons became components of an overall ideological project, and served as symbols of oppression and control (James 1999). In Soviet Latvia, the icons included for example the presence of the Soviet flag, statues and memorials, and the renaming of the streets to Soviet names and Cyrillic letters, while other symbols such as the Latvian flag, were banned. These regulations were part of a more standardised system of urban political control and planning comprising all Soviet republics and satellite states. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) claims that more than 150 streets, parks and squares acquired new names during the Soviet regime. For example, Aspazijas bulvaris, named after a Latvian poet, was changed to Padomju bulvaris (Soviet Boulevard), and Brivibas iela was termed Lenina iela (Lenin street) (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:135).

The quest for restoring the urban environment in Riga to its pre-war state became an important component of the independence movement in the 1980s. Another dimension was the process of restitution, which meant that land and property should be returned to its former Latvian pre-war owners. Stukuls-Eglitis stresses that the symbolic importance of naming and renaming also became a central ingredient in the process of normalising Latvian space after independence, as a way of restoring symbols and history related to Latvian traditions rather than totalitarian control and Soviet culture (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:134). During the 1980s, the more liberal political climate permitted more active symbolic reforms in this direction, including renaming streets, and the
The presence of the Latvian flag, which was legalised in 1988. The symbols of Lenin were some of the last traces to vanish from Riga’s urban scene, including the Lenin street and the statue of Lenin. The removal was believed to be controversial and “could incite outrage and possibly retribution from conservative forces” (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:140). The initiative to rename the streets into Latvian was raised by inhabitants of Riga together with the party Latvia’s Popular Front. Even before Latvia’s formal independence, stickers with the old pre-war Latvian names were placed on the Russian street signs. This became a contested project, which stirred some conflicts between groups of inhabitants advocating the symbolic Latvian reforms on the one hand, and those belonging to the conservative Russian-speaking groups on the other.

In downtown Riga, where streets had acquired more new names than in the outskirts of the city, some stickers pasted over old names were torn down, or paint was sprayed over the new designations. In the outskirts, where there were many signs with obscured Cyrillic letters, painters with different points of view on the issue erased the Latin script from street signs, leaving only the Russian name below (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:144).

Normalisation’ as exclusion

The process of normalising and reconstructing the urban space of Riga meant that the dominance by the Russian language was replaced by a quest for re-establishing the meaning and importance of the Latvian language and symbols. However, the symbolic landscape also defines and identifies different groups of people, distinguishing the dominating cultural group from others, which may be made deviant or even invisible. Thus, the ‘normalisation of space’ in the post-socialist period may be analysed as also having exclusionary effects, in terms of who is given the right to highlight and interpret the symbolic and material Soviet heritage, which may bear different meanings and significance among groups of ‘ethnic Latvians’ and Russian-speaking minorities.

In the end of May 2007, media reports from Tallinn described ‘ethnic related violence’ and the outbreak of riots in the streets in central parts of the city, expressed through acts of vandalism and violence by youths belonging to the Estonian Russian minority, as well as Russian citizens, resulting in mass arrests of up to 1000 people, and also in the death of a Russian citizen living in Estonia. The background to the riots was the controversial ‘Bronze soldier’

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46 The following section about the riots in Tallinn and controversy of the Bronze statue is based on On-Line articles from the Swedish newspaper Dagens Nyheter (www.dn.se), published between the 1st of January 2007 and the end of February 2008. The articles were accessed 2008-02-28.
monument, which was to be relocated to a war cemetery in the outskirts of Tallinn, a decision initiated by the Estonian government, despite protests among the Russian minority. The statue was placed at its original site at the Tõnismägi hill in central Tallinn in 1947, three years after the Red Army’s invasion of Tallinn during WWII, and during the Soviet regime it was a symbol of the victory over Nazi Germany, and also served as a burial ground for twelve Soviet soldiers who lost their lives. In January 2007, the Estonian government formulated a law which would include ‘the removal of forbidden structures’, which in accordance with the Geneva Convention would prohibit unmarked graves, as well as different monuments or remains which might serve as manifestation of the Soviet or Nazi rule. According to the Estonian parliament, the law was not specifically targeted to the removal of the Bronze statue, and should also include other Estonian monuments. The critique from Russian-speaking minorities as well as Russian politicians and inhabitants of the actions taken by the Estonian government was harsh. An official written statement from the Russian government concluded,

These admirers of Nazism forget that politicians come and go, while the people in the neighboring countries are neighbors forever. To disassemble the monument and violate the fallen soldier’s remnants is just one more evidence of the revenge focused on the politics against Russia and Russians living in Estonia (DN 27/4 2007, my translation from Swedish).

Critique was also raised within the Estonian political sphere. The Estonian president Toomas Hendrik Ilves used his veto against the law which was accepted by the parliament in February, since he regarded it as breaking against the Estonian constitution, which delayed but did not stop the process initiated by the Estonian government. Despite the controversy, the monument was removed to the Garrison cemetery on the 30th of April 2007.

Politicians in both Latvia and Lithuania expressed their concern over the escalating violence in Tallinn, and the potential risk that the riots would spread among the Russian-speaking minorities in the neighboring countries, but largely supported Estonia’s political agenda. Even though violence never spread to Latvia as a result of the event in Tallinn, it raised questions of the Soviet remnants in Riga. In January 2007, claims from the nationalist organisations, such as Latvia’s National Front, All For Latvia and WWII veterans were made to pass a similar law in Latvia as in Estonia, in order to remove the ‘Victory monument’ from a park in the outskirts of central Riga, still named ‘Victory park’ (www.baltictimes.com 2007-06-21, 2007-01-22, 2007-05-17, accessed 2008-02-20). The victory monument was established in 1985, and just like the Bronze
statue, symbolising the Soviet ‘liberation’ of Latvia in 1945, consists of a 30-
meter-tall statue flanked by statues of ‘Motherland’ and a group of soldiers, the
‘War-liberators’. While the quest and movement for independence took place
largely at the site of the Freedom monument, the Victory monument became a
site for the gathering of more conservative and East-oriented groups. Latvian
residents of Russian origin still meet at the monument on ‘Victory day’, the 9th
of May, to celebrate the victory over Nazism (Stukuls-Egglitis 2002). The claims
for the removal of the victory monument were rejected by representatives of
the Latvian parliament. Protests were also made from the Russian embassy in
Latvia, suggesting that the monument should be restored to its original form,
including a list of the names of the Soviet soldiers killed during the battles
fought against the German forces. The monument has been a target for van-
dalism by Latvian nationalist groups, and in 1996, two people were killed in an
attempt to destroy the monument (www.baltictimes.com 2007-06-21, 2007-01-

The events taking place in Tallinn and Riga clearly illustrate how the past Soviet
legacy is still being negotiated in the Baltic States. The period following inde-
pendence has included a continuous confrontation with the past in both a
material and social sense. The core issue at stake is ‘occupation’ versus ‘liberation’,
representing two different ways of interpreting the past. For the Russian mi-
norities in both Estonia and Latvia, the monument symbolizes freedom and
Chapter five – Geographies of relic-communism

liberation from Nazism, and those Russians killed when trying to free the Estonians. The protests are also anchored in the wish to gain increasing rights and influence for the Russian minority. For ‘ethnic’ Estonians and Latvians on the other hand, the monuments are symbols of oppression, but the events also illustrate the tense relations with Russia, and the struggle to manifest uniform Estonian and Latvian nation states with less Russian influence. Thus, the events in Tallinn are also rooted in questions of ethnicity and identity, of who belongs to the ‘ethnic’ nation state and who does not, of who should have the right and power to define borders both around and within a nation state or a city. As shown above, the negotiations over the ‘national common space’ does not merely take place within Latvia itself, but the situation is also affected by relations between Latvia and Russia.

**Commercialisation of the Soviet heritage through tourism**

Despite the domestic controversies and conflicts of the Bronze statue in Tallinn and the Victory monument in Riga, both locations have become popular tourism sites, as they represent two of the limited number of physical relics from the Soviet regime. In Estonia, media described the events related to the Bronze statue as having both negative and positive effects for tourism.

On the one hand, tourism in Estonia suffered from the riots in Estonia, giving an image of ethnic conflict and violence. On the other hand, in the period following the riots, the statue also became a popular tourism attraction for foreign tourists visiting Tallinn (The Baltic Times 2007-05-06, www.baltictimes.com 2008-02-28).

In Riga, the Victory monument has been included as part of a tourist ‘cultural daytrip’ of the city, marketed as ‘Back in the USSR’ by the private tour operator Riga Out There.

Nowhere in Riga is there a more vivid reminder of the Soviet era than at Victory Park. The place is mobbed by ethnic Russians on the most important days in the old Soviet calendar. ‘Ūzvaras Parkis’ is also full of Russians -young and old- whenever they wish to protest about political matters of one kind or another. Our tour stops off here for 15 minutes to let you immerse yourself in Riga's most blatant reminder of the Soviet past. Latvian nationalists have tried to blow this place up on occasion. But in the coming years it might well be the politicians who will finally succeed in doing away with these Soviet monuments (www.rigaouthere.com 2008-09-01).

In this case, the past is described as very much alive, but the future of the monument is illustrated as uncertain and controversial. The description of
Victory Park also puts focus on Soviet history as separate from Latvian history, as well as describing the site as one of the few places in which the Russian-speaking minorities (in contrast to the ‘ethnic Latvians’) may claim their political rights as well as their visibility in the city.

As illustrated by the above example from the Victory monument, the Soviet heritage in post-socialist countries is often made visible and communicated through the private sector rather than public tourism marketing. Worthington (2004) points out that it has mainly been external and foreign actors who have highlighted and commercialised the Soviet heritage, for example, in guidebooks, travel magazines and through the Internet (Worthington In: Hall 2004). Some countries have become destinations for ‘communist heritage’, often as a result of an increasing flow of Western visitors, inspired by guidebooks and media to different attractions rather than by active marketing from the destinations themselves. One example is the inflow of tourists to the former East Berlin, to where the Berlin Wall became one of the most visited tourism places after its fall in 1989 (see Light 2000). Moreover, there is the interest and demand from the foreign tourists, in their wish to experience the legacies and relics of communism. The Soviet heritage may be categorised as examples of ‘Dark tourism’, defined by Lennon and Foley (2000) as “the attraction of visitors to tourism sites associated with recent and historic incidences of death and disaster” (Lennon & Foley 2000 cited in Wight & Lennon 2006:520). This may include both sites which are directly associated with death, for example concentration camps, but also more ‘secondary’ places, such as, museums portraying events of people’s suffering and death (Wight & Lennon 2006).

Light (2000) on the other hand, prefers the term ‘communist heritage tourists’, for identifying those tourists whose main motive is to experience the communist heritage at the given destination. In this case, Light defines heritage as “the contemporary uses of the past” (Ashworth & Graham 1997:381, in Light 2000:160). Thus, focus is not put on how the past is valued, for example, in a more material sense, but rather how the remains of communism are used and consumed within tourism (Light 2000:160). For the tourist, travel may involve a search for ‘otherness’, to find more exotic environments in contrast to the ‘Western’ everyday life and routine. This search can involve more encounters with the ‘East’ associated with challenges and potential risks. This does not represent a recent trend; the curiosity for ‘life behind the Iron curtain’ was also evident during the Soviet period, but has continued and increased into the present due to less restrictions for travelling (Light 2000).
Making the past visible – examples from statue parks

One example of how the remains of communism have become sites for tourism is the development of different statue parks. In Budapest, following the collapse of communism, the future use of the communist statues was discussed. Some argued for the removal of all statues from the city centre, while others wanted the monuments to remain as a symbol and memory of the Soviet past.

In the end, the statues were removed to a park in the outskirts of Budapest, a cost which amounted to around 61 600 US dollars (Light 2000). The statue park Szoborpark opened in 1993, after an architectural competition announced by the Budapest General Assembly. In the park, statues and busts of Lenin, Marx and Engels are on display as well as other Soviet memorials. According to the winning architect Arkos Eleod, the aim of the park was

(…) to create something which was politically and artistically neutral, neither celebrating nor ridiculing the communist era, whilst acknowledging that the statues were a part of Hungary’s history (Light 2000:167).

The statue park has become a popular tourist site; some claim that it has turned into a ‘theme park’, while others view it as an open-air museum, providing insight into the period of communism. The park is estimated to have around 40 000 foreign and domestic visitors every year (Light 2000; www.szoborpark.hu 2008-02-24).

Another example of a statue park is the “Soviet Garden at Grutas Park”, unofficially known as ‘Stalin world’, located 130 kilometres southwest of the Lithuanian capital. The park was opened in 2001, and has been privately financed, displaying statues and monuments which were preserved by the Lithuanian state, and includes a zoo, museum, a children’s park and a café serving “sprat po russki” (herring, onion and vodka) (www.grutoparkas.lt 2008-03-03; Williams 2008). The official homepage describes Grutas park as follows:

The Grūtas Park exposition discloses the negative content of the Soviet ideology and its impact on the value system. The aim of this exposition is to provide an opportunity for Lithuanian people, visitors coming to our country as well as future generations to see the naked Soviet ideology which suppressed and hurt the spirit of our nation for many decades (www.grutoparkas.lt 2008-03-03).

Thus, the aim is to bring out the dark past into the daylight, analysing it with a new set of eyes, and thereby provide it with new meaning. However, the statue parks in both Hungary and Lithuania have been objects of controversy. For
example, Grutas park has evoked criticism among Lithuanians, claiming that
the park does not portray the seriousness of the crimes committed during the
Soviet period. A former Lithuanian politician in Parliament, Juozas Galdikas,
criticized the park owner as follows:

Malinauskas (The park’s owner) does not care that these forests where Grutas Park was built
once served as shelter for Lithuanian freedom fighters against Soviet occupants. He does not
care about the painful history of Lithuania. What is the purpose of this park? To laugh at our
pain? (Williams 2008:8, quote from Dapkus 2006).

In Budapest, the criticism has mainly concerned the commercialisation of the
park, and the different purposes and uses of the park by Western and local in-
habitants. Light (2000) argues that the main reason for the general acceptance
of the park has to do with its location. Being situated in the outskirts of the city
may have symbolic significance, as the park represents ‘neutral ground’. By re-
moving the statues from the urban city centre to a greenish park setting, also
changes their symbolic meanings. Here, references can be made to the above
quote from Grutas Park, in their aim to portray the “naked Soviet ideology”,
served in a completely different setting in order to dismantle and deconstruct
the power of the Soviet system. James (1999) argues that the Hungarian Szobor-
park may be analysed as a postmodern memorial site which remains open for
different and multiple interpretations, while representing conflicting views of
the past. James interprets the decision to relocate the statues from the city cen-
tre to the outskirts of Budapest as a way of drawing a border between the
contemporary post-socialist Hungary and its communist past.

(…) brick walls and wire fences define the museum’s boundaries. One is tempted to say that
these devices ‘imprison’ the collection, but a prison metaphor is just one of many possible
readings. ‘Quarantine’ is an alternative for those who see the recuperation of tarnished ideals
as a possibility. In any case, it is safe to say that the walls and fences symbolically segregate
communism from the flow of everyday life (James 1999:303).

Light (2000) describes the statue park as a ‘memoryscape’, a defined place for
remembering and for tourist consumption, “a piece of urban space organized
around social remembering through the assemblage of key iconographic forms”
(Light 2000:165). Thus, the past is not rejected, but more separated from the
city itself and its inhabitants and everyday life, by initiatives of the state and lo-
cal governments. Still, the relocation also raises the question of power, in who
has the ‘right’ to narrate and interpret the history being told, what interests and
aims the rewriting have, and who benefits. When the statues are ‘displaced’
from their original setting, as markers of the city, the urban context is lost, and the monuments tell another story. At the same time, other parts of the urban heritage are highlighted and preserved in the city centre. The statue park has also become a space for nostalgia for Budapest inhabitants, to experience different elements of their past everyday life (James 1999).

**Commercialising and masculinising the Soviet heritage**

The ‘normalisation’ of space in Riga as discussed above did not include the removal of different Soviet monuments to new ‘neutral’ places. However, the Soviet heritage is marketed and commodified to Western tourists through other channels within the private sector in general and among tour companies more specifically. Different tours of the city are promoted in terms to see the ‘undiscovered’ Soviet Riga, where few tourists go, and which are difficult to find by the tourist himself/herself. The Soviet heritage is described as being close to extinction, making time an important factor for attracting tourists. One of the tour operators, *Riga Out There*, describes the situation as follows:

Seventeen years on from the break up of the Soviet Union relics from nearly fifty years of occupation are fast disappearing (…) With the clock ticking down to a time when images of Soviet occupation will no longer remain, here at Out-there we would like to offer our clients the opportunity to experience the post-Soviet experience in its many guises (www.rigaoutthere.com 2008-02-25).

On the one hand, the Soviet heritage is promoted alongside with other heritage tours, such as ‘Soviet leftovers’, ‘Russian’, ‘Swedish’ or ‘Jewish’ Riga, focusing on different tourism sites, monuments, museums, and architecture. The ‘Soviet tours’ generally involve sites such as the Occupation museum, the Academy of Science and the car museum in Riga, which are also often found in travel magazines and guidebooks describing ‘Soviet Riga’. On the other hand, tours of the Soviet heritage are promoted as different from ‘ordinary’ guided tours, with more parallels to highlighting the ‘Dark past’ of Riga. In this case, the Soviet heritage is made into an ‘action’ adventure. Different tour operators such as *The Argonaut hostel*, offer different ‘Insane tours’, including ‘Shotguns and vodka’, ‘the Soviet prison adventure’ and ‘AK47 adventure’, which can be combined with skydiving, bob sleighing, bungee jumping, or shooting. The ‘AK47 adventure’ is described as the following:
Chapter five – Geographies of relic-communism

Need a Heart Starter? Coffee or an AK47? Stay at Argonaut and we will show you the Soviet bunker nearby full of weapons to have a blast with. Great for groups to challenge each other on head and body shots to see who buys the beers (www.argonauthotel.com, 2008-02-25).

Riga Out There promotes a tour called ‘Back to the USSR’, which includes themes such as, “Feel like James Bond on top of Zakusala island’s TV tower”, to “Have lunch with Lenin and Putin” and finish the tour with “a Russian dinner and vodka party”. The tour company also provides a ‘Nuclear Bunker Tour’ to the small town Ligatne in Cēsis district, a former top-secret escape site for the Soviet political regime and KGB officials in Latvia in case of a potential Western nuclear attack. The site was known as ‘The Pension’ and was made official in 2003, and resides underground of a public hotel sanatorium (www.rigaoutthere.com, 2008-02-25). The tour provided by Riga Out There combines the tour of the bunker with the “Soviet nuclear bunker retro party”.

Experience this to believe it! The canteen at the Ligatne bunker appears to be set in a time-warp as it remains virtually untouched from the time of Soviet occupation and provides a full Soviet experience including retro vinyl discs and a three-course Soviet lunch. Fortunately, the Russian food has definitely improved since those days! (www.rigaoutthere.com, 2008-02-25).

The promotion of the Soviet heritage by the private sector as described above may be viewed as a sign for a more tolerant attitude for commercializing the Soviet past in Latvia. I would suggest that this commodification process has at least two effects. First, it raises, again, the question of who is given the power to define Riga and Latvia as a tourism destination, and how this image is communicated to foreign visitors as well as domestic tourists. The tours presented above tend to give a more stereotypical view of the Russian and Soviet culture, rather than providing an insight to both past and contemporary life of Russians or ‘ethnic’ Latvians. Russians become in this case rather equivalent to Soviet Russian(s), rather than treated as a diverse group. This may in turn create problems and disparities between the official tourism aims set by tourism authorities, and those created by other actors, which may raise questions of how the destinations themselves can control how the heritage is presented and marketed. Tunbridge (1994) identified in this case a disparity between ‘identity versus economy’ (Tunbridge 1994 In: Light 2000:159), a process in which more economic goals and commodification are set in relation to the question of coming to terms with and dealing with the past.
Secondly, and related to the process of commodification, I would state that the tours offered in a more ‘Russian’ and ‘Soviet’ manner also are ‘masculinised’, both in terms of how the traveler (him)self is portrayed and the places and sites visited. Here, parallels can be made to the previous chapter which highlighted issues of sex tourism and place marketing, and feminised exotic images of the ‘East’ versus the male ‘Western’ tourist. In this case, the destination bears more ‘masculine’ traits, focusing on war, nationalism, occupation versus victory, which are in some sense different stories of men’s history and lives, and which have remained and ‘materialised’ into physical manifestations such as monuments, parks, architectural buildings or military ‘top-secret’ bunkers or prisons (see Edensor & Kathari 1994 In: Kinnaird & Hall 1994). Thus, the emphasis on these types of manifestations also tends to portray the elite structures of the Soviet system rather than the everyday life of the citizens themselves, the stories of both men and women, Russian ‘immigrants’ and ‘ethnic’ Latvians. The focus on the tours is based on ‘active’ adventures, also manifesting more masculine characteristics. Some of these tours, such as Riga Out There, combine the ‘action’ adventures with ‘nightlife’ tours as discussed in chapter four.

**Making the past (in)visible through tourism marketing**

Making the past Soviet heritage visible in post-socialist countries through tourism often includes more material and symbolical manifestations and remains, rather than a more diversified approach to how culture as such is defined and portrayed. The attempts to ‘normalise’ the post-socialist Latvian space also include policies which identify the members and non-members of the new nation state, with an emphasis on common values and traditions rather than diversity in terms of language and culture. The desire to ‘return to Europe’ as discussed in the previous chapter also means distancing Latvia from images of the ‘East’, including the Russian heritage. The following sections will discuss how the contemporary Russian socio-cultural heritage is portrayed within public tourism marketing, based on information provided by the Latvian Institute and the Latvian Tourism Development Agency. In this case, I will relate previous discussions of ‘neo-nationalism’ and ‘relics of communism’ and their effects regarding questions of minority culture and rights, first by providing a short background to questions relating to ethnicity in Latvia. The issues at stake are very complex and would require a more extensive in-depth analysis than I have space for.
within the delimitations of my study. I will return to questions of ethnicity related to the labour market in chapter six, as well as in the case studies of gender and livelihood within tourism. Here, I will provide a basic setting for questions relating to ethnicity, focusing on citizenship, language policies as well as integration. The aim is that this will serve as a background to my analysis of tourism marketing as reflecting perceptions of ethnicity and ‘ethnic culture’, as well as providing a basic context for the upcoming chapters.

The ‘ethnic’ question
The Russian minority in Latvia is often referred to as a rather homogenous group, and identified on the basis of being Russian-speaking, arriving in Latvia during the Soviet occupation, and still having roots and sympathies towards Russia (or the former Soviet Union), rather than towards the ‘ethnic’ Latvian nation state. However, as Budryte (2005) states, the Russian-speaking minority in Latvia should be analysed as diverse, with multiple sets of identities and backgrounds. Some ‘Russians’ were born in the former Soviet Union and arrived as labour immigrants to Latvia, while others have roots back to the period when Latvia belonged to Czarist Russia.

Table 4: The ethnic composition of the Latvian population (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1935</th>
<th>1989</th>
<th>2005</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Latvians</td>
<td>77.0</td>
<td>52.0</td>
<td>58.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russians</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarussians</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainians</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poles</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others*</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* In 1935, Jews constituted 4.9%, and Baltic Germans 3.3%
Source: Muiznieks Table 1 In: Muiznieks 2006:13.

Parts of the Russian-speaking minority have been born and raised in contemporary and independent Latvia; some speak Latvian fluently and have acquired Latvian or other citizenship, while others are classified as ‘non-

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47 See for example Muiznieks (ed) (2006), Budryte (2005), Jubulis (2001) and Danjoux (2002) for a more in-depth analysis of questions of citizenship and ethnicity in Latvia from both a historical and contemporary perspective.

48 During Latvia’s first independence, the Russian share of the population constituted around 10 percent. The Russian elite was quite limited and a majority of the Russian population lived in the Latgale region, and many worked as farmers (Muiznieks 2006 In: Muiznieks (ed) 2006). See Muiznieks (2006) and Budryte (2005) for an overview of the Russian immigrations and influences in Latvia.
citizens’. Some might identify themselves as ‘Russians’ or ‘Ukrainians’, while others would claim a Latvian identity. Table 4 above provides an overview of the ethnic composition of the Latvian population, comparing statistics from 1935, 1989 and 2005. Here, the effects of the Russian labour immigration and ‘Russification’ processes during the Soviet regime become evident, making ‘ethnic Latvians’ almost a minority in their own country in 1989, representing merely 52 percent of the total population 1935. This demographic imbalance together with the wish to reestablish a nation state based on Latvian culture, language and other traditions have been the source of the debates of ethnicity and citizenship.

Citizenship
At the time of independence, the question of citizenship became one of the more acute, but also controversial political questions in Latvia. In the immediate period following independence in 1991, citizenship was not automatically given to all citizens residing within the borders of Latvia, but only to “interwar citizens and their direct descendents (Muiznieks In: Muiznieks 2006:16)’. Consequently, around 740 000 people did not acquire an official citizenship status until 1994, when a new law on citizenship was passed (Budryte 2005:108). The reasons for this decision were, for example, the claims for a ‘legal continuity with the past’ including reclaiming pre-war institutions and constitutions for governing the country, while the Soviet period and the occupation in some sense were declared as invalid. Moreover, regulations of citizenship were also considered to impact the degree of political influence, since the ‘ethnic’ Latvian share of the population was barely in majority at the time of independence (ibid; Muiznieks 2006 In: Muiznieks 2006). The 1994 Law on Citizenship granted citizenship to “ethnic Latvians, spouses of citizens, those having finished Latvian language school”, while other groups such as former KBG members and Soviet military officials could not apply for citizenship. All other groups could apply for Latvian citizenship and became subjects for a neutralization process, implemented through a time-table or “neutralization windows”, ranging from 1996-2003. In this case, the process of citizenship was based on the idea of an ‘individual choice’ (Budryte 2005:108). The applications for citizenship still include a Latvian language test, history test and an oath of loyalty to the Latvian state. In 1998, the regulations set up by the ‘window system’ policies were abandoned after a national referendum, making it possible to apply for citizenship freely at any time. Children born by non-citizens in the period following independence were also automatically granted
citizenship (Muiznieks In: Muiznieks 2006:15f; Budryte 2005). The number of Latvian citizens has increased since the regulations of the ‘window policy’ were changed (see Table 5). Still, the number of non-citizens is still fairly high, comprising 418 000 people of different ethnicities in 2006.

Table 5: Citizenship and ethnicity in Latvia 1995 and 2006.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>March 1995</th>
<th>January 2006</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% Citizens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latvian</td>
<td>1,421,987</td>
<td>98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>764,896</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belarussian</td>
<td>109,122</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>69,334</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>64,987</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lithuanian</td>
<td>35,707</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>49,484</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2,516,517</td>
<td>1,776,286</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Muiznieks Table 3, In: Muiznieks 2006:17.

A law regulating the rights of non-citizens was introduced in 199549, which gave non-citizens the right to reside permanently in Latvia, but not the right to vote for either the national parliament Saeima or the local elections. They were also restricted in becoming political candidates, as well as occupying some work positions within the public sector, or more juridical positions within the private sector. Restrictions also applied to land ownership, and to the Latvian military service. It also became necessary for non-citizens to obtain special travel documents and visas for travelling abroad, especially to Western countries, while the regulations were less strict for trips to Russia (Muiznieks In: Muiznieks 2006:15f). These restrictions still apply, even though the restrictions for work in the private sector have been removed.

Language policies

Muiznieks (2006) argues that the Latvian citizenship laws have been controversial in an international context, with policies relating to language being the most debated question in Latvia since independence. The main issue concerns the status of the Russian language. From being the official language in Soviet Lat-

49 The law was named “The Status of Thos Former USSR Citizens Who Do Not Have Citizenship of Latvia or Any Other State (Muiznieks 2006:16 In: Muiznieks (ed) 2006)”.

142
via, Russian lost much of its status after independence when Latvian was recognized as the official state language, and Russian was termed a minority language. During the Soviet regime, Latvians had to learn Russian as part of their education, while Russians were not obliged to study the Latvian language. As a result, a census from 1989 showed that only 22 percent of the Russian share of the population claimed to have knowledge in Latvian, while 69 percent of Latvian population had a command in Russian (Muiznieks In: Muiznieks 2006:13). There is still conflicting opinion of whether Russian should be declared as an official state language or not. A survey from 2005 stated that an overwhelming part of Russian speakers (87%) wanted Russian to become an official language, compared to only 19 percent of ‘ethnic’ Latvians (Zepa & Supule In: Muiznieks 2006:35). Changes to the Law on Languages were made in 1992, which made adequate knowledge in Latvian obligatory for people working in parts of the public as well as in the private sector. People applying for jobs had to take language tests and if needed, language courses. A new law in 1999 stated that language requirements would not apply for work in the private sector.

Integration

(…) the past has not disappeared without a trace. In reality, the period of independence has still been too short for Latvia to free itself of the effects of fifty years of totalitarianism and occupation (…) Latvia has inherited more than half a million Soviet era immigrants and their descendants, many of whom have not yet become integrated into the Latvian cultural and linguistic environment, and thus do not feel connected to the Latvian state (National Programme The Integration of Society in Latvia 2001:7).

The above citation is taken from Latvia’s national integration programme from 2001, and illustrates the challenges of dealing with the past, not in terms of a material heritage, but in making the social and cultural heritage visible, embodied in the lives of the Russian-speaking minorities in Latvia. Here, much of the focus is on how the minority groups and non-citizens of Latvia should adopt and adjust to values of the ‘Latvian’ society, in terms of language and culture, which is very much based on the idea of the united nation state as discussed in chapter one. The aims of a future integrated society are specified as follows:

An integrated civil society is one where non-Latvians have a command of the Latvian language, having overcome alienation from Latvian cultural values, and are involved in realizing the common goals of Latvian society; and where non-Latvians have the right to preserve their native language and culture (National Programme The Integration of Society in Latvia 2001:8).
Thus, a lot of focus is put on the importance of Latvian as the one and only state language, and the distinction between ‘Latvian’ and ‘non-Latvian’ culture. Latvia signed the European Framework Convention on the Protection of National Minorities in 2005, which aims to “ensure effective and real equality for individuals belonging to national minorities in all areas of economic, political, social and cultural life” (www.integracija.gov.lv 2008-02-27). This was done after years of refusing the Convention created by the Council of Europe. Budryte (2005) claims that this reflected unwillingness to give more status to the Russian language, which would create more division than unity in the Latvian society. Still, only those who have acquired a Latvian citizenship and have a different language, religion or culture than Latvian are recognized as a national minority, according to a the law (Budryte 2005). Muiznieks (2006) argues that much of the ethnic question has focused on citizenship and language policies rather than on social integration between Latvian and Russian-speaking communities. On the one hand, there is a belief that there exist clear and unsolved oppositions between ‘ethnic’ Latvians and Russian-speaking groups, and that the Latvian society can be described as segregated in terms of politics, media and language. On the other hand, there are also opinions that there is not that much outspoken opposition between ethnic groups, and that the everyday life is rather friction-free (Muiznieks; Tabuns In: Muiznieks 2006).

Marketing the Russian socio-cultural heritage
When analysing public tourism marketing material from institutions such as The Latvian Tourism Development Agency and The Latvian Institute, it is clear that the majority of the material is based on the wish to construct an image of Latvia in general and Riga more specifically as having one common background and culture. This includes constructing of a sense of unity and fellowship, with a focus on one rather homogenous ‘authentic’ culture which has been suppressed and now is able to flourish after the Latvian independence. The ‘ethnic’ Latvian culture and language was regarded as being under threat during the Soviet period, a ‘crisis’ which was continued due to the Russian immigrants and a general decrease of the Latvian population. Constructing the nation state may also involve drawing borders around those identified as ‘Latvians’ and those not fulfilling the requirements of ‘Latvian-ness’ in terms of language and other

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50 The convention includes commitment to work against discrimination and for equality among minority and majority groups in the society, as well as the right to preserve cultural traditions and language, plus freedom to engage in civil society activities and mass media (see www.integracija.gov.lv 2008-02-27).
cultural values. Schwartz (2006) claims that the construction and reproduction of the core ‘essence’ of the Latvian identity remains generally uncontested.

Unlike the situation in many post-Communist states with historically weak or contested articulations of national identity (Ukraine and Belarus for example), the desirability of a “Latvian Latvia” is generally accepted. Agrarians and internationalists alike are committed to preserving a Latvian state in which the sole official language and dominant culture are Latvian and in which Latvians are the primary political shapers of their own destiny (Schwartz 2006:13).

As an effect, the heritage of Russian, Jewish and other minorities remain fairly invisible in the promotion of tourism, and in the image of Riga as a tourism destination. Tourism marketing in Latvia tends to reproduces the idea of a single and homogenous ‘Latvian culture’ as a central part of the establishment of the Latvian nation. The focus is on differences between ‘ethnic’ Latvians, inhabiting ‘unique’ features, and other ethnic groups, representing a different language and ethnicity compared to the norm of ‘Latvianness’. The Latvian Institute describes the ethnic differences in Latvia as follows:

As in many parts of Eastern Europe, so too in Latvia, *ethnic consciousness is very pronounced, sometimes even predominating over national or religious consciousness* (...) Latvians tend to contrast themselves with the large body of ethnic Russian immigrants who arrived during the Soviet era (www.li.lv 2008-02-25, emphasis in original).

‘Culture’ in Latvia is also described on a fairly uniform basis on the institute’s homepage, including descriptions of ‘Latvian’ traditions, folk costumes, Latvian cuisine, literature and art. Here, the focus is on how traditional and ‘authentic’ culture has survived during the Soviet regime, rather than on the cultural influences from other countries. The official Latvian tourism portal also focuses on the preservation of the Latvian culture rather than cultural hybridity.

In the beginning of the 21st century in Latvia there are approximately 664 092 Russians, 88 998 Belorussians, 59 403 Ukrainians, 56 798 Polish, 31 840 Lithuanians, 9 820 Jews, 8 403 Gypsies, 3 696 Germans, 2970 Tatars, 2670 Armenians 2530 Estonians and 136 representatives of other nations. In spite of the multicultural influence, Latvians have managed to preserve their national identity, culture and language (www.latviatourism.lv 2008-02-27).

The information provided by the Latvian Institute also includes descriptions of ‘The Latvians’ and ‘Latvians’, as opposed to another section named ‘Ethnic minorities in Latvia’. The different sections describe, for example, ‘What a Latvian eats’ and ‘A Latvian and His Land’, but also include physical and even ‘racial’ descriptions of ‘The characteristics of the average Latvian’.

145
Most Latvians belong to two North European physical types: Western Baltic and Eastern Baltic, the first of which is distinguished by taller stature, the latter being distinguished by a more rounded face. Approximately two thirds of Latvians have light hair and grey, bluish or greenish eyes, the rest being of darker complexion, generally with brownish hair and eyes. (Few Latvians actually have black hair.) However, in terms of physical features, Latvians would be very hard to distinguish from Estonians, Lithuanians, Swedes, Belarusians or the Russians living in adjacent areas. On the other hand, Latvian behaviour and mentality, and the sound of the language, all permit them to be distinguished quite clearly from people belonging to other ethnic groups (www.li.lv 2008-02-25, emphasis in original).

Thus, the characteristics of Latvians are closely examined, and contrasted with different minority groups in Latvia, which are described and 'categorized' (Russian, Jews, Roman, Ukrainian, etc), mainly based on their ethnic origin, when they arrived in Latvia, their language and degree of assimilation into the Latvian society. The information from the Latvian Institute also contains details of the process of citizenship and integration.

(...) most of Latvia's Russian population consists of immigrants who arrived recently as a result of the Soviet occupation, and unfortunately, many of them take a different view regarding the country's future and do not wish to recognise Latvian as the country's sole official language (www.li.lv 2008-02-25, emphasis in original).

Little focus is put on Russian cultural traditions, customs or other influences. Some might argue that some of the Russian immigrants would not represent a specific culture, due to their 'uprootedness' from their original home countries, and due to the ‘Russification’ process during the Soviet regime. The Latvian culture (and language) has also in some sense been affected and modified by ‘Russification', both during the Soviet regime, as well as contemporary Russian cultural influences, which would suggest a less homogenous Latvian culture. Separating Latvian culture from other ‘Westernised’ influences as discussed in the previous chapter appears as difficult, which rather would suggest a call for multiplicity, and Riga as a melting pot for Western European influences, a diversity of 'Eastern' heritages as well as traditional 'ethnic' Latvian traditions.

**Constructing the ‘victimisation ethos’**
Renegotiating the past in terms of questions relating to ethnicity become more complex due to the Soviet legacies and the somewhat unsolved past, as well as the fragile political relations with Russia. History is not really just yet put behind, unsolved crimes and doings still tend to surface. The main concern is to rewrite and interpret history into a more accepted Latvian version, for which
public tourism marketing serves as an example. The actions made by post-socialist countries to reinterpret the past also participate in the process of constructing a national identity, based upon the ‘construction of a victimisation ethos’ (Young & Kaczmarek 2008:56, the author’s emphasis)\(^{51}\). This ethos includes the history of multiple occupations, and the collective sufferings of the past shared by ‘ethnic’ Latvians. As James (1999) stresses, post-socialist countries’ relation to the past tends to have a ‘double nature’: communism is something which is put in the background, at the same time as the memories, sufferings and experiences may become uniting elements for the population (James 1999). I find these reflections as crucial for understanding the diversity of the transformation process in Latvia since independence, which also points to an important paradox. At the same time as the Soviet past is rejected and ‘snipped out’ from the historic time line due to its portrayal as an ‘invalid’ occupation, the Soviet heritage in terms of past narratives and memories together are indirectly made visible since they form a basic ingredient for the rise of ideologies of ‘neo-nationalism’. These ‘relics’ are in turn used in order to charge places, such as the Freedom monument with new meanings and symbolism, just as past cultural traditions such as the Dainas are manifested. The opening of the Museum of the Occupation of Latvia, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter, serves as a good example of how tourism participates in the construction and communication of a Latvian ‘victimisation ethos’.

**Conclusion**

Summing up, the purpose of this chapter has been to discuss tourism development and marketing in Latvia as representing ‘geographies of relic-communism’, in how the Soviet heritage is negotiated, challenged and made (in)visible through tourism. Here, the transformation process has been analysed as reflecting a ‘continuity of the past’, in contrast to the two previously discussed geographies which emphasise a ‘discontinuity’ with the Soviet heritage. Geographies of neo-nationalism represent in some ways a wish to cut out pieces of the Soviet period from the timeline, declaring the Soviet regime as invalid, while romanticising the first period of Latvian independence as the basis for the new nation state. Geographies of Europeanisation also promote a clear break with the immediate past, but in this case encouraged by new ‘Western’ aims of development and mod-

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\(^{51}\) See also Wight and Lennon (2006), who provide examples of how the Jewish holocaust is interpreted and displayed differently in two Lithuanian museums: the Vilna Gaon Lithuanian State Jewish Museum and the Museum of Genocide Victims (KGB museum).
ernisation, in order to follow already established pathways and directions. My aim has been to problematise these approaches further, and argue for that the outcomes of the transition process are much more complex and diverse, and rather constitute an intermixture between East and West, traditional and modern ideals, old and new influences, as well as the fact that this process has local outcomes, as being 'situated'. The legacy of the Soviet period is constantly present in the post-socialist Latvia, even though the material remains may have been removed or transformed, memories, institutions, ideals and ideas dating back to the Soviet period remain. The legacies are also becoming evident in terms of a heterogeneous and diverse Latvian population and socio-cultural heritage. Still, it is important not to treat the legacies as static or deterministic. All together, the Soviet legacies meet and interrelate with ‘new’ ideals of Europeanisation, as well as ideals dating back to the pre-Soviet period. Thus, the result of these processes must be analysed as constantly being transformed and negotiated, producing a diverse and sometimes even conflicting reality.

The chapter has provided different examples of how the Soviet legacies are used and negotiated through tourism development and marketing. I have shown how the historic relations with more ‘Eastern’ tourism markets have continued since independence, despite the wish to manifest a more Western European belonging. On the one hand, the Soviet tourism heritage could be analysed as a positive asset in the post-socialist period. The previous traditions of tourism within the Soviet Union meant that there has been an existing infrastructure in terms of accommodation, tourism destinations, and transport systems available. Parts of the remaining Soviet heritage have been highlighted and commercialised by both the private sector and by a tourist demand and interest in the Soviet period, reflecting adjustments made within the modern tourism sector, which include adopting a more capitalistic rather than socialist view of tourism. On the other hand, the use of the Soviet heritage within tourism remains a controversial question, especially by local inhabitants and public institutions, for whom it still contains more negative perceptions and memories of the past as well as represents contemporary tensions and controversies regarding minority rights, integration and citizenship.

It is evident that tourism has been affected by a general ‘normalisation’ process of ‘the post-socialist space’ in Latvia. This partly includes the removal of the material ‘relics’ of communism and replacing them with symbols manifesting a newly established nation state. Partly, the normalisation process has meant a focusing on reinterpreting history, and promoting new policies governing citizenship and minority rights which have reconstructed norms of
'Latvianess'. When analysing public tourism marketing material, it becomes evident that tourism tends to become a channel for constructing more positive ideals of a common Latvian culture and language, rather than promoting an image based on ethnic diversity. The re-interpretations of Latvian culture and history tend to be selective rather than open and multiple, based on a 'victimisation ethos', with a focus on past sufferings of 'ethnic' Latvians. This in turn illustrates how the past heritage of the Soviet period (in terms of memories and narratives) is used for establishing a contemporary national Latvian identity, communicated through tourism. This may be analysed as a process of 'Othering', making a distinction between 'ethnic' Latvians on the one hand and Russian-speaking minorities and non-citizens on the other, since selecting the dominating features of an 'ethnic' Latvian culture and identity leaves little space for the presence of other ethnic influences, which in turn may become deviant from the Latvian norm. The absence of interpretation of a more diverse socio-cultural 'Russian' heritage in the public sphere opens up for more commercialised and stereotypical versions of the past, which tend to be based on the tourists' own expectations and imaginations of the 'East', and may be more controversial for local inhabitants, including especially 'ethnic Latvians'. This process tends to reproduce rather than challenge the dualisms between 'East' and 'West', with the 'East' as the exotic 'Other'. The focus on more 'masculine' forms of Soviet heritage also reinforces the East as a 'playground' for the western male, providing adventure activities which may be combined with more sexual services.
Part III
Transforming femininities

The Latvian mother and her two sons. Part of the freedom monument in Riga. Photo by the author.
Chapter six
Femininities, work and national common space

The aim of the present chapter is to relate the three geographies discussed in the previous chapters to an analysis of work and gender in a post-socialist context. The main question in focus is how different ideals of femininities and work are formed in the period following independence in Latvia, and what positions women occupy in the contemporary Latvian labour market. These ideals also represent different spatial organizations of work in relation between the private and the public sphere. The chapter presents an overview of genderised ideals of work during the Soviet regime, followed by a discussion of three interrelated ideals of femininities: traditional ideals of femininities, with parallels to geographies of neo-nationalism; the emergence of Western ideals of femininities related to geographies of Europeanisation; and the continuity of socialist ideals of femininities, reflecting geographies of relic-communism. These ideals have been distinguished partly based on existing research of post-socialism, gender and work, and partly on my own analysis of both national and EU labour market policy planning documents, and national labour market statistics. Moreover, the three ideals of femininities should be viewed as constituting parts of the ‘national common space’, in which labour market and welfare policies are formulated and genderised by the state in the period following independence, as part of the process of constructing the new nation state and actively incorporating Latvia in a larger, European context.

The Soviet gender system
The foundation of the political ideologies of gender and socialism was set long before Latvia’s incorporation in the USSR in the 1940s. The ideologies of Marxism-Leninism which emerged in the late 19th century put class differences on the table...
and the existence of private property as the source for all types of social inequalities, including those between men and women. Women were considered to suffer from a ‘dual oppression’, manifested through both ‘bourgeoisie’ family relations and through the capitalist economy, due to men’s ownership and access to private property and the means of production. Women’s position within society was considered to change with the collectivization of property (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002; Marx & Engels 2001). By replacing the ‘bourgeoisie’ family structure with socialist collective ideals of the working class, a new ‘Soviet family’, or *Paterfamilias*, was constructed, encompassing the whole communist society, and governed by the Soviet leader (exemplified by Stalin) in the role of the patriarch and the father in both the public and the private sphere. The structure of the ‘family’ had clear masculine dimensions; the leader was responsible for both the care and upbringing of the Soviet population as his children. The state should be ‘caring’ for its citizens through social welfare and services, at the same time as state exacted control and loyalty, which gave both men and women more subordinate roles. Women and men were still given different ‘roles’ within the ‘family’; men should take a larger economic responsibility compared to women who were obliged to shoulder more social and caring roles (Goven 2002).

It is important to underscore that there did not exist one single homogeneous or fixed gender regime during the Soviet period. Rather, variations in both time and space should be acknowledged. The original ideologies of Marxism-Leninism advocating equality between the sexes were modified and challenged during the Soviet regime, according to the state’s priorities. The outcomes of the socialist policies also took different expressions in different Soviet republics, depending on their unique socio-cultural spatial context and the already-existing gender relations, as well as ethnical differences (see Gradskova 2007; Ashwin In: Rainnie et al. 2002). Still, the gender ideals produced within the communist society also shared some common features, and can be described as having both contradictory and paradoxical features, especially concerning women’s roles and positions. The gender ideals reflected official aims of equality on the one hand, and a more biological deterministic approach on the other. Women were simultaneously portrayed as the Same and as the Other; required to meet the demands of the hard-working socialist labourer, at the same time as they should engage in family responsibilities (Liljeström 1995).

Below I will discuss two dimensions of the paradoxical genderised ideals; firstly, the gender relations within the public sphere, both in terms of *homogenization* through the ideal of *Homo Sovieticus*, and the Soviet work ideology which
also was based on differentiating women’s and men’s professions. Secondly, I will analyse gender identities within the private sphere, which were characterised by differentiation through women’s ‘natural’ roles as wives and mothers.

**Homo Sovieticus and the Soviet labour ideology**

According to the new Soviet ‘family model’, women should be liberated by their work in the public sphere and by protection from the Soviet state. By working and participating actively in the socialist society, women would also raise their children in accordance with “true” socialist values and ideologies. Thus, work became a way of controlling women in multiple arenas of the society, and was not only aimed at emancipating them (Ashwin 2000). Women should adjust to the ‘rhythms of industrial life’, which meant participating in traditionally ‘masculine’ working environments, both in terms of the physical industrial locations, and the over-representation of male workers (Goven 2002). Goven states that the aim was ‘homogenization through masculinization’, which meant that women and men would officially become equals as workers, even though women’s work participation involved an adjustment to male norms and socialist working ideals (Goven 2002:14). Liljeström (1995) emphasises that the creation of the ‘new socialist man’, or ‘Homo Sovieticus’, revealed an image of an androgynous citizen, with no identified sex, but a mix of both male and female, united in one body. However, women were the ones who should abandon their femininity and embody the ideals of ‘Homo sovieticus’, while men’s masculine identity remained relatively intact. These ideals also originated in the aims of industrialization and economic development, especially during Stalin’s rule, which required a large workforce (Liljeström 1995).

According to communist ideologies, work should offer security, comfort and freedom for the Soviet citizens through collective labour, rather than exploitation as within the capitalist system. The idealised visions of work and labour as a universal right were contrasted with the obligation for each and every Soviet citizen to work. During Stalin’s rule, this was harshly formulated in the 1936 Constitution as “he who does not work shall not eat” (*Konstitutsiya SSSR* 1982:185, In: Lo 2000:20), but reformulated in 1977 to “from each according to their ability, to each according to their work” (Ibid:86). Even though the Soviet workers did not sell their labour in a more capitalistic sense, they committed themselves to work for social benefits. Work and labour were regarded as part of the welfare system, since every citizen had a right to work, and the state had to find work for everyone. It has been discussed whether or not the Soviet Union should be labelled as a ‘welfare state’, which in itself is a complex and
diverse, concept, relating to the living standards of the population, as well as to the rights and social security granted by the state in relation to the market and the family. The characteristics of different welfare states need to be analysed from a gender perspective, since gender relations form within the society in general and within the family more particularly; both affect and reflect the outcomes of welfare policies. The term welfare state is usually given a Western emphasis and meaning, with focus on market economies in the richer nations of the world. On the one hand, the Soviet Union could be described as a welfare state since social security officially was available for everyone employed, for example through paid vacation, pension, health and social care. On the other hand, the lack of more democratic values of the Soviet system, which normally form the basis of the welfare state, makes the definition more difficult (Lo 2000; Aidukaite 2004). Aidukaite (2004) terms the Soviet system an ‘authoritarian welfare state’, since welfare was the official image, but included low levels of social benefits, and a system based on control rather than democracy (Aidukaite 2004). The state was responsible for putting all citizens to work and thereby maintaining the vision of full employment. The official image of full employment was important also in order to prove the strength, success and the unsurpassable character of the Soviet system compared with the West (Lo 2000). The aims of full employment were nearly realized in official statistics within the Soviet Union in general and in Latvia more specifically, for both women and men (see Table 6).

Table 6: Labour force participation in Latvia 1989 (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16-54/59*</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-64</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* During the Soviet regime, the retirement age for women was 55 and 60 for men.


Still, the Soviet labour market remained horizontally segregated in terms of professions, where women were mainly found within low-paid jobs in the service sector or within the lighter industry (Rainnie et al. In: Rainnie et al. eds 2002).

53 My intention is not to go into details about the definition of a ‘welfare state’. See e.g. Esping-Andersen (1990) for a discussion of different welfare models in ‘Western economies’; the Scandinavian, Continental/conservative, and liberal, each representing different relations between the state, family and market in terms of welfare. See also Johansson (2000) for a feminist critique of the welfare state regimes, and a discussion of both national and local welfare models, as well as Aidukaite (2004) for an analysis of the welfare systems in the Baltic countries.
Despite the ‘gender-neutral’ ideals of *Homo Sovieticus*, the labour market reflected aims of *differentiation*, making women more suitable for certain types of work due to their biological characteristics, for example, within the textile industries. On the one hand, women should have prominent positions within otherwise traditionally masculine professions, but on the other hand, they ended up in professions defined as ‘women’s work’, which did not have the same status or wage as men’s work. Women’s participation in the labour market was regulated through laws of security and protection from some types of activities, for example, within the heavy industry, which can be analysed as a part of the ‘paternalist’ care of the state that in some ways involved both control and protection of women’s working and reproductive bodies (Marody & Giza-Poleszczuk In: Gal & Kligman 2000b:160; Liljeström 1995).

**Work and the private sphere**

Rainnie et al. (2002) emphasises that work during the Soviet regime should be analysed as more diverse than merely including work taking place in the kolkhozes or on the factory floors, since it also included practices within the informal and private sphere (Rainnie et al. 2002). Due to the strong interference of the state through both propaganda and regulations in the public sphere, the private sphere was given a different meaning and function during the Soviet regime. The household and family served as a place of refuge and political resistance, while also constituting the base for more informal economic activities. Thus, the private sphere emerged as a substitute for a civil society, as a way of avoiding state interventions and as an independent arena for solving everyday practical issues, which also included ‘illegal’ activities. However, the reproductive sphere also became an object for state control through the supply of childcare facilities and regulation of divorces and abortions, which affected men’s and women’s participation in the labour force (Liljeström 1995).

The private sphere tended to remain a feminised arena, where women were given more traditional roles, partly related to their biological role as mothers and partly due to their work responsibilities in the household and family. Thus, the ideals of homogenization did not apply within the private sphere, which continued to be a source for differentiating the gender roles (Gal & Kligman 2000a). The feminisation of the private sphere had its background in the overall organization and economic development of the Soviet society, which focused mainly on investing in heavier industries rather than the service sector. The state run services in terms of childcare and other household duties turned out to be inadequate, and women shouldered double and even triple
burdens through their roles as workers and mothers (Liljeström 1995). Still, some researchers emphasise that the private sphere remained a ‘sacred’ place of women’s lives, since it symbolized more feminine values rejected and suppressed in the public sphere and through the ideals of *Homo Sovieticus*. Paid work was considered to be forced upon women, which kept them away from activities in the home and family that they would have liked to prioritise (see Gal & Kligman 2000a). Liljeström (1995) claims that there has been a tendency to view the private sphere as an ‘idyllic place’ for women, though it involved a lot of unpaid work; and work in the public sphere could also be beneficial as a place for recovery and peace, and providing necessary social contacts, networks and relations (Liljeström 1995).

The distinction and division between the private and the public sphere increased in the post-Stalinist period. More evidently, women’s ‘natural’ nurturing, caring and reproductive roles within the private sphere became more accentuated, as a continuation and reinforcement of the earlier biological determinism. The more pronounced differentiation had political motives, and especially during the 1980s, was rooted in aims of coming to terms with decreasing birth rates. Mikhail Gorbachev claimed that earlier visions of full employment for all and the overall aims of equality should be modified to comprehend ‘equality through difference’, in order to restore family values and make it possible for women to return to their ‘natural’ place in the home. Thus, the political reforms included shorter working hours and increasing benefits for maternity leave, and childcare (LaFont 2001:207).

*The ‘brave victim’ and the ‘big child’*

The gender relations within the household took also other expressions apart from a traditional division of work. Marody and Giza-Poleszczuk (2000) emphasise how the Soviet gender ideals can be analysed in terms of the female ‘brave victim’ and the male ‘big child’; images which were communicated through state media and reproduced within the private sphere. Women were portrayed as ‘the brave victims’, due to the number of sacrifices made both in the public and private spheres. Women were ‘brave’ in the sense that they could manage to balance both work and family, which had parallels to the socialist ideals of the strong woman shouldering more ‘masculine’ ideals (Marody & Giza-Poleszczuk 2000 In: Gal & Kligman 2000b). At the same time, women became ‘victims’, due to their sacrifices for the socialist system, for example, in their obligations of motherhood, and employment in less attractive and low-paid jobs in the labour market (Lace et al. In: Guichon et al. 2006). Buholcs
(2005) and Sprugaine (2005) analyse the construction of gender in women’s magazines during the Soviet period in Latvia, which served to educate and inform women about Soviet norms and how to behave as Soviet citizens. The images revealed a utopian view of women, as ‘Superwomen’, who were active workers and political representatives, at the same time as they shouldered the roles as dedicated mothers and wives, even though these ideals usually were far from reflecting the everyday life of the average Latvian woman (Buholcs In: Brikse 2005; Sprugaine In: Brikse 2005). Marody and Giza-Poleszczuk (2000) emphasise that the image of the ‘brave victim’ not only was an ideal created and reproduced through media, but also enforced by women themselves.

(...) the “brave victim” identity gave women some justification for – and pride in – their situation, they were sacrificing themselves for the greater good. And this conferred them a sense that they were the real authority in the private sphere, the real head of the family (Marody & Giza-Poleszczuk In Gal & Kligman 2000b:163).

The ideals of masculinity were not as clear-cut as the images of femininity, especially not within the private sphere. Men shouldered the ideal of ‘the big child’ of the family, dependent on both the state and women, vulnerable and in need of protection (Gal & Kligman 2000a). Thus, the dominating gender ideals portrayed a strong image of the woman and a rather weak image of the man. For men, the patriarchal character of the ‘new Soviet family’ meant that they in some ways lost their roles when more authority was reproduced in the hands of the state. Despite their more privileged position in the labour market, men could also be described as ‘victims’ during the Soviet rule (Ashwin 2000). The role of the breadwinner was difficult to maintain due to the low wages and due to women’s increasing participation in the labour market. For some men, this ‘identity crisis’ was manifested through drinking, which even further put the responsibility of family support and livelihood on their female counterparts. For women, the mission was to raise and educate not only their children but also their male counterparts using a more ‘invisible’ or indirect manner, and to encourage them to contribute to the family’s well-being in both a material and a social sense (Marody & Giza-Poleszczuk 2000 In Gal & Kligman 2000b).

**Work and post-socialist gender identities**

The debate of how women’s and men’s participation in the labour market has changed since the collapse of the Soviet Union, has been wide and complex. One of the main issues of debate has been whether or not women have ‘suf-
Chapter six – Femininities, work and national common space

...fered’ more than men from the overall restructuring on the economy, for example, resulting in unemployment, a lack of social security, and a rise of a ‘return-to-the-home’ rhetoric associated with reclaiming traditional gender ideals. The remaining part of the chapter contains three different approaches to how work and gender identities have transformed in the Latvian post-socialist period, which are related to the different geographies discussed in the previous chapters: reclai...
Chapter six – Femininities, work and national common space

Reclaiming traditional ideals of femininities
Authors such as Einhorn (1993) and Funk and Mueller (1993) have argued that the obligations of paid work during the Soviet period have created a counter-reaction among women in the post-socialist period, evident in a withdrawal from the labour market into the private sphere. The implementation of the objectives of full employment was conducted through a top-down process, and in the period following independence, the women’s ‘choice’ not to work has been regarded as significant, as reflecting a ‘liberation’ from the socialist working ideals. Both men and women in Latvia and in other post-socialist countries also struggled with difficulties of finding work in the unstable labour market during the 1990s, due to the overall economic decline. Yet, it has been argued that the effects of unemployment have been more striking for women than for men, due to the cut-backs in sectors traditionally occupied by women. Moreover, neo-liberal political strategies and budget cuts within the welfare system are also considered to have contributed to a decreasing female participation in the labour market (see Funk 1993, Einhorn 1993).

This process is also regarded as having parallels to a wish to reclaim traditional ideals of femininity, which has links to re-emerging nationalistic ideologies, highlighting women in their traditional role as mothers and caretakers; these were embodied in the construction of the new nation state. In Latvia, these ideals are rooted in the formation of the first independent Latvian nation state, but were preserved during the Soviet regime, when women still were regarded as having ‘natural’ roles as mothers. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) emphasises how women continued to be the main protectors and preservers of the Latvian culture, identity and traditions, within the realm of the family, as a contrast to the totalitarian Soviet public sphere. Thus, in comparison to the more paternalistic state structures, the private sphere represented remains of a traditional ‘ethnic’ Latvian femininity, which could be reclaimed after independence (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).

The rise of neo-conservatism and neo-liberalism
Rainnie et al. (2002) claim that one common trend in many post-socialist labour markets has been a rise in unemployment, a high reliance on low state benefits for those unemployed, as well as the rise of unofficial job practices. The aim for the state has been to move towards more neo-liberal strategies, involving strategies of de-regulation, in an effort to abandon the socialist system which was perceived as ‘irrational’, ineffective and involving too much state control. Thus, the labour markets should be guided by market principles, in a process of
buying and selling labour, controlled by other actors apart from the state (Rainnie et al. In: Rainnie et al. eds 2002). Lace et al. (2006) argue that the rise of neo-liberalism in the Baltic countries has gone hand-in-hand with the re-emergence of more neo-conservative ideologies, which have resulted in a rapid dissemblance of the welfare system, and affected women’s participation in the labour market negatively, due to a lack of social services such as childcare (Lace et al. In: Guichon et al. 2006). The tendency has been to diminish the role and aims of social security, in the wish to endeavor economic and political targets set up in the transition process. A more individualistic ideology has emerged, in contrast to the previous collective spirit, portraying the state now as less interfering, making each citizen responsible for his/her own success and well-being. Therefore, problems such as unemployment and poverty tend to be regarded as individualistic issues rather than a state responsibility (Lace et al. In: Guichon et al. eds 2006; Aidukaite 2004). Aidukaite (2004) claims that the contemporary welfare system in the Baltic countries cannot be placed into the welfare models used for ‘Western’ economies, but that the social policies bear traits of both previous structures from the Soviet period and the pre-communist legacies, as well as being influenced partly by neo-liberal ideologies and existing welfare models in the Scandinavian countries. Thus, Aidukaite positions Latvia and other Baltic countries ‘in-between’ the liberal and conservative/corporatist welfare regimes as defined by Esping-Andersen, which rely on welfare measures related to either the market or the family, rather than on state benefits and security (Aidukaite 2004).

A 'return’ to the private sphere?

Some researchers object to the assumption that the post-socialist period has been characterised by women’s ‘return’ to the private sphere or that women have ‘suffered’ more than men in the transition process, and claim that women’s participation in the labour market in Latvia and in other post-socialist countries has increased rather than decreased since independence (see Gal & Kligman 2000a, Brunovskis 2001; Motiejanuīte 2008). Akvile Motiejunaite (2008) claims that the rise of more conservative ideals of femininity would result in a return to a ‘male breadwinner/female care-giver’ model, evident

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55 Aidukaite (2004) makes in this case a comparison between welfare models in the Baltic countries and ‘ideal-types’ of welfare regimes as introduced by Esping-Andersen (1990) and Korpi-Palme (1998). The continental/conservative welfare model includes a reliance on the family rather than the state as being responsible for welfare policies, with a low level of social services and child care facilities. The liberal model also provides a less interfering role of the state, in favor of the market (see Esping-Andersen 1990).
through women’s decreasing participation in the labour market and an emerging housewife ideal (Motiejunaite 2008). The return-to-the-home rhetoric was evident already during the Soviet regime as discussed above, and the question is also whether or not a ‘housewife ideal’ has links to a pre-Soviet Latvia. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) emphasises that women during the first Latvian independence were fairly active as workers. In 1934, Latvia held the second highest rate of paid female employment in Europe, 56.2 percent. Yet, women were mainly employed within the agricultural sector as unpaid workers, or found in educational professions. Men were also prioritised as workers in the cities due to problems of unemployment and identified as the head of the family, for example, through a new civil law in 1935, in which men were described as having “the decisive decision-making role in the family” (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:190). Stukuls-Eglitis describes pre-war Latvia as ‘progressive’ in terms of women’s societal positions, but not as linked to women’s active and large-scale participation in the labour market, which started in Western European countries during this period (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).

Based on a comparative study of labour market statistics in the Baltic countries, Motiejanuite (2008) identifies no ‘proof’ of a large-scale withdrawal of women from the labour market in the post-socialist period. She claims that the largest changes in employment occurred in the early 1990s, as an effect of the overall economic decline, characterized by high unemployment rates and decreasing employment rates. In Latvia, employment fell by 31.2 percent between 1990 and 1996, and both women and men were severely affected by the restructuring of the economy (Motiejunaite 2008:114). Motiejunaite states that there were signs of women withdrawing from the labour market between 1990-1995, most probably to due to the shortage of childcare facilities as an effect of the reforms in the social welfare system. The industrial sector was hit particularly hard in Latvia, in which employment was reduced by around 50 percent (ibid:123). Even though the industry was a male-dominated sector, many women working in the administration also lost their jobs. The lighter industries such as the textile sector were also affected more than the heavier industry in

56 In 1935, 84 percent of women aged 20-59 were working according to a Latvian national census, but a majority were unpaid workers within farming and agriculture (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:190).

57 In 1937, the opportunities for urban women entering non-agricultural professions were restricted by a government decree, recommending that “married women, if they had no children, had to leave their jobs, and so the family had to live on the husband’s wages. The wife with children had to stay at home anyway in city conditions. In part, these regulations had arisen from the growing rate of unemployment that (led to)... steps to fight unemployment” (Velta Ruke-Dravina In: Eglite 1994, quoted in Stukuls-Eglitis 2002:191).
the restructuring of the economy, the former being an important occupation for women. The expansive service sector absorbed many employees during this period, especially women, which is identified as an important factor behind the rather stable rates for female employment from 1996 and onwards (ibid). National Latvian labour market statistics, based on annual Labour Force Studies, show a steady rise of both women’s and men’s employment rates since 2001, and a slightly lower number of unemployed women compared to men (see Figure 5).

Figure 5: Economic activity58 for the Latvian population aged 15-64 by sex 1996-2007.

58 Economic activity: “persons of both sexes who in the reference period offered their work for the production of goods and services. Economically active population consists of employed persons and non-working persons actively seeking a job (both those persons who are registered with the State Employment Agency and those who are not).” Employed: “persons aged 15-74 years (prior to 2001 aged 15 years and over) who during the reference week did any work for cash payment or compensation in goods or services.” Unemployed: includes both registered and non-registered unemployed people at the State Employment Agency. “Persons who do not work and are not temporarily absent from work, are actively seeking a job and immediately available for work if they find it. The number of jobseekers also includes persons who did not seek a job because they had already found one and were going to start it within the next 3 months.” Economically inactive population: “Persons of both sexes irrespective of their age including persons under working age who can be classified neither as employed nor jobseekers (housewives, non-working disabled persons, students of working age who neither are in work nor seeking, non working pensioners, etc)” (www.csb.gov.lv Database 2008-07-03. Based on annual Labour Force Survey data).
Figure 5 also shows a decreasing pattern of the number of economically inactive persons in general and women more specifically, which include people officially registered as ‘housewives’. Still, women comprised a majority (60%) of the total number of economically inactive persons in 2007 (www.csb.gov.lv Database 2008-07-03). A significant difference can be distinguished in terms of age; the largest share of the female inactive population (43%) in 2007 consisted of women aged 15-24, which may include a larger share of students, who are classified as economically inactive (www.csb.gov.lv Database 2008-07-03). However, when analysing the status of those economically inactive, there has been a slight increase in the women registered as ‘housewives’, which constituted 18 percent of all female economically inactive in 2007, compared with 15 percent in 2002 (LSCB, data ordered upon request “Economically inactive persons by status and sex”).

Based on a quantitative attitude study of gender roles in the Baltic countries, West Germany and the former East Germany, Motiejunaite argues that more ‘traditional’ attitudes towards women’s labour market participation show decreasing acceptance. The study included statements relating to ‘traditionalism’ such as “When jobs are scarce, men have more right to jobs than women” and “Being a housewife is as fulfilling as working for pay”. In Latvia, the results showed a decrease of more ‘traditional’ gender role attitudes from 70 percent in 1990 to around 40 percent in 1996 (Motiejanuite 2008:98f). Motiejunaite concludes that the traditional gender ideals tend to prevail, but claims that there is little proof of a return of the ‘male breadwinner/female care-giver’ model, since women still tend to engage actively in employment in the labour market. Still, Motiejunaite tends to analyse the transition and its transforming gender ideals as moving from one phase to another, for example from a Soviet gender system to a potential ‘male breadwinner/female care-giver model’, rather than viewing it as a process with a more complex reality in which different typologies may exist on a parallel basis. The studies have been conducted on a national macro-scale, comparing and analysing different post-socialist countries as separate, but homogenous units. Thus, regional and local variations are put aside, for example, between the cities and the countryside. Potential local differences in how the traditional ideals of femininities are negotiated will be analysed in more depth in part IV and V of the thesis.

59 The quantitative study was based on ‘European Values Surveys’, conducted in 1990, 1996/1997 and 1999, measuring attitudes towards gender roles in the family and attitudes concerning female participation in the labour market, ranging from ‘traditional’ to ‘non-traditional’ (Montiejanuite 2008:65f).
Contemporary patterns of women’s employment in Latvia

The low share of women working part-time in the Baltic countries has also been put forward as an argument for supporting the claims that women still are active in the post-socialist labour markets (see Motiejanuite 2008). Compared to other European countries, such as Sweden, Latvian women’s participation in part-time work is low (see Figure 6). The share of female part-time workers also shows a decreasing pattern, from 13 percent in 2004 to merely 8 percent in 2007. Still, the share of part-time workers is higher among women compared to men, representing 61 percent in 2007. When analysing motives for part-time work related to childcare, eight percent of women specified “Looking after own children” as the main reasons for their part-time employment in 2007, while this alternative was not chosen by men to such an extent that it was included in the statistical results (LCSB Database 2008-07-15).

Figure 6: Share of women and men working part-time 2002-2007 (%).

Statistics on women’s and men’s registered unemployment, as provided by the Latvian State Employment Agencies, show different results compared to the figures presented by the labour force surveys above. Figure 7 shows how the

60 The definition of part-time workers according to Latvian CSB is “Persons who are part-time employed (employees) or usually work less than 40 hours per week, excluding those who consider themselves to be employed full-time irrespective of the number of their working hours” (Latvian CSB Database 2008-07-15).
number of women registered as unemployed has continued to be higher than that for men, even though they have declined since 1998. The gap between men’s and women’s registered unemployment has increased from 1996 onwards, but follows a similar pattern, with a sharp increase of unemployment from 1992 onwards, and a slower continuous decrease between 2000 and 2006. Women’s share of the total number of registered unemployed persons has also tended to increase. From constituting around 52 percent of the unemployed in 1994 and 1995, the statistics show a significant increase, especially from 2002 onwards, and in 2006, women comprised 61 percent of the total number of registered unemployed (ILO Laborsta Database http://laborsta.ilo.org 2008-07-03). The background to these patterns may be found in the fact that women tend to register as unemployed to a higher extent than men in order to receive social benefits and take part in educational programmes. This will be further discussed in upcoming chapters when presenting the results of the case studies from the Cēsis district and Jūrmala.

**Figure 7:** Registered unemployment 1992-2006.


‘Western’ ideals of femininities

The transformation process can be analysed as reflecting the emergence of more ‘Western’ ideals of femininities, related to the transition to a capitalist economy and the re-orientation towards Western Europe, as discussed within the Geographies of Europeanisation. But what then actually comprises more
'Western' ideals of femininities? I would suggest that they, just as more 'Eastern' ideals of femininities, should be regarded as taking diverse forms, and may in most Western European countries include both more traditional and modern ideals, which have national, regional and local variations. Still, the transformation process in Latvia and other post-socialist countries has, and is, taking place in relation to economic, political and socio-cultural influences originating in other parts of Western Europe and the world, through processes of globalisation, neo-liberalism and the spread of capitalism as the main economic system for development. These processes carry in turn different culturally-formed perceptions of femininities, which are also manifested in different economic and political directives, including those relating to work. In the next sections, I will discuss how the 'Western' ideals of femininities take two directions in relation to work. Firstly, I will argue that the ideals are rooted in increasing consumption through work, as a way of embracing a Western 'feminine' lifestyle and at the same time rejecting the homogenized and 'gender-neutral' Soviet ideals. Secondly, I will discuss how the aims and policies of the Latvian labour market are being affected by EU-policies in terms of employment, gender-mainstreaming and entrepreneurship, which uphold and negotiate different ideals of gender and work.

‘Emancipation’ through consumption

True (2003) claims that processes of globalization together with neo-liberal policies have brought not only a boom in production in post-socialist economies, but also in consumption. Consumption involves embracing a more ‘Western-oriented’ lifestyle in both a material and an immaterial sense, and has become a hallmark of a newfound freedom, which signals the choice of creating one’s own individual identity, in contrast to the earlier collective identity which often was manifested through work. True stresses that the increased consumption of ‘new’ Western products such as fashion and beauty products have come to symbolize a new ‘emancipation’ of women, as a way of expressing a more liberated femininity in contrast to the ‘over-emancipated’ and more masculine ideals which existed during the Soviet occupation. For women, and especially for the older generation, consumption comprises a rejection of the communist ideals, as a way of embracing the new supply and choice to express both a female identity and sexuality (True 2003).

But is the presence of more ‘Western’ ideals of femininities actually a new phenomenon in post-socialist countries? Gradskova (2007) points out that there is a tendency to analyse the former Soviet society as deviant and different
from the Western world, even though Soviet trends and ideals constituted a part of a more general (Western) development. Discourses of beauty and maternity emerging within the Soviet Union relied on ideals of modernity deriving from the Enlightenment period, for example, the emphasis on health and hygiene. Thus, it had close parallels to the modern project of the western world, and can be viewed as adopting and implementing ‘Western’ ideas in a more ‘Eastern’ setting. Western ideals of femininity were communicated through different forms of media as a consumerist ideal. However, the Western beauty and fashion products remained unavailable for a majority of women due to the low living standards, revealing social differences among different groups of women despite the socialist ‘classless’ society. The Western trends were not rejected but copied, and the ideals influenced women’s sense of fashion and style by representing modernity as ‘natural’ and important to their everyday life. Still, the official Soviet ideals included a ‘discourse of modesty’, which meant that the claim for beauty should not be exaggerated. This discourse fit in turn well into more local, traditional and conservative ideals of femininity, especially in the countryside (Gradskova 2007).

Marody and Giza-Poleszczuk (2000) argue that the new consumerist ideals in the post-socialist period have not merely had emancipatory effects for women, but have also resulted in more stereotypical gender identities. Women are increasingly portrayed as passive, attractive and individualized ‘objects’ for the male gaze. This has been evident, for example, within marketing and advertising, images used for selling everyday products, but also sexual services as discussed in Chapter four about sex tourism. Masculinity, on the other hand, tends to be more active and ‘macho’ compared to the previous communist ideals of the ‘big child’. The Western ideals of femininity emerging in the post-socialist period are no longer controlled or manifested by the state, but by the market, which in turn tends to transform the gender identities from collective to individualised forms. This includes a mission for women to be successful both in their careers and within the family, while also maintaining the right looks and lifestyles. Here, parallels can be made to the ideal of the female ‘brave victim’, making sacrifices in order to balance work and family, which now takes more consumerist expressions. The supply of ‘Western’ commodities has created a tension between the wish to purchase new products and services on the one hand, and women’s budget constraints on the other hand. Marody and Giza-Poleszczuk claim that, increasingly gaps among groups of women tend to emerge, evident in the fact that it may be easier for women who are younger,
single and well-educated to live up to the ideals of career, consumption and beauty (Marody & Giza-Poleszczuk In: Gal & Kligman 2000b).

**New ‘Western’ policies of gender and work**

The aims and trends of women’s and men’s employment in Latvia need to be analysed not merely in a national context, but also from an EU-perspective. Latvian public institutions need to follow policies set up by European Union bodies, such as the European Commission, in order to reach the ‘European’ targets of employment and economic competitiveness. Moreover, the policies include general aims of gender equality, rooted in Western European feminist ideologies and movements, which guide and question principles of women’s and men’s roles in the labour market as well in relation to the private sphere.

When analyzing policies and aims set up by the EU (for example, within the Lisbon strategy), it is evident that the new Eastern membership countries are compared and discussed in relation to questions of employment in general and gender equality more specifically, in order to identify potential ‘problems’ and ‘deviances’ from the ‘old’ EU-countries. Such analysis paves the way for identifying the modern (Western) European worker and his/her characteristics, and how the new membership countries in the East will have to come to terms with their ‘problems’, in order to ‘catch up’ on the same path as the Western EU-countries. On the one hand, the EU is portrayed as one strong unit, working together to achieve common goals of growth, but on the other hand, the differences in terms of economic development become pronounced.

The aims of work and employment within the European Union have since the beginning of the 21st century been drawn up in relation to the process of creating an overall development plan for the EU, which has been known as the Lisbon strategy. The strategy contains several aims of improved economic growth and employment, with the purpose of creating a single and more modernized market by 2010, to become competitive in an international context. The EU should become “the most competitive and the most dynamic knowledge-

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61 The Lisbon strategy should be achieved through three different measures. The first is to “attract and retain more people in employment, increase labour supply and modernize social protection systems.” The second measure is to “improve adaptability of workers and enterprises,” in terms of new technology, as a way of adjusting to “the increasingly global economy.” The third measure involves actions in order to “increase investment in human capital through better education and skills” (The Council of the European Union. Council decision of 12 July 2005 on guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States). The Lisbon strategy was simplified and updated in 2005 in order to “renew the basis of its competitiveness, increase its growth potential and its productivity and strengthen social cohesion, placing the main emphasis on knowledge, innovation and the optimisation of human capital” (The Council of the European Union 2005a:2).
based economy in the world”, with “more and better jobs” (see http://ec.europa.eu). The Council of the European Union has issued specific employment guidelines for the member states in line with the Lisbon strategy, which include both qualitative and quantitative aims, including that of full employment (The Council of the European Union 2005b). Thus, the aim of full employment is once again launched in Latvia as one of the main objectives for the labour market, but this time formulated in market economical terms rather than reflecting communist ideologies. According to the guidelines, each member state should try to achieve targets of employment set up by the EU by 2010, including increasing the employment rates to 70 percent in general, and more specifically 60 percent for women and 50 percent for the population aged 55-64 years. Each member state has been responsible for implementing their own National Reform Programme, and in Latvia, The National Lisbon Programme for Latvia 2005-2008 has been developed, which identified the EU as a key to providing economic growth, both in terms of GDP and higher employment rates. The program identifies a number of quantitative goals, including an annual GDP growth of between 6-8 percent and an employment rate targeting 67 percent in general, and 62 percent for women and 68 percent for men more specifically (Ministry of Economics et al. 2007a) Some of these targets have already been achieved; the employment rate in Latvia was estimated to be 66.3 percent in 2006, which is still far from the EU25 target of 70 percent, but the employment rates for women (62 percent in 2006), exceeded the EU25 average target (Ministry of Economics et al. (2007b).

Promoting gender equality

The employment guidelines of the Lisbon strategy pay specific attention to increasing women’s participation in the labour market and measures to “reduce gender gaps in employment, unemployment and pay” (The Council of the European Union 2005b). The Latvian Lisbon program contains goals of “fostering employment”, in which low male employment rates are identified as a problem in a European comparison, while the high female employment rates are treated as a good example. Some of the aims described in the program serve to promote information about gender equality within the society, and the development of childcare facilities and measures which can assist and encourage people previously on childcare leave to return to the labour market (Ministry of Economics et al. 2007a)62. Gender equality is not a new concept in

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62 The strategies and priorities set up in the program include; firstly to create “an inclusive labour market” (p. 33), in order to counteract exclusion from the labour market, for example,
Latvia due to the socialist ideologies introduced during the Soviet regime, but may appear as a controversial topic. An interview conducted with two representatives from the Ministry of Welfare (responsible for gender equality issues on a national level) illustrates how the process of implementing official guidelines for gender equality in Latvia has been slow.

It is difficult. We don't have a long tradition of non-governmental organizations. We don't have the experience of feministic movements, or something similar. The topic is fairly new. There is also a controversy over gender equality and how it was understood in the Soviet times. Sometimes it's very, very controversial, because people tend to remain out of the discussions or even refuse to accept the discussions, thinking it's something that we don't need to have (Female representative 1, Ministry of Welfare, August 2005).

The Ministry of Welfare has adopted the principle of gender-mainstreaming as one of the leading approaches to gender equality, which is widely used in the EU. The main aim is to introduce a gender perspective as a critical issue in all aspects of the public planning socio-economic process. The Latvian policy planning document, The Programme for Implementation of Gender Equality 2007-2010, draws up guidelines for gender and the labour market. It recognizes gender equality in relation to gender-mainstreaming and has been developed in relation to the aims of the EU program A Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006-2010. The program emphasises, for example, how both women and men should be able to make a career, and the importance of childcare

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63 The United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) defined the concept of gender mainstreaming in 1997. "Mainstreaming a gender perspective is the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in any area and at all levels. It is a strategy for making the concerns and experiences of women as well as of men an integral part of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres, so that women and men benefit equally, and inequality is not perpetuated. The ultimate goal of mainstreaming is to achieve gender equality" (www.ilo.org 2008-07-15).

64 The main Latvian actor responsible for The Programme for Implementation of Gender Equality 2007-2010 is the Ministry of Welfare. The program was preceded by a previous programme covering the period 2005-2006.

65 The program is based on six criteria: (1) Achieving equal economic independence of women and men (2) Enhancing reconciliation of work, private and family life (3) Promoting equal decision-making of women and men (4) Eradicating gender-based violence and trafficking (5) Eliminating gender stereotypes in society (6) Promoting gender equality outside the EU (Commission of the European Communities 2006).
facilities in order to raise women’s employment rates. The program concludes that “the offer of childcare services does not satisfy the demand” (Ministry of Welfare 2007:29). According to statistics from 2005, 75 percent of children aged 3-6 years old had access to childcare, but only 16 percent of children aged 0-2 years had. Still, the program underscores that the purpose is not to:

(...) achieve that any differences between women and men disappear, but that any individual might fully implement his or her potential regardless of the opinions and prejudices dominating in society in relation to actions, which are appropriate for a woman and a man, or to gender stereotypes (Ministry of Welfare (2007:54).

The interview with the Ministry of Welfare also points out that there exists a tension between implementing the ‘Western’ policies of gender equality, and the resistance and rejection of the socialist ideals of equality.

In one way, on the labour market, the Soviet times were quite good, because people were working then. There was not a very large split between men and women's occupations; for example, it was quite OK for a woman to drive a tractor, working in a physically hard profession, so we have this good legacy from the Soviet times. But there is also work to do (Female representative 1, Ministry of Welfare, August 2005).

From the other side, it's also part of the bad side, because women think we force them to drive the tractors now also. They think that we're trying to make both genders, not to have equal rights but to be equal, or to be the same (Female representative 2, Ministry of Welfare, August 2005).

Thus, the Soviet heritage is, on the one hand, perceived as a good merit for use in the development of more ‘Western’ forms of gender equality, but on the other hand, the existing Soviet legacy may make the policies controversial. The aims of the Latvian gender-equality program reflect this debate and include, for example, no guidelines in how to break the existing horizontally segregated Latvian labour market, as specified in EU-programs such as A Roadmap for Equality between Women and Men 2006-2010. In the latter case, the program draws up aims for ‘eliminating gender stereotypes in society’, in order to make more women choose traditionally male professions and vice versa (Commission of the European Communities 2006a).

Promoting entrepreneurship as ‘gender neutral’
One of the main aims for economic growth in EU in general and in Latvia more specifically is the promotion of entrepreneurship and development of
small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs). National and regional development programs such as The National Development Plan (NDP), emphasise the need for a well-educated work force for economic growth in Latvia, which should form the basis of a ‘knowledge-based economy’, with a focus on innovation and competitiveness. The NDP stresses the importance of entrepreneurship in order to renew the Latvian economy, and describes how Latvia struggles with low levels of entrepreneurship which is considered to be connected to a “lack of initiative in society, as well as to administrative obstacles within the business environment” (Ministry of Regional development and Local Governance 2006:10). Entrepreneurship is also described as a ‘solution’ to problems such as regional economic disparities, low employment rates and unemployment. A crucial instrument in this process is the structural funding, and the EU plans to spend around 27 billion Euros for implementing a ‘cohesion policy’, which aims at making the regions more competitive through the support of business development (The European Commission 2008). The Programme for Promotion of Business Competitiveness and Innovation 2007–2013 includes guidelines of how to improve the Latvian business environment and puts focus on how to educate the future entrepreneurs as follows:

Development of the spirit and skills of a businessman already from the level of primary school, provision of the options for acquisition of the necessary skills for successful commencement of business (Cabinet of Ministers 2007:20, my emphasis).

Entrepreneurship is rarely defined in the Latvian policy documents and is treated in a largely general and gender-neutral manner, which does not include an analysis of potential differences and similarities between women’s and men’s roles as entrepreneurs. Neither does The Programme for Implementation of Gender Equality 2007–2010 provide guidelines in how to promote women and men’s entrepreneurship, even though A Roadmap for equality between women and men 2006–2010 includes directions on increasing women’s entrepreneurship within the EU. In the above quotation, I have italicised the word ‘businessman’ as the main identity of the ‘entrepreneur’, which tends to portray the business owner

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66 The EU defines a micro business as an enterprise with less than 10 employees. Small enterprises should have 10–49 employees, a medium-sized business 50–249 employees and a large enterprise more than 250 employees. The definitions are also made based on the turnover of the enterprise. SMEs constitute more than 99 percent of all registered enterprises in Europe, of which 75 percent are classified as ‘microenterprises’, and the SMEs are estimated to generate 65 million jobs (http://ec.europa.eu 2008-07-15).

with masculine rather than feminine characteristics, with keywords such as ‘innovative’, ‘rational’ and ‘creative’. The fact that aims of entrepreneurship often are based on male norms has been widely discussed within feminist studies, and this issue will be further highlighted in Chapter nine, when analyzing entrepreneurship within rural tourism.

The emphasis on entrepreneurship as the key to a successful Latvian economy demonstrates how Western European models of economic growth are promoted and applied to a post-socialist context, as discussed in geographies of Europeanisation. As Blokker (2005) underlines, this includes highlighting ‘Eastern’ models of development (mainly through the examples of communism), as failing examples of societal formation, in contrast to the ‘victory’ and success of the Western, capitalistic society as the one and only model for development. Blokker points out how the rapid transition process often is driven by a small and exclusive elite of (male) entrepreneurs, which are responsible for the new societal order. Thus development is rooted in the rise of neo-liberal ideologies, aimed at decreasing the control of the state in favour of the market and the individual (Blokker 2005). Asztalos Morell et al. (2004) emphasise how the Western influences are given more masculine characteristics, in terms of adopting Western, male norms of economic management and entrepreneurship (Asztalos Morell et al. 2005:14).

I find it important to acknowledge the diversity of entrepreneurship, and make both men and women visible as entrepreneurs. However, there is a lack of both research studies and statistics which may provide a more nuanced image of men’s and women’s entrepreneurship in Latvia. Welter and Kolb (2006) estimate that women may constitute around one-third of the total number of Latvian entrepreneurs. A majority of the businesses are micro-businesses, and women tend to be self-employed to a higher extent than men, constituting around 69 percent of the total number of female-owned businesses, which may be related to that women in general need lower barriers for starting their own business (Welter & Kolb 2006). National Latvian statistics show a decrease in the share of self-employed women, from 9 percent in 1997 to merely 4.7 percent in 2007 (See Table 7). The share of female employers increased between 1997 and 2000, but this share has slowly been declining, reaching merely 1.9 percent 2007 which is close to the 1997 level. Moreover, the share of male employers continues to be almost twice as high as that of female employers, and the share of self-employed men is also significantly higher than women's.
Table 7: Employed by status of employment and gender (% of total number of employed persons).

<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
<td>Women</td>
<td>Men</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employees</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>79.2</td>
<td>86.6</td>
<td>83.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employers</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family workers*</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data from 1997 and 2000 are based on the Table, p. 47 in Women and Men in the Baltic Countries 2002, generated from the Labour Force Study. Data from 2004 and 2007 are the author’s own calculations based on statistics from the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia Database 2008-07-03.

* Definition according to CSB: Unpaid person who helps another member of family in his/her enterprise or private practice, craft and farm work.

Continuity of socialist ideals of femininities

The third set of femininities discussed in this chapter is related to the discussion of whether or not the gender system during the Soviet period has continued to influence contemporary gender identities in post-socialist countries, which have parallels to the previous chapter on ‘relic-communism’. Ashwin (2002) claims that the post-communist period has involved a continuation of the ‘Soviet heritage of gender ideology’ rather than a reclaiming of more traditional ideals of femininity (Ashwin In: Rainnie et al. 2002:117). Motiejunaite (2008) also argues that the Baltic post-socialist labour markets tend to reflect a continuity of the ‘adult worker/female care-giver’ model, which was evident during the Soviet regime. The following sections of the chapter will discuss the ‘relict’ of the socialist ideals of femininities from three different perspectives; firstly how Latvian women’s relatively high employment rates can be analysed as constituting an example of an existing ‘adult worker/female care-giver’ model. Secondly, I will analyse how the current gender-segregated labour market may have parallels to the previous Soviet division of labour, for example evident in women’s over-representation within the service sector. Thirdly, I will discuss the segregated Latvian labour market in terms of ethnicity, which also constitutes part of the Soviet heritage in terms of employment patterns among ‘ethnic’ Latvians and the Russian minorities.

Continuity of the ‘adult worker/female care-giver’ model

Ashwin (2000) argues that women’s high employment rates in post-socialist countries can be explained by the fact that the socialist ideals of femininity and
work still continue to have effect, and that women tend to work despite the difficulties they face in the labour market. In her studies of women’s participation in the Russian labour market, Ashwin emphasises how women have maintained the ideal of the ‘Superwoman’, who successfully combines and balances her duties both at work and within the family. In a survey, 80 percent of the female respondents stated that they would continue to work even though they would have the financial resources to stay at home. According to the respondents, work was considered to be an important part of their identity and everyday life. ‘The home’, as referring to the private sphere, was not merely given positive but also negative associations, including the home as a ‘prison’. Despite the importance of participating in paid work, the Russian female respondents still perceived the household as a ‘natural’ place for women, where they were expected to take the main responsibility for their family members and related chores. The study also revealed positive attitudes towards the use of public childcare facilities, which were described as important in terms of the educational and social development of children (Ashwin 2000; 2006).

Ashwin (2000; 2006) describes the Soviet gender legacy as paradoxical, portraying women as ‘active’ and ‘independent’ workers, on the one hand, and ‘dependent’ on their male counterparts and committed to their obligations within the private sphere on the other. In the Russian study, a majority of the female respondents claimed that the husband/man should be the main income provider for the household, which also reflected the actual income distribution. Thus, if a man was not able to provide for his family, it was considered to be a serious failure in his normal obligations and duties, as well as a threat to his male identity, which naturally placed a lot of responsibility and high expectations on men. Ashwin argues that women’s expectations of men originate in previous socialist working ideals, which emphasised how men should support the household, not only in material terms, but also by helping out in the family when women were at work (Ashwin In: Ashwin 2000). Nevertheless, even though men now are ‘free’ to reclaim their positions in the private sphere, they face difficulties to live up to the ideal of the male breadwinner, due to low wages and difficulties to find work in the labour market. In an interview study, the Russian women portrayed men as ‘lazy’, due to their lack of responsibility, which resulted in a greater need for women’s participation in the labour market (Ashwin In: Ashwin 2000:129). Consequently, women still shouldered their responsibility as the ‘brave victim’ in the public and the private sphere, while supplying the need for an additional income. Ashwin describes women’s gender identities as more differentiated and multiple than those of men, and not as
Chapter six – Femininities, work and national common space

 strongly associated with their achievements in the public sphere (Ashwin In: Ashwin 2006). The definition of masculinity was narrowed after the establishment of the Soviet state, since the socialist project downplayed the relationship between masculinity and private property. The ‘head of the household’ was no longer an obvious or given role for men, and no alternative roles or expressions of masculinity were presented. Thus, work and production within the public sphere, became one the few areas for practising masculinity (Goven 2007). Ashwin claims that women are not potential ‘victims’ of the transition, but rather its “heroic survivors”, which means that women have faced the post-socialist crisis better than men due to their roles within the private sphere (Ashwin 2006:4). In Russia, the post-Soviet period has continued to foster ideals of ‘strong’ women and ‘weak’ men, which have parallels to the ideals of the female ‘brave victim’ and the ‘big child’ (Ashwin In: Ashwin 2000).

Continuity of a segregated labour market
Ashwin (2006) claims that due to the fact that women’s double burdens tend to continue, women find it difficult to attain higher positions in the labour market. In an interview study in Russia, women considered men to have a righteous advantage in the labour market in terms of wages and positions, while there was a general acceptance of women’s dominance in the private sphere (Ashwin In: Ashwin ed 2006:50). Women’s and men’s different positions in the contemporary, post-socialist labour market can be analysed as a continuity of socialist employment patterns, which despite a call for ‘equality’, clearly revealed gender-segregated occupations and wage differences. However, it is also important to underscore that a segregated labour market based on gender is not a phenomenon merely found in post-socialist countries, but a pattern evident in a majority of both Eastern and Western European countries. Motiejunaite (2008) emphasises how the segregation of the labour market has increased rather than decreased following independence in the Baltic countries. Women have tended to leave male-dominated professions for example within the industry, which has resulted in a high over-representation of women within the public sector and within the growing service sector (see Figures 8 and 9). Even though men are starting to find their way into the service sector, as an effect of the downturn within primary sectors like agriculture, employment within the service sector is still divided between the sexes. Women tend to be over-represented within public services compared to the male-dominated private service sector, and men have tended to occupy prestigious and better-paid professions, such as trade and the financial sector (Motiejunaite 2008).
As shown by Figure 9 below, there has been a significant increase of women’s employment within services between 1992 and 2007, especially within sectors such as ‘hotel and restaurants’ and ‘public administration and defense’. Within hotels and restaurants, education, health and social services, women’s over-representation constituted between 82 and 85 percent in 2007. Female employment has decreased in three sectors: within financial intermediation which shows a decrease from 90 to 74 percent, and within transportation, storage and telecommunications as well as within wholesale and retail trade, which support the claims of men’s advancements within these sectors.

Motiejunaite argues that the occupational segregation in the Baltic labour market not merely bears negative connotations, but is a sign of how the female labour force may have been ‘revalued’ in the period following independence. ‘Female-coded’ jobs, for example, within the service sector, have gained increased status following independence compared to traditionally male jobs within the ‘old’ industrial sector. With references to Eyal et al. (1998), Motiejunaite discusses how women have had access to the ‘right’ human capital following independence, due to their high education and previous working experience within the service sector during the Soviet regime, which may constitute an advantage in the post-socialist period. Men, on the other hand,
especially those with a lower level of education, tend to remain in low-paid jobs within the declining agricultural or industrial sectors (Motiejunaite 2008).

Figure 9: Latvian women’s share in total employment within services 1992 and 2007 (%).


Continuity of a segregated labour market – the case of ethnicity

There is a lack of qualitative studies which interweave questions of gender and ethnicity in the analysis of the contemporary Latvian labour market. A majority of the available studies are based on larger statistical surveys provided by larger organizations, which rely generalizations of secondary data, rather provide more in-depth analysis (see, for example, studies based on Norbalt surveys by Aasland & Flotten 2001; Dobson & Jones 1998). The national labour market statistics available are also poor and insufficient, which make weak categorizations of Latvians and non-Latvians based on ethnic background, and do not take language skills into consideration.

The occupational segregation of the Latvian labour market in terms of ethnicity was evident already during the Soviet regime and has continued following independence. Aasland (2006) claims that it is difficult to state that Russians had a more privileged position in the Soviet labour market, just as it is
complex to conclude that the Russian-speaking minorities have faced more challenges on the contemporary labour market compared with ‘ethnic’ Latvians. During the Soviet regime, a majority of the Russian population lived in Riga and other urban areas, and was over-represented as employees within industry, transportation and administration. Many Russian industrial workers migrated to Latvia during this period, and a significant share of the Russian immigrants had a higher education. From one perspective, Russians had an advantage in the Soviet labour market due to their Russian language skills, and could easier occupy higher political positions, while ‘ethnic’ Latvians were found mainly in the primary industries and the cultural sector. The conditions for both ethnic Latvians and the Russian-speaking minorities changed at the time of independence. Some have argued that the ethnic minorities would experience more difficulties in the labour market since independence due to their over-representation within the state-owned industry, which faced a downturn in the 1990s. Moreover, the language laws and policies introduced in the 1990s have also been viewed as obstacles for the minorities’ employment and position in the labour market. Others argue that Russians have had different types of advantages in the post-socialist period. Firstly, the Russian-speaking minorities have been concentrated mainly in the urban centers in general and Riga more specifically, which have been the cores for economic growth. Thus, they have been less affected by the downturn of the agricultural sector, and have had different possibilities to adapt to the new flexible urban labour market. Secondly, the Russian-speaking minorities have kept their relations and contacts with the Russian market, which could be beneficial in the development of trade and businesses (Aasland 2006 In: Muznieks 2006).

The unemployment rates for non-Latvians\(^{68}\) have been estimated to be higher than ethnic Latvians during the initial years of independence\(^{69}\). Here, a difference in terms of gender can be distinguished, as the unemployment rates were higher for female non-Latvians. Aasland (2006) argues that the main background to this pattern is that female non-Latvians dominated the administrative state professions during the Soviet period, and had problems finding new jobs within the public sector due to the language requirements. Surveys at the end of the 1990s continued to reveal differences in unemployment rates for non-

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\(^{68}\) ‘Non-Latvians’ and ‘Latvians’ are used as two separate categories in most statistical surveys, for example, those conducted by the Latvian Central Statistical Bureau. The definitions are based on *ethnicity*, rather than citizenship or language knowledge.

\(^{69}\) Based on survey from Norbalt 1994.
Latvians and Latvians, with around four percent higher unemployment rate among non-Latvians (Aasland 2006 In: Muiznieks 2006).  

Figure 10: Employment rates by ethnicity and sex 2002-2005 (%).


The unemployment rates have also been higher for Russian men compared to Russian women (20% in 2000 compared to 16% for women). The main explanation to these differences may be that women who had administration jobs initially found it difficult to find work, but then were absorbed by the growing service sector, while men have remained within the heavier industries. Still, studies made between 2002-2005 have shown higher employment rates for Russian women, at the same time as the gaps between Latvians and Non-Latvians in employment have decreased (Aasland 2006 In: Muiznieks 2006). As shown in Figure 10, the employment rates for non-Latvians have increased, both for women and men. The employment rates for non-Latvian women remain low (49.4% in 2005) in comparison to Latvian women in general (53.8 percent) and Latvian men (63.3%) more specifically (The World Bank 2007).

Occupational segregation in the labour market in terms of ethnicity becomes evident when comparing employment in the public and private sectors. Following independence, ‘ethnic’ Latvians reclaimed their positions in the public sector, for example within administration, while Russian minorities dominate the private sector. This is considered to be related to the increasing

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70 Based on studies conducted by Norbalt 1999 and World Bank 1997-2002.
Chapter six – Femininities, work and national common space

status and use of the Latvian language within the public sector, and many non-Latvians experienced difficulties in qualifying for jobs in the labour market due to the language requirements (Aasland 2006 In: Muiznieks 2006). Based on quantitative surveys, Pabriks (2002) distinguishes large ethnic disparities in the public sector, both among employees within local governments and city councils, and within the Latvian state ministries, which are dominated by ethnic Latvians. The main factor identified as contributing to these patterns was considered to be the lack of language skills (Pabriks 2002). According to official national Labour Force Survey data, the net earnings for ethnic Latvians compared to non-Latvians were around 10 percent higher in 2002. One explanation for this could be the segregation of the labour market, which results in non-Latvians tending to be found in lower-skilled professions. A survey presented by the World Bank conducted in 2005/2006 among Latvian employees shows a strong relation between wages and Latvian language skills among non-Latvians. Those with little knowledge in Latvian had a 13.4 percent lower wage than Latvian native speakers, a group which mainly included employees within manual labour (The World Bank 2007:34).

Conclusion
The aim of this chapter has been to analyse different femininities in relation to work in the post-socialist period in Latvia, in order to gain an understanding for the transforming post-socialist labour market both in terms of gender and ethnicity. Illustrated in Table 8 are three different but interrelated femininities which have been identified in relation to the previously discussed geographies, as part of the ‘national common space’. These ideals all relate to work and livelihood, as well as reflecting different spatial organisations of work, between the public and the private sphere. The three femininities should not be analysed as separated, but as interwoven in a process of being negotiated, rejected and highlighted in different ideological contexts and through different practices. I do not regard them as three potential ‘outcomes’ of the post-socialist labour market, but rather as varying in intensity from pronounced to weak depending on the context. For example, claims that the post-socialist period has included reclaiming pre-Soviet traditional ideals of femininities, including women’s ‘return-to-the-home’ as housewives, may not be as clear cut as some researchers have suggested. These ideals are strongly associated with the idea of women as the ‘nurturers’ of the reborn Latvian nation, which place emphasis on women’s roles as mothers and care-givers in the private rather than the public sphere.
Table 8: Femininities and national common space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ideals of femininities</th>
<th>Geographies of neo-nationalism</th>
<th>Geographies of Europeanisation</th>
<th>Geographies of relic-communism</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional ideals of femininities. The (Latvian) Mother.</td>
<td>Western ideals of femininities.</td>
<td>Continuity with socialist ideals of femininities. Homogenisation (<em>Homo Sovieticus</em>) vs. differentiation (<em>The woman/mother</em>).</td>
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| Spatial organization of work | Emphasis of women’s work in the private sphere. | Emphasis on women’s participation in the public sphere. | Emphasis on women’s work in both the public and the private sphere. |

The chapter has shown that there is little ‘evidence’ that a large-scale ‘escape’ of women from the labour market actually has occurred, based on Latvian national statistics. Women’s employment rates have remained high, even though a decline could be distinguished during the 1990s, as part of the overall economic crisis. Still, I would suggest that statistical macro-studies are not sufficient to conclude that more conservative ideals of femininities do not influence women’s choice of employment and their everyday livelihood. I have highlighted the need for more in-depth local studies which also relate to women’s everyday practices, which will be discussed in upcoming chapters. Moreover, the traditional ideals of femininities also have interlinkages with the previous socialist working ideals, in which the main role for women was to balance being both *mothers* and *workers*. In this case, the focus is on women’s dual roles, in both the private and the public sphere, which rely on ideas of *differentiation* of women’s work and identities, rather than merely constituting an ‘escape’ from the labour market. Thus, more traditional ideals may be reproduced also within the ‘adult worker/female care-giver’ model, when analysing not merely women’s participation within the public sphere, but also taking into consideration their contribution and obligations within the home and family. Additionally, the contemporary segregated labour market based on both sex
Chapter six – Femininities, work and national common space

and ethnicity can also be analysed as a continuity of the past socialist gender system, including the over-representation of women within the service sector, and the division in employment between ‘ethnic’ Latvians and the Russian-speaking minorities.

The official visions of full employment and entrepreneurship as formulated on a national and supranational level within the EU provide further incentives for a continuous active female labour force. However, the ‘Western’ ideals of femininities are contradictory and complex; on the one hand, they serve to empower women as workers within the public, which have parallels to previous socialist ideals of femininities and work, but have been reformulated in order to serve the ideologies of the capitalist and neo-liberal system. On the other hand, the increasing supply of Western products and cultural influences, tends to give rise to an increasing objectification of women, and introduces ideals relating to consumption and individuality; at the same time there is less interference of the state in terms of welfare benefits, and more market influences. Implementing ‘Western’ ideals of femininities in terms of gender equality and mainstreaming also appears as controversial due to the Soviet legacy and the rejection of previous official ideologies of ‘equality’, which were considered to manipulate rather than emancipate women’s ‘natural’ femininities. Even though women’s active employment in the labour market is highlighted and also cherished as a ‘good example’ in comparison to men’s employment or female employment rates in other EU-countries, the aims of entrepreneurship as the key feature for the success of the Latvian economy remain ‘gender-neutral’. Consequently, the male norms of entrepreneurship linger, rather than making both women’s and men’s roles as entrepreneurs visible.
Chapter seven
Gendered work and livelihood within tourism

Jobs are not gender-neutral – rather they are created as appropriate for either men, or women, and the sets of social practices that constitute and maintain them, are constructed so as to embody socially sanctioned but variable characteristics of masculinity and femininity (McDowell 1999:135).

This chapter will explore the relations between gender and work within tourism from different perspectives, and present a theoretical framework for the upcoming case studies of women’s livelihood within tourism. The discussion will take its departure point from within earlier research in human geography and feminist theories, which have been substantial, as well as the more limited theoretical and empirical perspectives of work and gender within tourism studies. The aim is to analyse critically both work and gender, from a diverse and nuanced perspective. I will discuss women’s employment within tourism, but the focus is not from a pure or essentialist ‘women’s perspective’; instead the purpose is to place women’s livelihood practices in relation to dominating gender identities and femininities as discussed in the previous chapter, which include socially-constructed perceptions of work and livelihood. Peterson (2003) emphasises how accentuating traditionally ‘female’ sectors may serve several purposes.

Highlighting female dominated service jobs may be viewed as a feminist standpoint with the purpose of questioning analyses of class and working life, which to a large extent has been based on norms of ‘the male wage-earner’. It has also been a way of discussing that certain groups within society have been made invisible within research (Peterson 2003:21. Author’s own translation from Swedish).

Tourism research has tended to analyse and portray women either as ‘victims’ of the tourism industry in terms of unequal working conditions, or presenting tourism as the ‘solution’ for increasing women’s employment. I will argue that a more nuanced analysis is needed, which includes addressing aspects such as class and ethnicity, in order to avoid treating women as a homogenous group. Work, as in the most common definition of the word, relates to paid work and has traditionally had masculine connotations. In this context, I have chosen to
use the term *livelihood* in order to include more spatial dimensions of work, as well as to illustrate the interrelations between the private and the public sphere, which together may highlight patterns of women’s employment within tourism.

**Exploring work within tourism**

The World Tourism Organisation estimated the international tourism arrivals to be 842 million in 2006, and forecasts a continued growth to more than 1.5 billion tourism arrivals (www.world-tourism.org 2007-08-31). Statistics from the World Travel and Tourism Council approximate that the global tourism and travel industry created around 74 million jobs in 2005, which would be equivalent to 2.8 percent of the total world employment (www.wttc.org 2007-08-31).

Despite the well-cited description of tourism as the ‘largest and fastest-growing industry in the world’, it continues to be difficult to estimate the extent and more precise effects of tourism, for example, in terms of employment. This has to do with the overall structure of the tourism industry, which is difficult to define and distinguish from other economic sectors. Concurrently, it is difficult to make distinctions between jobs generated by tourism, from those produced by other industries. Work within tourism should be analyzed as diverse and complex, involving a range of occupations and positions, both in the public and the private sector, as well as the formal and the informal sector. Tourism-related work is usually seasonally-concentrated to the summer months, ranging from employment within large-scale five-star hotel facilities to micro or small-scale, informal accommodation services. Moreover, tourism involves people who are both directly and indirectly employed within tourism, and employment or entrepreneurship within tourism is sometimes combined with other forms of work, for example, within agriculture.

What then characterizes work within tourism? Sinclair (1997) emphasises how tourism, on the one hand, is about producing and selling tangible products, such as art, crafts and souvenirs. On the other hand, tourism produces services and intangible experiences, which usually are sold and consumed at the same time and at the same place as they are available. The cultural dimensions of tourism-related work are evident within tourism and service-related work, for example in the encounter between the tourist and the host population. In other words, the tourism industry is regulated by not merely economic relations and transactions, but also by the service interaction as part of the actual tourism product, which is both consumed and commodified (Sinclair 1997).
Chapter seven – Gendered work and livelihood within tourism

The ‘feminisation’ of tourism-related work

At a variety of tourism destinations, tourism has developed into a ‘feminised’ sector in terms of employment and work. This is evident both in the number of women working within tourism, as well as the female-coded work which is conducted within hotels and restaurants, smaller guest houses, spa facilities, tourism information centers, tourism attractions, etc. Service-related jobs and salaries have not traditionally received the same status as other economic sectors within the national and global economies (Kinnaird & Hall 1994; Adkins 1995). Thus, I would suggest that it is crucial to make the workers within tourism visible, and analyse the current division of labour, since tourism is no exception when it comes to producing and reproducing existing gender patterns within society, and other social inequalities, such as class and ethnicity.

Tourism tends to reflect an overall gender-segregated labour market, both vertically and horizontally. In the latter case, it includes a division of the labour market based on sex, where a large share of the female labour force is found within service jobs in general and within tourism professions more specifically. The ‘feminisation’ of certain occupations has also had the tendency to contribute to lower status and pays within female-dominated jobs. The labour market can also be described as vertically segregated, where women work in the lower positions within a company or organization, while men occupy the higher positions. This has also been evident within tourism, despite its female-dominated character (see Adkins 1995: Kinnaird & Hall 1994; Hemmati 1999). Work within tourism has also been ascribed a ‘female-coding’ due to the character of the work involved. Tourism work is often described as flexible, and includes elements of hospitality, service, social interaction and ‘caring’ for the customers. The social and cultural dimensions of the service encounter are often regarded as demanding a certain awareness of the ‘needs’ of the customers and often involve norms and regulations for the staff in terms of expected behavior, hospitality, and criteria of how to dress. The feminization of tourism is in some ways taken for granted, which reflects traditional gender relations and dualism between the Tourist and the Host(ess). The employment has also close parallels to traditional household tasks in the home, such as catering, cleaning and caring for other family members (Adkins 1995).

Does tourism generate ‘victimisation’ of women?

Tourism research and other studies of the tourism industry have tended to analyse women’s employment mainly from three dominant perspectives; firstly, tourism has continued to be viewed as a ‘gender-neutral’ phenomenon, where
the over-representation of women within tourism might be recognized through different forms of statistics, but not problematised or explained in more depth. Thus, the high number of women within tourism is regarded as something ‘natural’, and taken for granted, with the tendency for potential gender differences and inequalities to be treated as non-existing and invisible (see e.g. Swain In: Swain & Momsen 2002). Secondly, tourism is regarded as offering positive opportunities for women, in order to strengthen their roles in general within the society (see Hemmati 1999). Thirdly, women are portrayed as ‘victims’ of the tourism industry, evident, for example, in the low-status of tourism jobs designated for women (see Kinnaird & Hall 1994). In the following section, I will discuss the two latter perspectives, and highlight the need of finding a more nuanced analysis of women’s employment within tourism.

In many countries, employment within tourism, especially for women, is considered by both inhabitants and investors as a source of income and modernization, especially for developing countries, but also for post-socialist ‘transitional’ economies. A lot of hope, effort, and investment are put into the development within tourism, often with the aim of turning a negative situation around for areas and regions which might suffer from downward trends within agriculture, and lack other large-scale and ‘tangible’ industries. Tourism is considered to be a ‘clean’ industry, easily accessible for employment and investments for new entrepreneurs, since many tourism facilities are micro or small-scale. Increasing the female employment rates in the transition to a more service-based economy tends to be viewed as positive, and the feminisation of the tourism sector or other service jobs is rarely discussed or acknowledged (Apostopoulos et al. In: Apostopoulos et al. 2001). The over-representation of women within tourism is often viewed as a positive resource and an arena for women’s advancement and opportunity. A report from The United Nations Environment and Development Committee of the United Kingdom (UNED-UK) describes women’s roles within tourism as the following:

(...) the tourism industry seems to be a particularly good “candidate” for engaging in efforts towards the advancement of women. Due to its size, its rapid growth and its extremely diverse and dynamic nature, the tourism industry has an enormous flexibility. This can enable the industry to develop key initiatives for the advancement of women so that other industries can benefit from initiatives and strategies in the tourism sector as models for its own development. The high percentage of women in the tourism workforce in many countries provides a necessary fundament for the further advancement of women: The “critical mass” is already there (Hemmati 1999 www.earthsummit2002.org).
On the other hand, women are described as ‘victims’ of the tourism industry, especially concerning the effects of mass tourism, which are perceived as using traditional gender roles and stereotypes for employment, offering mainly low-paid, low-status jobs, and generating other socio-cultural effects such as sex tourism (see Chapter twelve). The extent to which tourism is considered to create ‘opportunities’ or ‘exploitation’ of the female workforce is mainly analysed in relation to the size and development of the tourism industry. More small-scale tourism activities, such as rural tourism, are considered to strengthen women’s roles in society by offering empowerment, independence and livelihood, while also being a way of challenging existing gender relations. Mass tourism, on the other hand, has been considered merely to apply and exploit gender roles (see Gibson; Hall In: Apostopoulos et al. 2001).

The discussion of women’s ‘victimisation’ is also evident within feminist studies of the transition process in post-socialist countries. True (2003) claims that much of the research has emphasised women as ‘victims’ of the transition process and the more globalising and liberalising forces in regard to women’s limited political influences, job losses, low-status employment, and finally, their plight in emerging sex-trafficking. Hall (2001) considers women’s marginalisation in the post-socialist labour market in general to be reflected within tourism, which results in an over-representation in low status and low-paid jobs, and women are regarded as constrained in their participation due to family responsibilities and childcare (Hall In: Apostopoulos et al. 2001). True calls for a more nuanced analysis of how the changing gender relations are expressed, and points out how women also should be regarded as ‘agents’ in the transformation process, as a way of recognising the local responses to more global processes (True 2003). Ghodsee (2005) criticises the assumption that women would necessarily face larger difficulties in the transition process, because any generalisation about women as a homogenous group should be avoided; instead one must acknowledge the existing differences among women with regard to class and ethnicity. She also shows in a study of tourism in Bulgaria how work within tourism during the communist period offered language skills, education and other experiences for women which now serve as important cultural capital in the post-socialist period (Ghodsee 2005). I agree with both True’s and Ghodsee’s arguments. The need for a more diverse analysis of women’s position in the labour market and within tourism will be further discussed below, partly by exploring gender identities within tourism and partly by using ‘livelihood’ as a concept when analysing women’s employment within tourism.

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71 See Chapter twelve for a more detailed discussion of Ghodsee’s study.
Gender identities and work

Swain and Momsen (2002) among others claim that tourism research mainly has attempted to describe women’s employment within tourism, without any specific theoretical framework or problem-based approach. Phillimore (2002) points out the absence of research which tries to find the reasons behind why women tend to be found in low-paid, low-status jobs within tourism (Phillimore I: Swain & Momsen 2002). Then, how should the gender-segregated labour market in general and the feminised tourism sector more specifically be explained? The explanations are often sought with the assistance of feminist theories relating to the segregated and genderised labour market in general, a literature which covers an extensive area. The explanations for the segregated labour market vary, but have generally been focused, on the one hand, on the different ‘choices’ of individuals and, on the other hand, emphasised the role of often deterministic, structural processes. Jenkins (2004) stresses that occupational segregation traditionally has been explained by labour market theorists with an analysis of the labour market itself, while feminist geographers have sought the explanations in the private and family sphere. A range of theories have been introduced, for example, the dual-system theory, which illustrates how capitalism works together with forces, such as patriarchy, resulting in different forms of genderised exploitation, both in the private and the public sphere (Jenkins 2004). Within tourism research, Adkins (1995) emphasises how tourism work and labour are ‘sexualised’, positioning women as ‘sexual workers’, due to exploitative patriarchal and capitalist forces which regulate both their paid and unpaid work (see Adkins 1995).

McDowell (1999) emphasises that the wide variety of labour market theories developed from economics and human geography, in many ways have failed to explain fully the gender-segregated and unequal labour market. The focus on capitalism and work as merely exploitative for women has been criticized, with reference to that work may also be a way for women to strengthen their positions, both in the labour market and within the family (McDowell 1999). Post-structural and post-colonial feminist theories have increasingly emphasised gender identities rather than merely gender relations, as a way of illustrating how work is gendered ‘in the making and doing’ of different occupations, and how women create, negotiate and contest different gender identities at work. Moreover, focusing on gender identities also stresses how gender intersects with other traits, such as class and ethnicity, in the process of shaping people’s identities. The purpose has been to reveal among between women, rather than treating women as a homogenous group, and
thereby avoiding the assumption of that all women are subjects to the same structural oppression, and inequalities. Tourism research in general has tended to view the category ‘women’ as universal and encompassing all women within tourism, rather than acknowledging geographical differences and the variety of professions within the tourism sector. There has been a lack of studies of work and tourism which also include a more diversified analysis, including different gender identities. Adib and Guerrier (2003) claim that the heterogeneity of both the workforce and the clientele within hospitality studies needs to be acknowledged, in order to achieve a more diverse analysis of tourism. The authors focus on different intersecting identities, to avoid essentialism and the tendency to view identity as something set and fixed. Rather, identity is described as relational, fluid and socially-constructed, which may vary in different situations and contexts (Adib and Guerrier 2003).

Femininities

In their book Geographies of new femininities, Dwyer et al. (1999) emphasise the existence of multiple femininities and masculinities, which vary through social, political, economic and cultural processes in time and space. In other words, gender is not considered as something ‘fixed’ or stable. Different meanings of being a woman or a man constitute different norms within society, which regulate what is considered as ‘normal’ or ‘deviant’ femininities and masculinities. Thus, people are socialized into different gender identities. Identities in this context are not ‘biological’, but socially-constructed over time and within different social and cultural contexts. Consequently, identities are not considered as having biological roots, an assumption which would claim that certain traits of essentialist ‘femininity’ are biologically etched into women’s behavior and minds (Dwyer et al. 1999).

Dwyer et al. claim that there is no single gender identity shared by all men or by all women; rather different notions and norms of femininity exist parallel and vary between different contexts, but some gender identities become more dominant and hegemonic than others. Gender identities also intersect with other identities, such as class, ethnicity, nationality and sexuality. Still, different identities should not be viewed as ‘added’ to each other, which would create forms of ‘multiple oppression’. Acquiring different gender identities is not merely a determining, homogenous top-down process, but something that the individual herself/himself to a certain extent takes part in. Gender identity is in this case ‘performed’, constructed and contested, in different situations, such as at work, in the home or within social networks, based on conceptions of
femininities and masculinities. With reference to Butler (1990), Dwyer et al. claim that this performance is not voluntary, and notions of femininities and masculinities can therefore be challenged. From this perspective, Dwyer et al. (1999) partly position themselves within post-structuralist studies in feminist geography, which have become a study of ‘doing’ or ‘performing’ gender (see Butler 1990). McDowell (1999) emphasises that “gender is constructed and maintained through discourse and everyday action” (McDowell 1999:22). My interpretation of the Dwyer et al discussions is that they choose a ‘middle way’, in acknowledging the cultural dimensions of how gender identities are constructed, but do not fully acknowledge Butler’s arguments of how gender can be reduced to merely its discursive and cultural meaning. Dwyer et al. stress the existence of genderised structures and ‘gender regimes’ which govern the lives of individuals, but they are not completely determining or static, but rather processes which are subject to change.

The lives of individuals are clearly constructed within economic, political and social structures through which dominant femininities (and masculinities) are determined. Individuals are thus positioned, and position themselves, in particular ways in relation to dominant discourses and practices of gender identities. Individually, or collectively, they may be complicit, subverting and/or critical. They may also locate themselves or be located in relation to other forms of identification, not simply gender identities (Dwyer et al. 1999:4).

I agree with the description of gender identities as presented by Dwyer et al., and find it useful in emphasising the diverse range of femininities and masculinities, which also are expressed in different forms of work. I also concur with the Dwyer et al calls for the need to maintain an analysis of structural inequalities, which is also evident in the works of Linda McDowell. She claims that even though the categories ‘women’ and ‘men’ need to be further problematised and questioned, the basic inequalities between men and women tend to exist in most societies, and women tend to have lower wages, less control and influence within society, and are subjected to male-dominated violence. To merely deconstruct the categories ‘women’ and ‘men’ might involve problems in the feminist mission to change the society.

If there is no longer a stable category 'woman', how may we make claims on her behalf? (McDowell 1999:25).

Dwyer et al. emphasise further the emergence of new femininities and masculinities. But what is actually new with them? They claim that constructing femininities can be a way of both reclaiming ‘old’ femininities and existing ones.
Thus, ‘old’ ideals are mixed with ‘new’ through processes of change, for example, through globalization, which means that ideals of femininities spread and emerge at different places around the world, a process which can be described as both homogenous and diverse. For example, ‘Westernised’ ideals of femininity are spread through international mass media and other sources of information, at the same time as more place-specific genderised traditions and identities remain. This process was discussed in the previous chapter, when analysing how different ideals of femininities in the Latvian post-socialist period are shaped and transformed in the intermixture of ‘old’ socialist and traditional ideals, as well as Western influences. Dwyer et al. emphasise how the processes of globalization have diversified and genderised outcomes.

Economic, cultural and political processes are working in different ways across the globe and may result in new forms of social relations which work to transform gender identities and open up new spaces for engaging with the construction and contestation of femininities. Rather than creating greater opportunities for women, processes of globalization may also be associated with the remaking or reworking of existing gender divisions (Dwyer et al., 1999:3).

Here, parallels can be drawn to discussions in previous chapters of how the transition should not be regarded as a ‘universal’ process, but how different post-socialist countries may take different ‘paths’ or trajectories in their transition, and might choose alternative ways to encounter the transformation. Thus, the question is therefore also how women working within tourism relate to these changes and how the gender identities are re-produced and negotiated. Still, there lies also a danger in trying to analyse how major changes impact ‘on’ women, as a simplified, one-way process. The changes are more complex than that as well as is the category ‘women’. Dwyer et al. emphasise the importance of studying the processes of globalization as a two-way process, to see what effects globalization has, but also how it intersects with the local context in terms of gender and work, which may also result in a rejection and resistance towards ideals of femininity. Therefore, women should not be treated as one homogenous group, but instead focus should be on the different ways gender identities are shaped and constructed. Smith (1999) also underscores that it is important not to construct a binary opposition between women in the ‘East’ and ‘West’, and instead acknowledge the diversity of femininities constructed in the ‘East’ (Smith In: Dwyer et al., 1999).
Merely performance?

Post-structural theoretical approaches have emphasised how gender identities are performed, also within tourism-related work, with a focus on front-line service jobs, and themes of hospitality and emotional labour. A number of studies have researched the genderised jobs of the airline industry, and related occupations such flight attendants (see Peterson 2003; Forseth 2005). Tourism literature has also focused on embodiment and aesthetic labour, emphasising how “all work is gendered and all work is embodied” (Morgan et al. 2005: 2). In this case, much attention has been given to hospitality research and emotional labour, which do not merely include feelings and emotions in the service encounter, but also comprise more aesthetic dimensions of how to look and dress (see Knights and Thanem In: Morgan et al. 2005; Adkins 2002). The focus on the genderised ‘service performance’, can be viewed as problematic from different perspectives. Firstly, when analyzing the roles people take on at work as merely an expression of gender as a cultural phenomenon and discourse, it legitimizes a stereotypical behaviour as something ‘natural’ within service and tourism occupations. Peterson (2003) approaches the question of power relations in her study of performance within the airline industry.

If sex is a role and not something real, it does not become as necessary to change, since people can think that they are not that role for real (Peterson 2003: 213, my translation from Swedish).

Peterson’s study shows that the airline companies use and ‘exploit’ gender roles and stereotypes for their own purposes. Even though the employees separate their ‘true’ and ‘acted’ identities, they still submit and perform norms of gender which are not as ‘equal’ as they might seem. Even though they are considered as ‘free’ to take on their role, they are performing something controlled by company regulations. The emphasis on performance and role play tends to turn into a tool for power, and could be described as hidden forms of discipline and control. Secondly, and related to the above, is the question of what possibilities women have to negotiate their identities, which are described as ‘mobile, fluid and flexible’, and this ability may serve as an argument against the perception of women as ‘victims’ of the tourism industry. Adkins (2002) claims that women may use both more feminine and masculine identities at work, for different situations, which reflects an increasing self-conscious and reflexive approach (Adkins 2002). To renegotiate and explore alternative forms of femininities

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72 See also Pritchard et al. (eds) 2007 for an overview of tourism research relating to questions of embodiment, sensuality and experience.
outside the ‘traditional’ femininities might be restricted and lie out of reach due to structural (social and economic) restrictions. Thus, it may be easier for some groups of women to break the societal norms (see Dwyer et al. 1999).

**Livelihood and tourism**

My theoretical approach can be viewed as post-structural in how I acknowledge a diversity of femininities, which are created and recreated within tourism. Yet, the purpose of my thesis is not to explore these gendered identities as merely performed or embodied, but to see how different women relate to ideologies of femininities in their livelihood practices within tourism. I do not consider work as merely ‘theatre’, but part of a wider context, linked with a person’s whole life-world and everyday life, as well as to more comprehensive, but transforming structural processes. I have chosen to use the term ‘livelihood’ rather than merely ‘work’ when analysing employment within tourism. Livelihood can be defined as “a means of securing the necessities in life” (The Oxford Dictionary of English 2005). Scholten (2003; 2005) emphasises that livelihood is a complex concept which includes both social and material dimensions, and includes different ways of supporting both oneself and others. Therefore, livelihood can comprise access to financial and material resources, but also include responsibility and care for children or other family members, or obligations towards a home district. Scholten describes livelihood as “navigating among possibilities as they appear” and highlights questions such as; what possibilities for livelihood exist? What resources are available in order to secure adequate standards of livelihood? How do women and men create space for their own independent livelihood on their own terms and based on their own ideas and aims? Scholten identifies a range of different sources of livelihood, for example, different forms of social subsidies, education, the combination of formal and informal income, part-time work, jack-of-all trades, and how marriage may be a way of securing livelihood (Scholten 2003; Scholten In: Friberg et al. 2005).

I claim that a focus on livelihood creates a possibility to explain and relate women’s employment in relation to both the public and the private sphere, rather than just focusing on the forces of the labour market itself. Hanson and Pratt (1995) were some of the first pioneers within feminist-geographical research who started to explore the relations between the public and the private, as inseparable and combined parts of daily life, which only together could explain the occupational segregation on the labour market. Based on a large empirical and longitude study in England, gender relations in both the public and the private spheres were described as determining the organisation of
women’s everyday life through mobility, access to work and social networks. The authors also showed how space and gender interrelates and how women’s experiences of different places vary depending on class, ethnicity and sexuality (Hanson & Pratt 1995).

Schough (2001) emphasises that “the base of livelihood is work, but what counts as work varies over time and space” (Schough 2001:23, author’s own translation from Swedish). Livelihood has, in other words, more spatial dimensions, and is constructed through a mutual interplay between place, space and gender. Different forms of work (paid/unpaid work, organisational and occupational positions, entrepreneurship) are coded as ‘male’ and ‘female’ and reflect place-specific cultural traditions and conceptions of work and livelihood, which in their turn have consequences on men’s and women’s choice of livelihood practices. Still, the preferences of work and livelihood should not merely be analysed as reflecting rational economic strategies, which prioritise studies of women and men’s participation in the public sphere. The background to differences between women and men’s work and employment reflect overall gender relations, and conceptions of women’s responsibility in the home and family. Therefore, research of livelihood within feminist geography actively tries to avoid tendencies to equate livelihood with work, which automatically maintains the genderised dichotomy between the spheres of production and reproduction, the public and the private. Instead, a more holistic perspective is advocated, in how the mutual relationship between work and home/family together determine the conditions for livelihood (see Scholten 2003; Scholten In: Friberg et al. 2005; Schough 2001).

Livelihood ideologies and practices

In my analysis of women’s livelihood within tourism in Latvia, I will focus on three interrelated concepts illustrated in the model below; spatial and gendered livelihood practices, livelihood ideologies, and physical/material resources and restrictions (see Figure 11). Together, they relate to how the spatial preconditions for women’s livelihood have both material and immaterial dimensions, including physical resources and more social and ‘intangible’ place specific conceptions of gender, work and livelihood. The three concepts and their interrelations will be discussed separately below.
Chapter seven – Gendered work and livelihood within tourism

Figure 11: The interrelations among livelihood ideologies, practices and physical and material resources and restrictions.

Livelihood ideologies
When analysing women’s livelihood within tourism, the choice of livelihood relates to place-specific socio-culturally constructed norms and traditions of livelihood, work and gender. These can together be analysed as a set of ideologies, relating to previous discussions of the transforming Latvian ‘national common space’, and different femininities relating to work and livelihood as illustrated in Chapter six. Here, contemporary ideals of femininities and livelihood are being shaped, which include a mix of both prevailing ‘traditional’ femininities, continuity with ‘socialist’ ideals and ‘Western-influenced’ gender identities, as well as associated ideals of work relating to both the private and the public sphere. I do not regard the ideologies of livelihood as existing independently from the actors themselves, but they are part of more comprehensive and transforming structural processes, and have in their turn implication for how women on an individual level perceive their work and livelihood possibilities. Thus, women relate to these ideologies in their everyday life and take part in shaping the femininities through their practices.

Livelihood practices
Livelihood also includes practices and actions which are conducted through the routines of everyday life. I regard practices as operating through both institutions and individual actions, but the focus will be put on women’s individual livelihood practices. Livelihood practices can be viewed as actions that take place in multiple spaces, for example, in the home, at work, at the unemployment agency, at educational institutions, etc. The practices are constantly carried out in relation to more dominating ideals of femininities and ideologies of work and livelihood. Susanne Stenbacka (2001) has in her thesis analysed counter-urbanisation in rural areas in Sweden, with a focus on the motives for moving to the
countryside, and the everyday actions or ‘rural practices’ connected to family’s new life in the local community. The study generates useful perspectives of practice and actions as two interrelated concepts. She describes both the intentions of why people move to the countryside, while illustrating actions and experiences of how people relate to their countryside living in their everyday life. Stenbacka has a qualitative and phenomenological approach in her study, in order to take the departure point from the informants’ own life world, and how they view their own and others’ actions. Israel (1999) defines actions with reference to von Wright as,

(…) to achieve a change of a given condition or a given situation deliberately. To act can also be directed at preventing a change and preserving the existing. The change or preservation of a condition may in its turn be achieved in two ways; either that we actively intervene or that we achieve change by avoiding to intervene (Israel 1999:27, author’s own translation from Swedish).

The actions of individual people are considered to have an overall dimension and connection to the societal level, which are generated into practices. In other words, by analysing people’s actions, the analysis will also include more societal dimensions. Consequently, the practices are in their turn part of processes of change, which transform the countryside. I would claim that this perspective is relevant, since it emphasises how people are taking part in the transformation processes themselves, and are not merely ‘victims’ of change. In Latvia, tourism serves as an example of how the economy is finding new forms, both in rural and more urban areas. Thus, the purpose is to see how women take part in this process through different practices, and thus create space for their individual livelihood.

Stenbacka concludes that the focus on actions and practices reflect how people relate to different private and public spaces in their everyday life. Moreover, spaces are created through actions and practices. Werlen (1992) objects against the assumption of space as an object, and calls for an ‘action oriented social geography’ (Werlen 1992:7). He states that space is “neither an object nor a priori, but a frame of reference for actions” (Werlen 1992:3). Thus, it is important to see humans as embodied actors rather than subjects facing the impacts of external forces. Stenbacka views the individual as “an acting subject”, and emphasises her purpose is to focus on people’s actions and practices, rather than on the actors themselves, with references to Werlen’s ‘action oriented social geography’. In other words, the focus is put on how people act rather than what people are (Stenbacka 2001:66). Stenbacka
emphasises the differences between this approach and the ‘structural life mode analysis’ introduced by Højrup\(^73\).

(…) actions can be viewed as existing phenomenon, without them needing to be used to categorise people (Stenbacka 2001:147, author’s own translation from Swedish).

The Danish structural life mode analysis has been a unifying theme within the research on livelihood (see Friberg 1990; Lönnbring 2003; Jakobsen 1999). Højrup claims that the society is constituted partly by different structures, which can be deduced to its modes of productions, and partly by logically-constructed life modes. Life modes are described as the sum of people’s daily actions in the relation between work, home and leisure time, which are regarded as taken for granted. The life mode analysis has been criticised from different perspectives, for example, for its deficient gender perspective. The theoretical framework has been developed on the basis of the household and family as an economic unit, in which the man becomes the norm and carries the life form in his role as breadwinner, while women are described in their roles as housewives. Men are considered to live in a ‘pure’ life form, while women are described as living in ‘mixed’ life forms, and using multiple life modes, which contributes to women being considered as deviant\(^74\). Another critique against the life mode analysis is how it tends to be ‘static’ in its form, due to the emphasis on life modes merely as theoretical and abstract logical constructions, and not empirical phenomenon. The risk is that people are viewed only as passive objects in relation to more overarching structures. Consequently, people are categorised to fit into the “top-down” constructed models of the life mode analysis, which creates a high level of abstraction of an individual’s subjective experiences and actions which thereby become subordinate to the theoretical project. Changes in the life modes are considered possible only through structural change, and not through deliberate human action. Actions then merely become ‘outcomes’ and responses to structural change (see Lönnbring 2003; Friberg 1990).

Stenbacka’s approach presents an alternative way of discussing livelihood with an ‘action- approach’ rather than the static framework of the life mode analysis. However, she declares that her study does not include more overarching processes which might affect the intentions and actions of individuals. Unlike Stenbacka, my intention is to take a departure point from the transforming Latvian society, striving to analyse more general processes and

\(^{73}\) See e.g. Højrup 1995.

\(^{74}\) See Jakobsen 1999 for a remodelling of the life forms into ‘love forms’ and ‘work forms’.
structures which affect women’s livelihood within tourism. Still, the focus is on the individual, how women perceive their livelihood possibilities and their livelihood actions and practices as actively taking part in the transforming tourism sector. Livelihood can from this perspective be analysed as an interaction between humans and structures, in how structures to a certain degree set the framework for livelihood and what space women occupy in their livelihood strategies. Giddens (1979) has through his ‘structuration theory’ tried to overcome the dualism between human actions and structure.

(The duality of structure) relates to the fundamentally recursive character of social life, and expresses the mutual dependence of structure and agency. By the duality of structure I mean that the structural properties of social systems are both the medium and the outcome of the practices that constitute those systems (Giddens 1979:69, emphasis in original).

Giddens emphasises the interrelation between agency and structure, and how structures not merely are means of restrictions, but may also contribute to and enable different human actions. One aim therefore is to view people as conscious, acting actors (Giddens 1979). Baerenholdt et al. (1990) emphasise in their analysis of the ontological challenges of life mode theory that no structures should be viewed as existing beyond human actions and practice. Moreover, the studies of human everyday life should be done from a holistic perspective, including the relations among work, home/family and leisure, with a focus on the meaning of people’s actions. This suggests a more qualitative and phenomenological and hermeneutic perspective, in order to understand people’s life worlds from “within”, and to interpret their experiences, and not let them be pre-determined by theoretical frameworks (Baerenholdt et al. 1990).

Physical and material resources
The livelihood ideologies and practices are also affected by the provision of more physical and material resources, for example, in access to infrastructure and services. For example, women’s and men’s access to work and livelihood may also be determined by their spatial mobility. Hanson and Pratt’s (1995) study shows women commute less and travel shorter distances compared to men, especially among female-dominated professions, which is conditioned by their responsibilities in the home (Hanson & Pratt 1995). They use a time-geographical approach in their study, similar to Tora Friberg’s (1990) study of women’s livelihood with the aim of understanding women’s everyday life in the relation between home, leisure time and work. Women’s mobility can be understood as different ‘projects’, which are linked together in time and space on the
basis of hidden and non-linear strategies and aims. Friberg claims that women’s mobility is restricted in space, and that women constantly have to make different spatial adjustments, partly based on material and social factors, and partly in relation to time constraints which set the framework for the everyday life. The weekdays become more or less a time puzzle, with the main aim to find practical solutions to practical problems (Friberg 1990).

**Setting the framework for women’s livelihood**

Figure 12 below sets the framework of my analysis of women’s livelihood within tourism. The model should be viewed as three-dimensional, and the aim is not to apply a ‘top-down perspective’ of how women’s livelihood is affected by structural change, but to illustrate the processes of change in which women actively take part.

![Figure 12: Intersections between gendered livelihood ideologies, strategies and practices.](image)

Central to the figure is the 'national common space', with the three geographies and ideals of femininities which have been discussed in previous chapters. These

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75 Figure 12 is identical to the mind-map figure presented in the introductory chapter (Figure 1), but will here be discussed in more depth theoretical and empirical application.
together with more place-specific contexts, illustrated by ‘geographies of place’, set the political, economical and socio-cultural framework of the transformation process. Thus, these dimensions become the ‘setting’ or ‘stage’, on which women’s livelihood practices take place. One aim of the study, relating to central issues within human geography is to illustrate the linkages between national processes and the local and the individual level. Human geography involves a holistic approach to capture the interaction and interrelatedness between these different scales, in which local studies can be used to illustrate more general societal phenomena (Johansson 2000). Gender can in this context be described as the framework in which more comprehensive political and economic processes interact with and transform conceptions of femininities and masculinities, on different geographical levels.

Geographies of place

Closely interrelated with the ‘national common space’, are the geographies of place . These two dimensions will be analysed as intertwined and mutually-interdependent, even though ‘geographies of place’ refer to the local context of the two case studies I have conducted in Jūrmala and the Cēsis district, as local outcomes and expressions of the transforming ‘national common space’. Thus, the chosen places and case studies should not be viewed as ‘static’, but as transforming in pace with the overall society, and through the actions and practices of human actors (Schough 2001; Scholten 2005; Lönnbring 2003). When analysing ‘geographies of place’, I will focus on more local aims of tourism development, and place-specific socio-cultural perceptions and ideologies of work, livelihood and gender. The three geographies of neo-nationalism, Europeanisation and relic-communism take different forms and expressions in the two case study areas, both relating to tourism development and the presence of femininities and ideologies of work and livelihood. This has to do with both the socio-cultural and physical/material context, which influences in turn how women negotiate and perceive their livelihood within tourism.

The rural and the more urban local setting may offer different physical, socio-cultural and economic possibilities and restrictions for livelihood, for example, in terms of spatial reach and people’s mobility. Immaterial resources in terms of social networks, human resources, know how etc. also vary among different places. The more physical and material context has to do with access

76 The term derives from previous studies of livelihood by Schough (2001) and Lönnbring (2003). Schough describes what she refers to as ‘common space’ as part of the geographies of place, but I have here chosen to treat them separately, even though they greatly intersect.
to different forms of services, for example, childcare facilities, commuting distance and quality of infrastructure. Economic factors which may influence livelihood also include the overall structure of the local labour market, wages, different forms of economic benefits, and costs for living. The local conditions for livelihood are also affected by more socio-cultural factors, such as ideologies and traditions of work and livelihood, which have been formed on a historical basis. These norms can be described as highly genderised, and what is perceived as ‘male’ and ‘female’ work and professions vary in time and space, and relate to people’s expectations and dominating socio-cultural norms. Some communities may ‘allow’ breaking against these genderised norms, while others might resist change. Women’s and men’s work and livelihood are valued differently in different contexts, which can be related to more overall gender structures (see Stenbacka 2001; Friberg 1990; Schough 2001). Lönnbring (2003) emphasises the social and cultural context from which employment and entrepreneurship evolve, and how the background to different means of livelihood not necessarily have to be strictly economical, or guided by rational actions.

Focus is put on the local structural conditions with their possibility for creating alternative actions in both a material and social sense. The local culture – the place – is viewed as a medium through which people interpret and organise their actions. Entrepreneurship is therefore considered as a result of structural prerequisites (Lönnbring 2003:87, author’s own translation from Swedish).

Thus, the structures are believed to find expressions only through human actions. Lönnbring emphasises the possibility for changing the outcomes of the structural processes, since they are mediated through social and cultural filters. In other words, more overarching structural processes have local and place-specific outcomes. On the one hand, a lack of infrastructure and services may be experienced as obstacles for livelihood practices, but may on the other hand be viewed as an advantage, in terms of the appeal of nature and attraction for tourism. Stenbacka (2001) emphasises that place is experienced differently by different people, and what may be a restriction for some people may be believed to be a possibility for others, depending on their intentions and resources (Stenbacka 2001:149f).

Strategies, intentions and conditions for livelihood
As illustrated by Figure 12, the ‘intentions and strategies’ and ‘conditions’ for livelihood practices are affected by the intersections between ‘geographies of
Chapter seven – Gendered work and livelihood within tourism

place’ and the ‘national common space’. Still, it is also important to take into consideration more personal and individual motives, strategies and catalysts which affect the forms of livelihood practices. Stenbacka (2001) emphasises the need of analysing the intentions and reasons for why people move to the countryside. I too find this question relevant, but with the aim of analysing the background to why people engage in work within tourism. Stenbacka identifies different intentions and strategies behind the decision to move to the countryside. These include, for example, ideas of ‘the good life’ for the family in the countryside, and different aims of living a better life and building one’s own home (Stenbacka 2001). The aim is not merely to focus on the economic preconditions for women’s livelihood, but also to illustrate how employment within tourism may be a way of realising other personal aims and intentions. It may also be guided by family values and responsibilities, in the wish to combine work and family. Bjerén (1989) emphasises that livelihood strategies not necessarily have to involve merely rational, strategic and conscious planning for individual purposes. Instead, livelihood is analysed as closely related to the place-specific contexts, and different possibilities at hand, guided by individual characteristics and external resources.

By ‘livelihood strategy’, I mean in this context not a conscious career planning, but the sum of all choices and considerations with respect to ability, co-supporter, labour market, tax- and subsidy systems, care, transportation conditions, etc., which lie behind each individual’s specific livelihood situation (Bjerén 1989:22, author’s own translation from Swedish).

Stenbacka (2001) also describes different catalysts or specific events which might have triggered the decision to move to the countryside, due to changing family conditions, divorce or pension (Stenbacka 2001). These different altering circumstances are also of much importance when analysing the background to livelihood within tourism, since changes in the current livelihood situation may create the need for new or complementary livelihood practices. This might involve job losses, both for oneself and for other family members.

The other dimension illustrated in the figure includes ‘individual conditions’ for livelihood, including both concrete and abstract dimensions. Concrete conditions may, for example, involve how access to a property or to a piece of land might have triggered the decision to start up a rural tourism business, or economic assets, and the possibilities to take a loan. The abstract conditions involve memories and personal attachments to a place, for example, the countryside, or social networks (friends and family) (see Stenbacka 2001). These individual conditions may also appear different between men and women, and
may be based on the household or family as a unit. They also relate to access to human capital (education, working experience), and need to be analysed in relation to traits, such as ethnicity and class, to emphasise the differences not only between women’s and men’s livelihoods, but also among women.

Means of livelihood and livelihood practices
The intentions, strategies and different forms of abstract and concrete conditions develop into different means of livelihood. By means of livelihood I refer to the different ‘formal’ or ‘informal’ designations of livelihood. The aim is here to illustrate the interrelations between the private and the public sphere. For example, some women may take the step to become ‘entrepreneurs’ within tourism, while others seek employment in hotels or other tourism facilities. Moreover, some women may combine and mix different forms of livelihood, which also may include informal income and reliance on other family members. The different means of livelihood may also include expectations of shouldering different genderised ‘roles’, and ideals of femininities. For example, ‘the entrepreneur’ may carry more masculine-coded attributes, while a job as a receptionist may bear feminine ideals.

The livelihood practice refers to the actions and experiences of how people relate to their environment through their livelihood, and what priorities they set in their everyday life. Stenbacka (2001) emphasises that people do not always act in terms of their intentions, and the outcome of their actions does not necessarily have to give the result which was expected (Stenbacka 2001). Schough (2001) also claims that different conflicts can arise between the practice and ideology of livelihood. In her study women expressed a wish to create a way of living which did not match their own livelihood practice. The conflicts may therefore be expressed both within the women themselves and in relation to norms and ideologies within society. In the latter case, I will relate women’s livelihood practices to the three ideals of femininities discussed in Chapter six, in order to see how traditional, ‘Western’ and socialist ideals of femininities are negotiated in women’s everyday life within tourism. Stenbacka (2001) makes a distinction between outward and inward oriented practices, which relate to the public and the private sphere. Some practices were, for example, more oriented towards the local community and its social and physical dimensions, while others related to their residence and home in their everyday life. In my analysis, I will not treat the ‘private’ and the ‘public’ as two separate spheres, but analyse how the borders between the private and the public may dissolve through the livelihood practices within tourism, and how the centre of gravity may be dislo-
Chapter seven – Gendered work and livelihood within tourism

cated from one sphere to another. Thus, public paid work may become private, unpaid work, and private chores remain private unpaid duties. I will relate the private and public-oriented practices to the three different ideals of femininities, which include perceptions of work and livelihood, as well as the specific spatial organisation of work (see Chapters ten and thirteen).

Livelihood action space
The last dimension of Figure 12 relates to Livelihood action space. Here, the focus is put on the outcome of women’s livelihood practices, and what space for women’s independent livelihood is created in relation to their means of livelihood and practice orientations. This livelihood space is negotiated and contested, and might involve both challenges and adjustments to norms and ideologies of work, livelihood and gender, in relation to ‘national common space’ and ‘geographies of place’. The space for women’s action space is affected by the forms of employment, in terms of wage and employment conditions, but also by their own aims and aspirations. The question is whether or not women’s livelihood practices within tourism contribute to a challenging of existing ideals of femininities in the private and the public sphere. Not all actions might challenge dominating gender identities, but some specific actions might contribute to this change. The individual space for livelihood might be characterised by different paradoxes, in the wish to act for more independent forms of livelihood, while meeting the demands of the environment. Friberg (1990) describes women’s livelihood as a paradoxical situation in how women do not decide the conditions for their adjustment at the same time as they all strive towards individual aims. Women handle these problems in multiple ways, but the common feature is an ‘adjustment strategy’, partly to more structural contexts, and partly to demands within the family (Friberg 1990).

Conclusion
The aim of the chapter has been to set the overall theoretical framework for the upcoming case studies of women’s livelihood practices and strategies within tourism in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala. I have argued for a more nuanced and diverse analysis of both gender and work, in order to highlight women as ‘agents’ rather than passive ‘victims’ in the Latvian post-socialist transformation process, of which tourism constitutes a part. In terms of gender, I have chosen to use gender identities in general and femininities more specifically for my analysis, in order to illustrate the complex process of how gender is constructed, and how women themselves constitute parts of this process, in their everyday actions.
and work. Using the term ‘femininities’ also reflects a wish not to treat women as a homogenous group, but diverse in terms of ethnicity and class. *Work* as a concept within both feminist and tourism research has also been discussed, which has tended to include mainly paid work and activities in the public sphere. In my case studies, I will focus on *livelihood* rather than work, in order to illustrate the interrelations between the public and the private sphere, since women’s employment within tourism may be affected by, and reproduce, gender identities in both spheres. I distinguish between livelihood as *ideology* and as *practice*, even though they are closely intertwined, in order to illustrate the relations between ‘national common space’ and ‘geographies of place’ on the one hand, and women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism on the other. Livelihood as ideology refers to both more national and place-specific perceptions of gendered work, as part of more comprehensive and transforming structural processes. Here, three different femininities related to work and livelihood have been discussed in previous chapters, which relates to the geographies constituting ‘national common space’.

Livelihood as practice, on the other hand, refers to the day-to-day actions of women’s work within tourism, and illustrates a more ‘action-oriented’ approach in how women as actors take part in the transformation process. The interlinkages between livelihood as ideology and practice can be analysed as relating agency to structure, in how human actors are both constrained and enabled in their actions due to structural processes. My intention is to analyse the strategies and practices for women’s livelihood within tourism, and what space for more independent livelihood is created, in relation to both material and physical restrictions, and structural constraints and possibilities. In this process, I will also explore how different ideals of femininities are negotiated, reproduced and challenged, in relation between both the private and the public sphere.
Part IV
Exploring women’s livelihood within tourism in the Cēsis district

From the top: (1) A Latvian farmstead (vīnsēta) (2) Rural tourism holiday home (3) Former kolkhoz apartment buildings. Photos by the author.
Chapter eight
‘Geographies of place’:
Rurality, rural tourism and
the labour market in the Cēsis district

Despite the urban character of tourism in Latvia, the interest in rural tourism is expanding throughout the Baltic countries, and the supply of different forms of rural accommodation options is showing a rapid increase. The Latvian Country Tourism Association “Lauku ceļotājs” increased its members from 38 rural accommodation establishments in 1995 to 393 in 2006, which together provided around 6380 beds for tourists (www.celotajs.lv 2008-04-19). A national survey estimated the number of rural overnight visitors to be 77 280 in 2006, but this number is based on statistics including merely 182 different registered rural accommodation establishments and no does make a distinction between domestic and foreign visitors (LCSB Tourism in Latvia in 2007). However, according to statistics provided by “Lauku ceļotājs”, the interest for rural tourism among foreign tourists seems to be increasing; around 68 percent of the overnight visitors were foreigners in 2007 compared to 18 percent in 1999, of which a majority (30%) were German tourists (www.celotajs.lv 2008-04-19; www.standbynews.info 2005-02-04). Apart from the increase in tourist demand, the development and promotion of rural tourism in Latvia also reflects the political aims and priorities both on a national and a supranational level within the EU, as a means and tool for regional development. As in both Western and Eastern Europe, a majority of the Latvian rural regions are characterised by high unemployment and demographical problems, and there is a need for new and alternative income possibilities, of which the development of rural tourism is considered to play an important role (OECD 2003).

77 The first national Latvian survey on rural tourism accommodation establishments was conducted by LCSB in 2007, and included hotels, guest houses, holiday dwellings, rural houses, castles, manors, camp sites and ‘other’ (LSCB Tourism in Latvia in 2007:5, 55). However, the actual number of rural tourism accommodation establishments is estimated to be much higher and may be around 1000 (www.standbynews.info, Dienas Bizness 2008-05-22, 2008-09-08).
The Cēsis district has around 58 000 inhabitants of which 66 percent live in rural areas\textsuperscript{78} (Latvia’s regions in figures 2004). Just as in other parts of Latvia, the Cēsis district is experiencing a process of economic restructuring. The agricultural sector is declining, while employment within services, trade and different industries is experiencing an overall growth. Thus, the development of tourism is perceived as a way of diversifying the local economy.

\textbf{Figure 13}: Map of the Cēsis district and municipalities.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{map_cesis_district}
\caption{Map of the Cēsis district and municipalities.}
\end{figure}

Source: State Regional Development Agency \textit{Development of Regions in Latvia} 2006. Modified and published with permission from the State Regional Development Agency.

The Vidzeme region in general and the Cēsis district in particular has been a node for travel and trade historically. The city of Cēsis, which dates back to the 13\textsuperscript{th} century, became a part of the Hanseatic League during the 14\textsuperscript{th} century. The area has also been subject to foreign rule and cultural influences which today constitute some of the main cultural tourism attractions in the region, including castles, architecture and other manifestations in the landscape. From being occupied by German crusaders, namely, the Livonian order in the 13\textsuperscript{th} century, the area became a battleground for a number of political powers from the 16\textsuperscript{th} century onwards, due to its location which was profitable for both trade and defence. The area became a part of the Lithuanian-Polish union

\textsuperscript{78} According to the Latvian Statistical Bureau, ”Urban population refers to those persons, who live in cities and towns, i.e., in populated areas with not less than 2,000 resident population. (…) The rest is rural population.” (Latvia’s regions in figures 2004:11).
during the 16th century, but was replaced by Swedish rule between 1620-1721. The Swedish rule comprised ‘Swedish Livonia’, the present parts of Vidzeme and southern parts of Estonia; but Sweden lost the territory to Russia after the Nordic War. During the first period of independence, the rise of modern tourism in the Cēsis region included the establishment of health resorts and summer houses, and is today considered to have large potential for developing rural tourism. The main tourism attractions in the rural areas are the Gauja river and national park, and different winter sport facilities. The medieval town of Cēsis constitutes the centre of the district with a population of around 17 000 people and is visited by a considerable number of both international and domestic tourists, of which a majority constitutes day visitors from the capital Riga (Rukšane et al. 2001; Vidzeme Development Agency 2004). The city of Cēsis is not part of this study, since the main focus is on more rural areas in the district, including 21 rural municipalities and smaller towns or villages. This focus also reflects the attempts to diversify tourism in the Cēsis district, with the aim of attracting more visitors to the rural areas surrounding the city of Cēsis.

The overall purpose of this chapter is to analyse the local framework and context for the case study in the Cēsis district, with a focus on Geographies of place, which relates to more local aims of developing tourism, and perceptions of livelihood, work and gender. The chapter is based on interviews with representatives from local governments in the Cēsis district as well as with public actors with tourism on a national, regional and local level in the Vidzeme region. The main interview questions concerned the incentives and aims of developing rural tourism, as well as social and economic questions relating to women and men’s positions in the labour market in the Cēsis district. The chapter is structured around three themes of ‘rurality’ relating to the three geographies discussed in previous chapters: rurality as ‘a national symbol’ (relating to geographies of neo-nationalism), as ‘a site for consumption’ (relating to geographies of Europeanisation) as well as the rural as ‘a problem’ (relating to geographies of relic-communism).

What is rural tourism?

To define rural tourism is problematic in several ways, and there is a lack of a common and internationally-accepted definition. This problem has been acknowledged within the body of tourism research on the subject, starting from the 1990s and onwards. Roberts (2001) emphasises that it is difficult to make a definition of rural tourism, which covers the multiple and complex forms of tourism activities which take place in a rural context. Rural tourism is often re-
ferred to as being small-scale in its character, but covers a large selection of activities. As a consequence, a range of concepts have emerged and are used synonymously with “rural tourism”, such as agro-tourism, farm tourism, ecotourism, green tourism or adventure tourism (Roberts 2001; Lane 1994).

However, Lane (1994) claims that the definition of rural tourism should not encompass all tourism activities in rural areas. More urban forms of tourism can ‘spill out’ or be established in rural areas, such as different types of resorts or theme parks (Lane 1994). Petterson-Löfqvist (2002) puts focus on the relation between tourism and the rural cultural landscape, which makes rural tourism more distinct from other forms of nature-based tourism, such as wilderness tourism, activities which commonly take place in a natural landscape (Petterson-Löfqvist In: Aronsson et al. 2002).

Another central dimension in the definition of rural tourism is what should be included in the term ‘rurality’. What is classified as ‘rural areas’, from a more political and economical perspective, varies among nations, but is usually based on population density, or traditionally ‘rural’ economies such as agriculture and forestry. The perception of rurality has also more symbolical and socially-constructed dimensions, and is often based on the dichotomy between the urban and the rural, in which the rural is perceived as representing a more traditional lifestyle compared to the modern and dynamic urban areas (Roberts 2001). The promotion of rural tourism in Latvia could easily be analysed as an expression of the traditional urban-rural dichotomy, with an emphasis on the increasing social and economic gaps between the cities and the countryside, and how rural areas tend to be perceived as ‘lagging behind’. Moreover, tourism can sometimes be viewed as a way of conserving the rural ‘traditional’ way of life, with regard to both natural and cultural resources. To formalize the division between the urban and rural areas should be made with some caution. Sharpley (2004) states that “…the rural, in the tourism context, is a constructed, negotiated experience, the symbolic significance of which may bear little resemblance to the reality of a dynamic countryside” (Sharpley In: Lew et al. 2004:377). Thus, it is important to acknowledge that rural areas, just like urban areas, are not isolated from the processes of change as an effect of globalisation, which has resulted in an increased mobility of people, products and information, diversification of the economy and network building activities across national and regional borders. Rural areas could be described as transforming, through increased urban-rural flows, both in terms of more temporal mobility such as tourism and leisure, but also more permanent forms of mobility such as migration and second-home ownership (Roberts 2001).
Tourism does not necessarily merely ‘preserve’ the rural, but might as well contribute to a change of the rural ‘way of life’ and its economic structure. Rural areas tend to become more and more urban in their character, a phenomenon which closely relates to the development of tourism. Rural areas tend no longer to be places solely for production, but also for consumption (Roberts 2001; Petterson-Löfqvist 2002 In: Aronsson et al. 2002).

Gender, rurality and rural tourism
Empirical studies of tourism involving the transforming rural post-socialist regions in general have been scarce, as well as research including a gender perspective (see Granberg In: Alanen 2004; Apostopoulos et al. 2001). Little (2002) argues for the need of feminist theories in studies of rural geography, which have contributed to making ‘the rural others’ visible, including rural women and ethnic minorities. Feminist approaches have examined and explored socially and culturally-constructed perceptions of rurality in line with the ‘cultural turn’ within geography, of how genderised ideals of rurality and nature are produced, manifested and challenged in terms of e.g. genderised landscapes and representations. Moreover, gender studies have also researched how gender relations and identities are produced in a rural context, including women and men’s positions within the rural community, the labour market, and within the family (see Little 2002). I would suggest that both these approaches are relevant for the analysis of the emergence of rural tourism in the Čēsis district, which will be discussed below. Focusing on the local socio-cultural and economic context as genderised ‘geographies of place’ is also an attempt to; “understanding the rural community not only as a ‘container’ for the operation of gender roles but also as a socio-cultural factor in the evolution of gender relations” (Little 2002:71), as suggested by Jo Little. Thus, the local place-specific context both affects and is being affected by existing gender relations.

In terms of rural tourism, some researchers have suggested that its employment effects in post-socialist countries have large potential for improving the economic situation for rural women (see Hall In: Apostopoulos et al. 2001). The successive transition towards market economy and the development of tourism place high demands on entrepreneurship and individualism, in contrast to the earlier collective mentality and large-scale production. The emergence of tourism is considered to bring new ways of

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79 Little (2002) refers in this case to Philo’s (1992) critique of how rural studies have tended to ignore issues relating to marginalized groups (such as rural women), which thereby become treated as the ‘rural others’ (Little 2002:9).
livelihood, both in terms of entrepreneurship and waged labour, and appears as a chance for rural women to combine work and family. More small-scale tourism activities, such as rural tourism are considered to strengthen women’s roles in society by offering possibilities for increased empowerment, independence and livelihood, while also being a way of challenging existing gender structures. However, Hall (2001) considers women’s marginalisation in the post-socialist labour market in general to be reflected within tourism, which results in an overrepresentation in low status and low-paid jobs, and women are regarded as constrained in their participation due to family responsibilities and child care (see Hall In: Apostopoulos et al. 2001). Studies of women’s participation in farm tourism in Spain have shown that women tend to be the main initiative takers for rural tourism, and that a majority of rural tourism business are run by women. Still, work within rural tourism has been viewed as an extension of household work and caring for the family, and therefore not considered to be a ‘real’ profession but merely an extra income to agriculture (Garcia-Ramon et al. 1995; Caballé 1999).

Three approaches to ‘rurality’ and rural tourism
The next three sections include a discussion of how the emergence of rural tourism can be analysed as closely related to the three different gendered ‘geographies’ discussed in previous chapters. Firstly, I will discuss ‘the rural as a national symbol’, connected to the ‘geographies of neo-nationalism’, in how rural tourism is perceived as a tool for preserving cultural and natural resources through tourism, which also reflects a wish to reimagine the rural as a central ingredient of the Latvian national identity. Secondly, I will examine the rural as ‘a site for consumption’, relating to aims of diversifying the traditional rural industries and emphasising entrepreneurship and investments within tourism, which in turn reflects ideologies embodied within the ‘geographies of Europeanisation’. Thirdly, I will analyse rurality as representing continuity with the past, in how structures rooted in the Soviet period still serve as portraying the rural as ‘a problem’, struggling with issues such as poor work ethics, lack of institutional frameworks, poor social and cultural capital, and finances.

80 These three approaches have their roots in existing theoretical and empirical studies exploring questions of rural tourism as well as rurality and geography, and should not be treated as static categories but as examples of how rurality and rural tourism in Latvia can be analysed (see e. g. Little 2002; Alanen et al. 2004; Lönnbring 2003; Schwartz 2006; Herslund 2007).
The rural as a national symbol

The development of rural tourism can be analysed as closely related to the perception of the ‘rural idyll’, based on a more romanticised and idyllic view of the rural. In this context, the rural is given more ‘traditional’ characteristics compared to the urban, representing a simpler and more natural way of life. This rural idyll consists of strong nostalgic and romantic elements, constructed on both an individual and a collective level, and is central in attracting tourists to the countryside (Sharpley In: Lew et al. 2004). The promotion of tourism in line with more romanticised elements has been evident in many Western European countries in order to develop more niche-oriented tourism products. These trends have also become evident in Latvia and other post-socialist countries, where rural tourism has become a way of re-imagining rural areas by using a pre-communist heritage, of which the rural idyll and a sense of ‘authenticity’ become important features. In national tourism marketing, the Latvian countryside is being portrayed as containing traditional, picturesque culture and heritage, as a journey ‘back in time’.

Back to nature. Latvia has kept alive small farm traditions (...) Latvia has thousands of romantic farmsteads and country homes that are open to guests. Live with a family, learn their traditions, even join them in milking the cows, feeding the pigs or searching for herbs and mushrooms (Discover Latvia 2004:22).

Moreover, the Latvian tourism marketing also reflects an attempt to portray Latvia’s nature and rural landscapes as different and unique compared to other sceneries and traditions found elsewhere in Western Europe. Here, parallels can be made between the romanticisation of the rural landscapes within tourism marketing and the reimagination of the ‘homeland’ and ‘ethnoscape’, as discussed in chapter one. In this case, the reconstruction of a Latvian national identity was described as being rooted in an agricultural heritage which celebrated Latvians closeness to nature. Schwartz (2006) argues that this ‘agrarian romanticism’ dates back to the first independence of Latvia. From the 1920s and onwards, the Latvian economy was based in agriculture, formed by a ‘peasant’ ideology which was at the base of the Latvian identity, where the idea of the ‘homeland’, with its nature and cultural landscape were central, and practiced through work within agriculture. Moreover, the heart of the agricultural society was the Latvian vīnsēta, the often isolated family farmstead, dating back to the 12th century. Schwartz points out that the farmsteads became symbols of a Latvian national identity during the first independence. At that time, a large share of Latvians was landless due to the previous Russian regime, which had
maintained the Baltic Germans as the dominating land-owning class. Thus, the role of the *vinēta* was re-established through the land reforms from the 1920s and onwards, with the aim of making all Latvians free farmers with their own land and property. The agricultural economy also grew strong in the interwar period, and Latvia exported a number of agricultural products to other European countries such as Sweden (Schwartz 2006; Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).

‘Normalising’ rural space

The Latvian countryside was largely transformed during the Soviet period, through nationalisation of land and property and collectivisation of agriculture, a process which was more or less completed by the end of the 1950s, when all farms had been collectivised. Around 50 percent of the traditional farmsteads were also abandoned and destroyed to give way for the collective large-scale agriculture (Schwartz 2006:58). However, the rural as a symbol for national identity re-emerged in the post-socialist period, and the farmsteads became once again associated with a sense of ‘Latvianness’, manifested through the return of small-scale agriculture. At the time of independence, it was hoped that the status of the agricultural sector would be restored into its former glory and serve as the engine of development and economic growth in the post-socialist period as it had done during the first independence. One step towards reclaiming the agricultural heritage was to implement land reforms, privatisation and restitution, to ‘return’ land and property to its previous pre-war (Latvian) owners. Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) claims that the decollectivisation and restitution process was part of the strategy of regaining ‘normality’ of rural space, just as had been done in Riga by changing the street names from Russian into Latvian ones. This was symbolic in many ways, for example, by giving power to the ‘ethnic’ Latvians rather than to non-Latvians who automatically did not have the same rights to the agricultural land since they were not a part of the pre-war population (Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).

Stukuls-Eglitis also emphasises that critical voices have been raised against the actions taken to abolish the rural kolkhozes, since this aim have included

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81 Stukuls-Eglitis (2002) makes a distinction between ‘privatisation’ and ‘reprivatisation’. A certain degree of privatisation of the agricultural sector had already taken place during the late 1980s, when it became possible for individual farmers to acquire land. Reprivatisation on the other hand involved restitution laws, through which land was offered to its previous pre-war owners and their relatives. This process was complex and generated may conflicts since all people who acquired land had different motives for using the land, which did not always include agricultural activities, especially among urban residents or exile Latvians (see Stukuls-Eglitis 2002).
Chapter eight – Geographies of place:
    rurality, rural tourism and the labour market in the Cēsis district

eliminating all traces of the previous Soviet economic system. As a consequence, the former base of the Soviet large-scale agriculture was eroded and the way for rather unproductive, small-scale units of agriculture was paved in the attempts to restore the ideals of family-based agriculture. Tisenkopf (1999) states that the reforms resulted in a small-scale type of agriculture, which mainly served the purpose to maintain basic subsistence for individual families and households due to a lack of capital, machinery and other agricultural resources. In the 1990s, the number of farms increased from 800 collective units to 200 000 individual farms, of which merely 10 000 were classified as ‘commercial farms’ and could be compared to larger farms in western parts of Europe (Tisenkopf 1999:412).

The genderised ‘rural idyll’
The development and promotion of rural tourism in Latvia since independence tend to reflect the ideals of the traditional Latvian family farmstead and its small-scale agriculture, in which tourism is perceived as a way of continuing and sustaining the agricultural practices. In this case, the difference and uniqueness of the rural in comparison to the urban is valued and considered to be of significance, as a way of returning to the ‘roots’ of Latvianness and manifesting the national identity. Thus, the rural tourism entrepreneurs become in this context important actors for upholding, maintaining and communicating this heritage through their everyday livelihoods. In an interview with the Latvian rural tourism association, the following was emphasised:

(…) rural people are not really entrepreneurs. Most of them they are really not, and that makes it hard for them and that is why rural tourism is so positive; this is my belief, they are… They love their property very much because it is theirs, mostly. We are not speaking about the big vacation houses in the countryside, with the marketing manager sitting in front of their office and selling. We are speaking about the rural entrepreneurs who rent out their own property for guests, and this is the concept of rural tourism in my understanding, that the owners of the house are the family members, which are then giving their own part. They are giving away parts of their own private life in order to accommodate clients and to prepare their breakfast which is their own recipe, their own traditions, their own style and so on, and this is the hardest in rural tourism (Female representative, Latvian rural tourism association, August 2005).

In this case, the uniqueness of traditional Latvian culture is stressed, and a difference is made between ‘family entrepreneurs’ and ‘real commercial entrepreneurs’, of which the former is considered to be the very essence of rural tourism. The ‘family entrepreneurs’ are given characteristics which relate to their traditional ‘rural life’ and practices, rather than to more economically
oriented motives. Their individual and unique ‘way of life’ is also described as becoming commodified as part of the tourism product.

But if you go to these rural houses it is important, and mostly important is the owner of the house, who makes the atmosphere of the house and the surroundings, and then the leisure and then the activities, and then some kind of details. That is what I love in rural tourism. This individuality is what I think will take over, and you can see it already in the tourism demand, that there is this individuality and not mass tourism anymore. To keep this individuality is our main task for the future years, to be in the European Union, to stand with the rules and recommendations and at the same time keep the individual Latvian culture and show the difference and stand and be very hard that grandmother’s pancakes are the ones that are different in Europe. This is why people are coming to Latvia, and this is why travellers are returning to their countries and bringing their memories about these grandma’s pancakes (Female representative, Latvian rural tourism association, August 2005).

As Little (2002) suggests, perceptions of the rural community and its way of life often constitute the very embodiment of the rural idyll, separating rural people and their activities from those in urban areas, highlighting the rural in a more authentic and genuine manner (Little 2002). Moreover, the above two quotations emphasise the role and importance of the family as well as the home/farmstead and the private sphere, as some of the most important features for rural tourism. I would also suggest that the importance of the family as a unit within rural tourism also reveals how it is dependent upon existing gender relations. Stukuls-Eglits (2002) argues that the nostalgia for the past agricultural landscape in the post-socialist period also includes reclaiming social relations within the family farmstead, which correspond to more traditional ideals of the pre-war ‘peasant family’ (Stukuls-Eglits 2002:157). By emphasising and celebrating traditional family ideals within the ‘rural idyll’, women tend to become both the ‘natural’ and ‘biological’ caretakers of the nation, and of the family as discussed in chapter one (see also Little 2002). This is also closely related to the demographic development, and that the ‘national crisis’ would be avoided by strengthening the family. By emphasising the importance of rural tourism as a ‘family business’, it indirectly refers to a gendered division of work within the household. Women’s roles within the rural tourism businesses were emphasised as follows:

It’s about the kind of warmth of their house which is very difficult, but biologically created by women. This is a very individual appeal which you create by decoration. Of course you can use a professional decorator for your house, but you have to have an individual approach, for example fresh flowers, so that the house gets a personal touch. I believe that mainly women can create that, I might be wrong, but that is my personal experience and opinion. We really
had problems with single men running these kinds of businesses (Female representative, Latvian rural tourism association, August 2005).

**The rural as a site for consumption**

Schwartz (2006) claims that the more conservative approach of ‘rurality’, which has focused on re-establishing agriculture since independence has been accompanied by a more liberal approach to how the countryside should be reimagined. In the latter case, there has been an increased focus on the needs of diversification of the economic practices in the countryside apart from those preserved through traditional agricultural labour. The national and local priorities of developing rural areas have changed from being focused solely on maintaining and encouraging agriculture, to becoming more diversified, for example, by promoting sustainability and creating employment and entrepreneurship also from non-agricultural activities (Zobena et al. 2005). Thus, the idea of the countryside as a site for commercialisation and consumption, rather than merely for production, is starting to evolve in Latvia as in other European countries. In this case, the countryside is perceived as ‘open’ for trade and services rather than bound to traditional industries, and its cultural and natural landscapes are accessible through tourism activities. The goals set up related to regional development in Latvia also aim at counteracting the unequal relations among regions in Latvia, and promote a balanced advancement of the whole country based on the given resources of development. One aim of the Latvian regional policy, as formulated by the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments, is ensuring equal living, working and environmental conditions for inhabitants of the country as well as creating equal preconditions for business activity in the entire Latvia (Development of Regions in Latvia 2005:7).

Herslund’s (2007) study of the diversification of the Latvian and Estonian countryside states that EU-development funds and programs such as SAPARD have been significant in the Baltic States in the process of diversifying the agricultural economy (Herslund 2007). The calls for diversification of the countryside have been an effect of the EU-membership, and new ways of promoting regional development in Latvia, focusing on ideologies of regionalism as discussed in chapter four, are aimed at making the rural regions in Latvia more

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82 The regional policy discussed here is based on the Law on Regional Development from 2002 and Basic Principles for Regional Policy signed by the Cabinet of Ministers 2004 (Development of regions in Latvia 2005:7).
‘competitive’ in a European context. This also involves a decentralised planning process, aimed at giving more responsibility to the local and regional levels, at the same time as the development is monitored and controlled by policies set up by the EU and institutions on the national level. According to the Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments, the adjustment to regional policies set by the EU involves decreasing the direct subsidies to the local level and encouraging a more active approach to rural development.

It is more about a change of thinking, at the European level, that you should be going from purely supporting agriculture, and directly supporting agriculture, to supporting rural development, and supporting rural development also through creating links between urban and rural territories (Female representative Ministry of regional development and Local Governments, February 2007).

Thus, the regions are given more responsibility for developing themselves, rather than expecting financing from the state and national level, which earlier has been the case especially for more economically weaker regions. Consequently, the regions will be responsible for formulating and developing their own potential based on their resources, including tourism. In this case, development from ‘below’ is encouraged, which puts more focus on how Latvia needs to develop stronger regions and multiple high growth areas apart from Riga being the most prominent and dominating region of the country. However, it also calls for more cooperation and networking among urban and rural areas, with the aim of attracting human and economic resources to more remote regions, from Riga or internationally, in order to strengthen their competitiveness (Female representative Ministry of regional development and Local Governments, February 2007; Ministry of Regional development and Local Governance 2006).

**Promoting rural tourism and entrepreneurship**

The Latvian aims of diversification correlate to policies set up by the EU within The Rural Development Strategic Guidelines, of which one of the six aims includes “Improvement of quality of life and encouraging diversification in rural areas”, as a measure to create new jobs in rural areas (Latvian Rural Development National Strategy Plan 2007-2013:58). The rural development programme for Latvia 2007-2013 emphasises diversification of the rural economy as one of the main targets.

Support to non-agricultural business start-ups and development in micro-enterprises, particularly where agricultural activity is replaced by other kind of production, primarily supporting non-agricultural business in rural areas (The rural development programme for Latvia 2007-2013:98).
Here, the focus is on how to create competitiveness within rural regions in Latvia by introducing new, non-traditional products and activities, of which one prioritized measure is the development of businesses within rural tourism. An example is the ‘diversification of entrepreneurship’, which opens up for alternative incomes apart from the agricultural sector. The rural development programme for Latvia 2007-2013 and the Latvian Rural Development National Strategy Plan 2007-2013 both refer to aims of entrepreneurship and competitiveness set up in the Lisbon strategy as well as the National Development programme for Latvia (see chapter four). Here, diversification is “(...) targeted at preservation and further development of agricultural and rural cultural heritage” (Latvian Rural Development National Strategy Plan 2007-2013:52). Thus, the traditional heritage as discussed in the previous section should both be conserved and promoted through tourism.

The national plans provide little information about the tools for implementing the aims on a local level. For example, the contents and character of rural tourism are not defined which leaves them open for interpretation, which may include both large-scale and small-scale forms of tourism activities, accommodation and other types of products. Moreover, there are few definitions of how entrepreneurship should be promoted as well as what groups of rural inhabitants should constitute the basis as the ‘new’ entrepreneurs, both within tourism and other ‘non-traditional’ sectors. I would suggest that entrepreneurship tends to become a rather general term, which is often taken for granted rather than its diverse character being acknowledged. As has been discussed in chapter four, the entrepreneur also tends to become a gender neutral term, which does not take into consideration potential differences in men and women’s possibilities as entrepreneurs. Consequently, I would argue that there is a potential risk for entrepreneurship being interpreted in relation to a male norm, and that women’s involvement as entrepreneurs may become invisible due to their choice of sector, or as constituting part of a ‘family business’, as discussed in the previous section of rural tourism as a ‘national symbol’.

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83 The rural development programme for Latvia 2007-2013 and the Latvian Rural Development National Strategy Plan 2007-2013. The latter is a policy document drawing up the main guidelines for rural development, while the former covers the implementation process. Both fall under the responsibility of the Ministry of Agriculture. The funding for implementing these policies will be divided between the use of state funds, private funding as well as EU funds (see www.zm.gov.lv).
Diversification through tourism in the Cēsis district

The Cēsis district is described as the most active entrepreneurial district within the borders of the Vidzeme planning region, based on the number of registered businesses, which in 2005 included 4500 companies, of which 2492 were different farms. The companies are mainly represented within manufacturing, and connected to the use of resources such as forestry products. Within agriculture, milk cattle breeding is the dominating branch, and many farms have registered to become ecological farms (www.cesurajons.lv 2008-04-12). Still, just as in other regions and districts of Latvia, rural tourism is promoted as one of the tools for promoting economic diversity in the rural areas. According to the Development strategy of Cēsis district 2000-2012, one of the aims is “tourism based on cultural heritage and natural resources” and “promotion of qualitative tourism services” (www.cesurajons.lv 2008-04-12). The Cēsis district is considered to have large potential for developing tourism based on its cultural and natural heritage, and also for its relatively proximity to Riga, around 90 kilometers. According to the Strategic Plan of Tourism Development for Cēsis district worked out by the tourism council in Cēsis, the aim is to develop sustainable tourism which is well integrated with the local community, with a focus on small-scale but quality tourism, for example, rural tourism, which is considered to have “positive and wide social influence on local society” (Cēsis Tourism Information Centre 2000:7). The number of tourists to the Cēsis district has increased over the last few years, but the number of foreign tourists is still low, around 10 percent. A challenge raised by the tourism authorities in Cēsis is to increase the number of foreign visitors and to prolong the stays of both foreign and Latvian guests.

In the Cēsis district, public actors on both the district and the municipality level are involved in the promotion and development of tourism. Still, according to the Law on self-governments, tourism development is defined as a voluntary rather than a permanent function for the local governments. According to the subsidiarity principle, the local governments should “perform as many tasks as possible because they constitute the lowest local government level”. The local governments have 17 different permanent functions which can be divided into two main sets; firstly, to provide social and health services to the local inhabitants, and secondly, to engage in more long-term planning and development according to specified aims and priorities. The latter dimension includes ensuring and promoting employment and entrepreneurship, for example, to “encourage business activity in their administrative territory and to take measures to decrease unemployment” (ULRG 2004:11). Thus, the local governments may directly and indirectly promote the development of tourism. Still,
Chapter eight – Geographies of place: rurality, rural tourism and the labour market in the Cēsis district

garding to the Tourism Law from 1998, the local governments are responsible for promoting tourism in several ways, for example, through both physical and strategic planning for tourism development, and based on the plans provide resources for tourism development, use and preserve public tourism attractions, develop and finance “tourism development centers”, and use tourism as a way of gaining educational values and “a healthy lifestyle” (Ministry of Economics 1998).

Based on interviews conducted with public tourism actors in the Cēsis district, including rural municipalities, some of the local and regional municipalities highlighted the importance of tourism as a positive source and tool for local and regional development, both economically and symbolically. It was evident in the interview study that the local and regional governments stressed that tourism as well as other parts of the local economy was dependent on external rather than internal resources, for example, EU-funding. Funds from different EU-projects were described as the main condition to develop tourism infrastructure, for example, including hiking and bicycle routes, both on a local and a regional level. There were also examples of cross border cooperation between the Vidzeme region and regions in Estonia to develop tourism. Regional tourism associations have also been established, in order to create networks with private entrepreneurs and to apply for EU-funds. The local municipalities describe their role also as ‘collaborating’, to act as an intermediary for contacts between companies, public organizations and other actors within the district. Some municipalities also collaborate in developing tourism information centers, tourism infrastructure and marketing for tourism, with a clear niche toward active, ecotourism and rural tourism.

Some of the rural municipalities, especially those located in the western part of the district, with a proximity to Riga and access to paved roads, described a positive development based on an increased inflow of residents through counter urbanization and tourism investments.

Today, a quite rapid development is taking place here. Just as in Riga, whole villages are being built; the aim is to build up to one hundred new houses, as part of a private initiative. They want to sell the properties and then invest the money in new communications, for commuting. We are located around 80 km from Riga, and services for water and sewage are much cheaper here compared to in Riga. More and more service businesses are also being established, for example, restaurants and conference establishments (Chairwoman, rural municipality, August 2005).

227
Chapter eight – Geographies of place:
rurality, rural tourism and the labour market in the Cēsis district

The proximity to the urban Riga region makes it possible for people to commute by car to Riga for work, which also has resulted in fairly low unemployment rates, and a more balanced demographic situation.

Many people buy land here and build houses. If we look at the demographic situation, it is improving; the number of births exceeds the number of deaths and we believe that the number of inhabitants will increase. Our municipality will be very attractive in the future (Chairman 2, rural municipality, August 2005).

Thus, there is an emphasis on external resources which also included the access of human capital from urban regions, networking and collaboration with urban as well as rural regions, the need for investments from foreign or urban companies and the search for new entrepreneurs. Representatives from the rural municipalities also stressed the need for an increase of the local population through migration to the local area, which was also described as crucial for the development of tourism.

The municipalities try to recruit tourism specialists from universities and colleges; they have the qualifications and specific knowledge needed for developing tourism. A new generation is needed, who can look at tourism with new eyes (Chairwoman, rural municipality, August 2005).

The rural as a ‘problem’
Despite the positive outlook described above, in the effort to strengthen the local and regional level through decentralization and ‘new’ ways of promoting regional development, the images of the rural as a ‘problem’ still tend to prevail, in how rural areas are perceived as ‘lagging’ behind in development compared to the cities. These opinions are not only significant for Latvia or other post-socialist countries, but have also been found and explored within research in a majority of Western European and Scandinavian countries (see e. g. Lönnbring 2003; Berglund et al. 2005). Lönnbring (2003) describes how the countryside from a Swedish perspective has been ascribed with negative connotations, based on how the peripheral rural is different from the urban norm, for example, in terms of economic decline and emigration. Thus, the value of rural regions as ‘assets’ (e. g. for tourism and recreation as discussed above), and/or ‘problems’ (e. g. in need of economic and social assistance) are rooted in the common separation between the rural and the urban, but are usually based on urban actors’ perceptions of the rural (Lönnbring 2003:17f).

I would suggest that acknowledging how the rural is perceived as a problem does not necessarily mean ignoring existing economic, socio-cultural
and demographic challenges which rural areas in Latvia face in the post-socialist period. However, it is important to view rural areas as representing a diverse set of approaches on how to tackle these challenges based on their local socio-economic context, rather than constituting a homogenous unit following the same path of development. Moreover, I also want to avoid making an analysis of the rural as ‘victimised’ due to urban-generated socio-economic change, but also discuss how actors in rural areas take part in reproducing images of the rural as a problem and how the Soviet heritage constitutes a part in this process, which also has genderised dimensions.

**Rural challenges in the post-socialist period**

In the beginning of 2007, it was estimated that around 32 percent of the Latvian population lived in rural areas. The statistics show a general decrease of rural inhabitants by 2.7 percent between 2000 and 2005, from 698 300 people to 679 400 people (State Regional Development Agency 2006:47). This decrease has affected a majority of the Latvian regions except Riga. In the Vidzeme region, the rural population decreased by 4.2 percent to 245 400 people between 2000 and 2005, constituting Latvia’s lowest population density with 16 people per km2 (ibid:24ff). The decrease of the number of rural inhabitants is related to an urbanization process, mainly to Riga, but also to a rapid increase of people leaving Latvia on a temporary basis to work in other EU-countries. In 2005, estimations were made that around 2 percent (50 000 people) of the Latvian population worked in other EU-countries (Ministry of Agriculture 2006a). Moreover, the demographic changes are also linked to a general downturn of the agricultural sector and the absence of alternative sources for work and livelihood. From a national perspective, the GDP from agriculture, fishing, hunting and forestry fell from 21 percent in 1990 to 1.8 percent in 2007 (Schwartz 2006:84; Ministry of Agriculture 2007:8). The number of people working within agriculture has declined from 12.3 percent in 2001 to 8.1 percent in 2006, representing 88 000 people aged 15-74 (Ministry of Agriculture 2006b). On an individual level, the average income for a full-time employee within agriculture was estimated to 129 Lats per month in 2005, which is 27 percent lower than the national average income (Ministry of Agriculture 2006a:11).

The unemployment rates vary between different rural municipalities. In 2005, the highest unemployment rate was found in Goliseva pagast (37 percent). Figures from 2007 are based on “contribution of value added of agriculture and hunting to GDP at current prices, %” (Ministry of Agriculture 2007:8).
percent), and the lowest in Palsmane pagast (1.8 percent) (State Regional Development Agency 2006). The average unemployment rate in rural municipalities in the Vidzeme planning region (including the Cēsis district) was 6.6 percent in 2005. In the Cēsis district, the rural municipalities showed large variations in unemployment rates in 2006, ranging from 7.9 percent in Skujene pagast to only 2.8 percent in Zoseni pagast in 2006 (www.cesurajons.lv 2008-04-12). The statistics should be treated with some caution since hidden unemployment is common due to some people not registering as unemployed, for example, those working within family agriculture. The educational level is also considerably lower in rural areas compared to the cities. Statistics show that 7.3 percent of the rural population had a university degree compared to 16.8 percent in the cities (Ministry of Agriculture 2006a:30).

The socio-economic challenges facing the rural areas were also reflected in the interview study conducted with public representatives from different local municipalities. One factor identified as greatly affecting the conditions for local development was the trend of emigration from the rural areas, which meant that the local municipalities lost a significant source of income through the loss of potential tax payers, capital which could be used for local development.

Many people go abroad. Even though it is only 30 out of 3000 inhabitants who leave for work abroad, it makes a big difference for us when those taxes disappear. Those who go to Riga or other cities to study do not return either, that is our second largest problem. The salaries here are not very attractive; it is difficult to draw young people to come here (Chairman 2, rural municipality, August 2005).

The ‘negative’ development trends in terms of economic development, employment and demographic imbalance were also considered to have internal causes and origin, which provided a rather negative and pessimistic image of the countryside. In this case, one of the main problems was considered to be the ‘passivity’ of the local population, including a lack of work ethic and an absence of entrepreneurship.

It affects the economic development severely. Money comes from non-locals; they are the ones who invest. It is not our own population that is staking money (Chairman 1, rural municipality, August 2005).

Thus, as discussed above, these trends were considered to have solutions by attracting external resources in terms of human and economic capital rather than
mobilising the community based on local assets. The passivity of the local population was described as having its roots in the Soviet period, as a continuity of socialist working ideals in the post-socialist period. These ideals were also described as having genderised dimensions, which will be illustrated below.

‘Active’ rural women
Women constituted 60 percent of the number of registered unemployed persons in the Cēsis district in the end of 2003, and 69 percent of the long-term unemployed, a pattern which also is evident in other rural areas in Latvia (LSCB Latvia’s regions in figures 2004). However, comparing these statistics with data from the Labour force studies conducted in urban and rural areas as well as in Vidzeme, a different pattern emerges (see Figure 14). According to statistics from 2007, women make up merely around 40 percent of the total number of unemployed, a figure which is even lower for the Vidzeme region (35.1%). Women also tend to be less represented among the economically inactive share of the population in rural areas compared to urban areas (57.5%), but comprise a lower share of the employed part of the population (44.2%) (LCSB 2008, data ordered upon request).

Figure 14: Share of women of employed, unemployed and economically inactive population 2007 (aged 15-64, in percent).
The main reason behind the different figures for women’s unemployment is that women tend to register at the state’s unemployment offices to a higher extent compared to men, a pattern which was confirmed in the interview study. Representatives from the local governments described women and men as having different roles and possibilities in the labour market. On the one hand, women were portrayed as a well-educated part of the local population, part of the heritage from the Soviet period; they registered for different courses locally and were active in their quest for working opportunities. On the other hand, the labour market was described as segregated, providing fewer job opportunities for women than for men. It was mainly older women (over 40 years of age) who were considered to have problems finding work due to the restructuring of the local economy, including the closure of kolkhozes and a decrease in the more qualified and specialized professions. Consequently, women were described as being ‘forced’ into either taking low qualified jobs or applying for jobs within traditionally male professions within the wood processing industry.

Moreover, due to the limited number of (skilled) jobs for women, representatives from the local municipalities also emphasized how more well-educated younger women tended to leave the rural areas.

In the higher classes in the compulsory school it is almost only boys. The girls study in the city (Cesis). If we arrange discotheques, there will be more boys than girls. Girls have a higher education and do not return here after their education (Chairwoman, rural municipality, August 2005).

The labour market was described as having masculine attributes, with references to the cultural and natural landscape, the traditions of large-scale agriculture during the Soviet period, and the development of wood processing and agriculture (dairy production) since independence. Women were described as having their place within the service sector, within health and education, and public administration, which also constituted fairly low-paid sectors compared to ‘men’s work’.

It is mainly women who are unemployed here since wood processing is the dominating industry. For women it is a bit different, for them there is the school, elder care, shops, post offices, library and in the municipality administrative department, where women can find jobs (...) Those are so-to-speak female jobs. The wood processing industry and mechanical work are more for men (Chairman 1, rural municipality, August 2005).
Thus, the interviews revealed strong perceptions of what was considered to be ‘appropriate’ work for men and women. Even though women being ‘active’ participants in the labour market was described as a positive feature of the development of the local economy, some jobs became ‘marked’ for women, which in some way also served to restrict their potential. The heritage from the Soviet period in terms of the official ideology of full employment and the encouragement of women’s participation in traditionally male professions was rejected, and a continuity of a segregated labour market can be distinguished.

I think equality is a good thing, but there has to be a limit. If you have a painting in a frame, it means that the painting has some limitations, and without the frame, you might have painted things outside of it. It is the same with the family; each and everyone should have their own specific roles and functions. It is good if the man can take care of the children and help out, but I do not think it would be good if the woman drove around with the tractor on the field, and the man would cook food. Then, the woman would no longer be a woman; she would get masculine arms and become a masculine woman with dirty jeans and thick fingers. Then, her femininity would be lost, and she would resemble a man (Chairman 1, rural municipality, August 2005).

Thus, the aim was not to break the existing genderised patterns in the labour market or in the private sphere, in order to increase women’s employment, which would challenge the ‘natural’ gender order.

‘Passive’ rural men

While women were portrayed as actively searching for jobs despite the difficulties in the rural labour market, men were described as more ‘passive’ in their economic activities in the interview study, despite the fact that men’s position in the labour market was considered to be much brighter compared to women. The ‘problem’ of men’s participation in the labour market was regarded to be related to an unwillingness to take the jobs available, or to register themselves as unemployed or attending educational courses provided by the municipalities.

If men are unemployed, they don’t want to work. Some do not want to register either, they find it unnecessary. In male professions, there is a shortage of labour. In the middle of the 1990s, we had nineteen wooding industries, now we have eight, but they are quite large (Chairwoman, rural municipality, August 2005).

The unwillingness to work was described as more outspoken among the older generation, a group which also tended to have a lower education. The ‘passivity’
of men was revealed to have its roots in an overall ‘male depression’, resulting from the transition process and lingering socialist ideals of work and gender.

Men wait for better times, as during socialism, waiting for someone to come and say, do this, this and this. In the socialist system, everything belonged to the people, and men do not find it attractive to work for some businessmen; it is below their dignity and honor. They are not open to capitalism; they still think in a socialist way. They have had it drummed into their minds in their youth, they cannot change their way of thinking, they will die with these ideas, and cannot accept alternative ways of thinking (Chairman 1, rural municipality, August 2005).

The male depression was described as taking different forms, and apart from the low economic activity could involve drinking and other social problems in the community. The rural municipalities described a number of measures taken to solve these problems, including training and education, but also professional help in terms of both psychological counselling and group discussions. However, it had resulted in a majority of women rather than men showing up for the meetings. But what then is the background to this “male depression”? As was discussed in chapter six, the socialist images of men as ‘weak’ and women as ‘strong’ and active seem to have continued in the post-socialist period (see Ashwin 2000; 2006). According to True (2003), women have had it easier to adjust to the new market economy, and have maintained their roles within both the family and the labour market. Men, on the other hand, have experienced a larger threat to their working ability and traditional role as the head and economic supporter of the household due to the economic hardships in the transition period. Watson (1995) identifies “a male identity crisis” in post-socialist countries, which is revealed in, for example, high male suicide and mortality rates (Watson 1995 quoted In: True 2003:71). In Latvia, the average life expectancy at birth for men in rural areas was 64.7 years in 2007, compared to 75.1 years for women (LCSB database www.csb.gov.lv 2008-12-10). Even though the interviews described the problems of ‘male depression’ as more outspoken among older men (40-50s), the idea that it is the man who should be the head of the household was described as being transferred between the generations.

Maybe it is something that has to do with our mentality, the man should be the head of the family. He should be the boss, but when he realizes that he no longer can assume his full responsibility, he starts drinking and cannot manage to get back on track again. And if his wife starts earning more than him, I can tell you that he will fall into an even deeper depression (Chairman 1, rural municipality, August 2005).
The development of rural tourism as a 'problem'

The development of tourism was not considered to be a priority for all the local municipalities interviewed in the study, and a majority of the local representatives expressed difficulties and problems relating to the aims of tourism development. The economic and organizational structure for supporting tourism development proved to be weak, with a lack of planning documents for this purpose. This is also evident in other areas of development, and it is estimated that only 45 percent of all local rural governments had territorial development plans, which is considered to be a problem in order to stimulate entrepreneurial activities (Ministry of Agriculture 2006a:33). The organization of tourism consisted mainly of voluntary tourism associations and other public tourism organizations financed in collaboration among different rural municipalities, rather than having people employed for tourism marketing and planning within a specific local government.

The main argument for not identifying tourism as a priority was related to the economic and organisational situation of the local municipalities. As has been discussed above, tourism is a voluntary function of the local governments and do not generate a separate budget from the state.

Our municipality budget is 190 000 Ls (…) 37 000 Ls are state benefits, which primarily go to education, sports and culture, not tourism in particular. That is the main aim of the state benefits (Chairman 1, rural municipality, August 2005).

Thus, money for tourism development and marketing needs to be collected primarily from local taxes and VAT, which have to be weighted against other socio-economic needs and local services such as schooling, sports and culture. The economic budget was also considered to be related to the organisation and design of the local municipalities. In its current structure, Latvia is divided into 441 different rural municipalities (pagasts), a formation which has roots going back to the political structure of the first independence. The size and population of the municipalities vary greatly; in 2006, 73 percent of the local governments had a population of less than 2000 people (State Regional Development Agency 2006:10). In the Cēsis district, the Kaive rural municipality had merely 482 inhabitants in 2001, equalling 4.1 inhabitants per km2 (www.cesurp.apollo.lv 2005-06-10). The high number of pagasts has

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85 The Latvian local governments include 63 pilsetas (53 towns and 7 republican cities), 29 novads (amalgamated local municipalities), and 441 pagasts (rural municipalities). The regional governments consist of 26 rajons (districts, dating back to the Soviet period), and 7 republican cities (see King et al. 2004).
turned out to be a rather weak organisation in the post-socialist period, since a low number of inhabitants (especially those of working age) tend to generate a low amount of taxes for the municipalities. Moreover, the political organisation of the municipalities is also considered to have its limitations not only due to their restricted size, but also due to the lack of experience of a more decentralised and ‘bottom-up’ planning system compared to the Soviet era. Currently, a territorial and administrative reform is taking place in Latvia, which may result in 50 different municipalities compared to the current 556 local and regional governments (Female representative Ministry of Regional Development and Local Governments, February 2007).

In terms of tourism development, the interview study showed that the local governments are taking on a rather paradoxical role. On the one hand, the responsibility for tourism development and promotion is believed to be in the hands of the state or the private sector due to the lack of capital, human resources and experience on the local level. On the other hand, the local municipalities identified tourism as one of their priorities, but claimed that there were unspecific regulations of how this should be done. This was also described as a response to the state tourism organizations not actively promoting and developing tourism in the countryside.

Nothing is done to promote tourism in other parts of Latvia except Riga. We are fighting every time, together with regional and local tourism association, with the tourism department, and for years they are giving more and more money to regions, but it’s nothing. They’re making regional information, one map for each region; that’s all (Male representative, Cēsis tourism council, August 2005).

Even though a lot of hope was put into the role of the private sector, the representatives from the rural municipalities expressed a concern that the entrepreneurs within rural tourism were considered to be too small-scale and not enough investment and business-oriented. The interviewees expressed a need for investment in larger tourism facilities and other service facilities by ‘real’ entrepreneurs, which could accommodate a high number of tourists and conference attendees. The need for the ‘right’ type of investments was also regarded to be related to the ‘passivity’ of the local population as discussed above, representing a type of mentality and attitude which could be restricting rather than encouraging the development of tourism in the region. This was considered to be related to the continuity of a working mentality from the Soviet period, which did not match the requirements of the new market economy in terms of skills, education and experience. Thus, as a result, the people in-
volved in rural tourism were described as too opportunistic and inexperienced in their actions, contributing to a short-term and uncontrollable development of tourism, which had to be regulated.

Those who started to work in rural tourism in the beginning, then there were no rules or regulations at all, or very low requirements. But now the demands are much higher, which demand more professionalism (…) Those working within rural tourism, those are not professionals but those who want an additional income. Often it is people with poor education, but it requires professionalism to make people return (…) Many of the rural tourism entrepreneurs are not members in any organization, then they are not controlled by anybody (Female TIC employee 1, rural municipality, August 2005).

As a result, a lot of hope was put in ‘external’ tourism actors as the main driving forces for rural tourism in terms of ideas, strategies and capital, rather than mobilizing the local population.

Conclusion
The aim of this chapter has been to provide an initial framework for the analysis of the first case study of rural tourism in the Cēsis district by discussing Geographies of place, relating to local aims of tourism development, women and men’s positions in the labour market as well as genderised perceptions of ‘rurality’. Table 9 provides an overview of the chapter as well as illustrating the relations between Geographies of place (the Cēsis district) and the three Geographies of neo-nationalism, Europeanisation and relic-communism which together constitute what I have chosen to term ‘Latvian common space’. I regard Geographies of place and National common space as closely intertwined and related. Thus, analysing Geographies of place involves an illustration of the local outcomes of Latvia’s transition process, as well as how the local becomes a crucial part of how Latvia as a nation is reimagined and transformed in the post-socialist period. In previous chapters, I have emphasised how the transition process is genderised. I have started to explore how the local expressions of these genderised processes, as well as how existing local gender relations, affect the outcomes of the transformation process, which will be discussed further in upcoming chapters.

Perceptions of the rural constitute an important dimension of how local communities contribute in the process of reimagining the national common space. Here, I distinguish between three interrelated approaches, the rural as a national symbol, the rural as a site for consumption and the rural as a problem. In the first case, the rural is reimagined in a more traditional and romanticised sense, becoming a symbol for a lost national identity, reborn in the attempts to
‘normalise’ rural space through decollectivisation and privatisation of the agricultural sector.

Table 9: Geographies of place in the Češis district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographies of place:</th>
<th>Geographies of nationalism</th>
<th>Geographies of Europeanisation</th>
<th>Geographies of relic-communism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Rurality’</td>
<td>The rural as a national symbol.</td>
<td>The rural as a site for consumption.</td>
<td>The rural as a ‘problem’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tourism</strong></td>
<td>Tourism as the ‘rural idyll’.</td>
<td>Tourism as a source of economic development.</td>
<td>Lack of resources and experience for tourism development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender and work/livelihood</strong></td>
<td>Traditional gender relations.</td>
<td>Focus on the role of (gender-neutral) external actors and entrepreneurs.</td>
<td>Men as ‘passive’ women as ‘active’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based partly on literature discussing ‘rurality’, gender and rural tourism (see e. g. Sharpley In: Lew et al. 2004; Roberts 2001; Schwartz 2006; Little 2002), and partly on the interviews conducted with tourism actors within the public sector.

Tourism has become an important channel for communicating images of the ‘rural idyll’, including a cultural and natural heritage maintained through a rural ‘way of life’, which is illustrated as different from modern urban living both in Latvia and other parts of Europe. Highlighting the rural idyll through the development of rural tourism also tends to be based on traditional social relations both within the rural community and within the family, including ideals of femininities, which tend to portray women not merely as mothers of the nation, but also as the backbones of the rural tourism businesses.

Rurality is not merely recognised as a national project, but is also related to a much broader European context, reflecting policies of regional development, in how to modernise and diversify the countryside. The rural has become a site for consumption through the development of tourism, apart from its previous role as a producer of agricultural goods. Thus, the rural is defined, accessed and reimagined by international and urban tourists, and EU-politicians apart from the ‘local’ inhabitants themselves. In this case, rural tourism tends to be valued in terms of its economic rather than symbolic significance, as a resource for recreation and local, regional and national income. The interview study revealed a reliance on external rather than internal resources for the development of tourism as well as of other sectors of the local economy, including EU-funding, urban entrepreneurs, investors and capital. I raised the
Chapter eight – Geographies of place: rurality, rural tourism and the labour market in the Česis district

question of what groups should be responsible for economic development and growth. Even though national directives tend to rely on official gender-neutral descriptions of the entrepreneur, they may be analysed as disguising more traditional and masculine perceptions of the ‘rational entrepreneur’ rather than highlighting and encouraging local entrepreneurs and making women visible within this process.

As described in the third approach to rurality, the rural is still perceived as a ‘problem’, in need of assistance and as ‘lagging behind’ the development in urban areas due to challenges such as urbanisation, demographic imbalances and economic decline. This is usually an image originating in urban areas, as well as being associated with policies set up by the EU in order to achieve growth and development also in peripheral and ‘depressed’ regions. However, I have also pointed out how the perceptions of the rural as a problem are reproduced and rooted in a more local, rural context. I regard these more negative perceptions of the rural as being closely related to the presence and continuity of the Soviet heritage, as discussed in the chapter of relic-communism, as well as in the working ideals originating in the Soviet period as discussed in chapter six. In this case, the heritage of the Soviet period is not regarded as an asset for the development of tourism, but as an obstacle due to a lack of experience and human resources. The interview study showed that the problems of the rural, represented through an overall passivity of the local population, had a masculine rather than feminine face. Rural women were described as ‘active’ in the labour market as well as taking the main responsibility for the family, while the men were described as being ‘depressed’ and ‘passive’ despite the fact that men were perceived as having more opportunities in the local labour market.
Chapter nine
Women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism in the Cēsis district

The present chapter will discuss women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism in the Cēsis district, with a focus on the background, intentions and motives for employment and entrepreneurship within rural tourism. Analysing livelihood strategies is a complex process, and one aim is to avoid focusing merely on the economic preconditions for livelihood. The term ‘strategy’ does not merely include rational and conscious planning, but one must also analyse strategies in relation to the local context, to see how they may be either constrained or encouraged through individual concrete and abstract conditions, such as education, social networks and economic capital.

The case study is based on the main results of a survey and interview study conducted in the Cēsis district. The survey included both women and men working within rural tourism as entrepreneurs and employees in both the public and private sector, including different forms of tourism accommodation, tourism activities and sites and tourism information centers. The interview study included women working as both entrepreneurs and employees within tourism, who were selected based on the interview study. Here, I will focus mainly on the background to women’s entrepreneurship within rural tourism and their livelihood strategies. The reason for this is twofold; firstly, the share of female entrepreneurs in the survey was larger than the share of female employees. Secondly, based on the rural setting and the local labour market, starting up a tourism business may constitute one of the few options for women’s livelihood. The rural tourism sector also tends to be fairly small-scale, which limits the number of regular jobs offered through larger private businesses. I will give examples of women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism as employees, with a focus on work within the public sector. This will serve as an analysis of women’s possibilities in the rural labour market, as well as a background to upcoming discussions of entrepreneurship. The chapter will discuss and highlight research questions such as, what is the background for women’s employment and entrepreneurship within rural tourism? Is
entrepreneurship within rural tourism a deliberately chosen lifestyle or a survival strategy in times of extensive transformation?

The chapter will start by providing an overview of the results of the survey conducted in the Cēsis district, by highlighting the main features of the respondents and the main motives behind work within rural tourism as revealed in the outcomes of the survey. Thereafter, I will report on four employees within rural tourism, who were part of the interview study, and describe their motives behind work within tourism and discuss what means for livelihood the work within rural tourism provides, with a focus on the public sector. The remaining parts of the chapter are dedicated to women’s entrepreneurship within rural tourism, based on the results of the interview study. In the latter sections I will also draw parallels between the results and other research studies of women’s entrepreneurship from both a post-socialist and Western European context.

Survey: general overview of rural tourism

The survey in the Cēsis district comprised a total number of 88 replies, of which 59 were women (67%) and 29 men (33%). The Cēsis district constitutes a fairly homogenous population, with around 80% ethnic Latvians, which was also evident in the survey. All respondents stated that they had a Latvian citizenship and 94 percent specified Latvian as their first language. The respondents also proved to have a ‘local’ profile; 72 percent had lived at their current place of residence for 11 years or more, and around 20 percent also stated that they were born and/or raised at the given place of residence. However, nine of the respondents specified larger cities, such as Jūrmala and Riga as their main place of residence, indicating that they only were living in the Cēsis district during the summer months. Around 58 percent of both women and men had some sort of higher education (university or college education), but only three out of 59 female respondents had higher education from the tourism field. The age distribution was fairly homogenous, where 80 percent of the respondents were 36 years or older (see Figure 15). The higher age is especially evident among the male respondents, of which around 70 percent were 46 years or older. The pattern for the female respondents’ age interval shows a more even distribution. The age distribution is also reflected within the household and family structure. Eighty-two percent of the respondents were either married or living with a partner, and only nine persons stated that they did not have any children. A majority had two children (46%), but a considerable share of the respondents (36%) had three or more children. A large share of the
respondents had children over the age of 18, but in 67 percent of the cases at least one child was still living at home.

Figure 15: Age distribution of survey respondents.

Around two-thirds of the respondents stated that they had worked three years or more in their current job within tourism (see Figure 16). The figures also show a difference between the sexes; 52 percent of the male respondents had worked six years or longer within tourism, compared to 25 percent of women.

Figure 16: Number of years at current work within tourism.

Source: Author’s survey in the Cēsis district 2005.
Tourism tends to have a high seasonality, which also was evident in the results of the survey. Even though around 60 percent of both women and men stated that they worked all year-round, they specified that “I decide my own working hours”, which rarely corresponded to full-time employment. Those who did not work within tourism all year-round specified a high concentration of work in the summer months between April and September. A majority of the respondents (65%) also had additional paid work all year-round. The main sectors for additional work for women were education, agriculture/forestry, trade, and manufacturing. Men were found mainly within agriculture/forestry, public administration and trade.

The main motives behind work within rural tourism

Around fifty percent of the female respondents and 75 percent of the male respondents specified that they had their own business of some sort (self-employed, family business, company owner). The remaining respondents stated that they were permanently, temporarily or seasonally employed. As will be described later, the more precise share of female and male entrepreneurs should be analysed with some caution. The interview study revealed that some women were officially registered as employed within a business owned by their husbands, while in fact they were actively running and managing the business.

In order to gain insight into different motives behind the decision to work within tourism, the survey contained 15 different statements relating to this topic. Differing motives was also a key theme in the interview study with women working within rural tourism, in order to connect their decision to wider questions concerning the labour market, gender relations, etc. The survey shows a mix of both economic and social factors which affect the decision to work within tourism. On the one hand, tourism is considered to offer a chance of employment and additional income. A majority of the female respondents ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed more or less’ to the statements, “I had few other employment options” (88%), “I needed additional work” (52%), and “I wanted to have my own independent income” (74%). On the other hand, 79 percent disagreed to the statement, “I was unemployed and needed a job”. In other words, the basic foundation for women’s livelihood was already in place, through another type of job or income. The more economic motives were also reflected in the answers to more open-ended questions of the survey, relating to the motives behind work within rural tourism.
Chapter nine – Women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism in the Cēsis district

1) Additional income was needed. 2) The properties are situated in a beautiful place, on the shore of a lake, which is one of the main factors for attracting tourists (woman, 44, self-employed).

I like working with people, good environment. I want to have a material base for the pension days, to be able to earn some additional money for my pension (woman, 45, company owner).

These answers also highlight other more social and lifestyle-oriented dimensions of work within tourism apart from pure economic motives, as well as making references to the character of surrounding natural landscapes. Sixty-nine percent expressed consent to the statement, “I wanted to work in a pleasant physical environment”. References to the rural scenery and landscape were also made in the more open-ended questions of the survey, emphasising the willingness to communicate natural and cultural experiences to tourists, and to develop the local community.

First of all there is a mission and understanding that we need to develop our small corner of Latvia. Secondly, the willingness to show it to others as well. But now sometimes there is a will to hide it from others as well (woman, 43, unspecified work position).

In terms of the social motives for work within rural tourism, 53 percent of the female respondents ‘strongly agreed’ to the statement, “I wanted a job in which I could meet people”. In the open-ended questions of the survey, emphasis was also put on the type of work rural tourism included in terms of working hours, self-fulfilment and flexibility.

I am completely responsible for my success and failure. I can regulate the work intensity on my own. I do not feel that I owe something to someone; it is rather the other way around (woman, 43, company owner).

Twenty years ago I was forced to change my field of employment (…) I believed that tourism would be an industry where I could fulfill myself, influence, many meetings, non-ordinary, interesting things (…). I am communicative; I can deal with different situations (woman, 54, employee).

More family-oriented motives for work within rural tourism also became evident, and 69 percent of the women ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘more or less agreed’ to the statement, “I wanted to be able to combine work and family”. The opportunity to combine work and family was also expressed in the open-ended questions.
Chapter nine – Women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism in the Čēsis district

My husband started it and someone had to continue. Because I have 3 small kids, currently this is an ideal possibility to be together with kids and at the same time earn a bit (woman, 29, company owner).

Employment within rural tourism

The interview study included four employees within rural tourism, mainly employed within the public sector (see Table 10). This section will give examples of how women have found their way into rural tourism as employees, based on their livelihood strategies, and what means and conditions for livelihood the employment within tourism may offer, with a focus on work within the public sector.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 10: Female employees included in the interview study.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alona, 31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iveta, 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justine, 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liga, 53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Like the survey, the interview study shows a combination of economically and socially related motives for employment within tourism. For the female interviewees living in the Čēsis district, work within tourism was described as one of the few employment options offered to women in the local labour market, at the same time as they state how they actively had chosen to work within tourism due to its service character including social contacts with both foreign and Latvian visitors. However, the motives for working within tourism also bear differences, and the narratives of Liga and Justine represent two different generations of workers within tourism.

Liga is in her fifties and worked at a hotel in the nearby area during the Soviet regime. She lost her job at the end of the 1990s, when the hotel where she had worked for 20 years was closed and privatised.

It was a pity that I had to leave the hotel. I thought that I could become an entrepreneur or something, but it takes a lot of money for maintenance. You have to have a lot of capital, and I was not sure that it would work out. When I lost my job I thought that I could not return to a job as a teacher either; I had not worked as a teacher for 20 years. The only alternative was the hostel, so I thought that it was worth the risk (Liga).
Today, Liga works as a manager in a public-run hostel, but has also worked as an entrepreneur within rural tourism. Liga and her husband had a smaller farm with cows and pigs, but since her husband passed away a few years ago, she has gradually reduced her work load on the farm in favour of her paid work at the hostel. She has considered starting her own business again within tourism as an entrepreneur, but claims that she lacks the financial resources. Still, she emphasises that she would have the experience needed due to her previous jobs in managerial positions within tourism, as well as her previous job as a teacher.

Just as Liga had done, Justine actively searched for a job within tourism. She studied in Riga for a couple of years, and completed an education as a tour guide and worked in the hotel sector in Riga for a few years. Justine is originally from the Cēsis district, but met her boyfriend in Riga and when they had their first child, they decided to move back to her place of birth, mainly due to practical and economic reasons. She found it difficult to combine a full-time job in Riga with family responsibilities and therefore decided to return to her home-town where her mother could help out with the children. Justine got a job at a guesthouse, and she and her boyfriend moved in with her mother. Today, she combines her job with part-time tourism studies at a university college, and has completed four out of five years.

I chose this place because of the salary; it's better compared to Cēsis. It's not as good as in Riga, but better compared to Cēsis. Two years ago the wage was the main issue. Also there was the hotel owner in Cēsis who said that I can’t study while working there. That was the second reason. So I looked for what I could get. Here they allow me to study, and they are glad that I’m studying (Justine).

Liga’s and Justine’s narratives of their motives for work within tourism both illustrate different livelihood strategies for handling a changing family situation. In Liga’s case, employment within tourism was considered to be a more rational choice than starting up her own business following the loss of her husband. For Justine, her career ambitions within the tourism sector took another turn when she started a family together with her boyfriend. Even though their search for livelihood represents a certain adjustment to changing circumstances, they still hold crucial tools for a more independent livelihood, in terms of a higher education and previous experience from the tourism sector.

Work within the public sector as means for livelihood
Three of the female employees work within the public sector, which both directly and indirectly involves tourism activities and has strong roots in the
traditions of work during the Soviet period. The interviewees described work within tourism in the public sector as having both advantages and disadvantages. On the one hand, it was considered to offer a relatively secure job and income in a rural labour market which offered limited opportunities for women. In this case, the public sector as well as services and education were described as the main alternatives for employment. On the other hand, the public sector was also described as offering poor and insufficient wages, as well as representing more ‘negative’ working Soviet ideals, which ‘lagged behind’ in the development of tourism needed to meet the demands by contemporary tourists.

Iveta is 47 years old and lives in Riga, but works at a state-owned fish cultivation station in the Cēsis district and is responsible for guiding visitors at the farm especially during the summer months. She is originally from Russia, but moved to Latvia together with her husband after marrying and completing her university degree in Kaliningrad. She has worked within the state sector her whole life, but describes her involvement within tourism as fairly new. Opening up the farm for tourists was encouraged by both private and public actors in the area, in order to include tourist attractions along newly developed hiking trails. For Iveta, tourism has indirectly become a part of her job assignment, which she has become interested in. However, she feels that she does not have enough time for the tourists, and claims that the farm is not adapted to receiving so many visitors. Moreover, Iveta is not paid extra for guiding tourists, even though it mainly takes place during her lunch break or after her regular working hours.

I do not get paid extra for guiding the tourists. The institution which receives the income is relatively new, and we are trying to solve this problem with the income from tourism. I hope that it will be solved; I do not know, maybe it has something to do with the state’s policies, but even though we work extra and work within tourism we should get paid. Tourism is an extra work load for us right now, on top of everything else (Iveta).

Iveta emphasised that it is difficult for her to influence her current livelihood situation. She is in need of an extra income, but finds it difficult to combine her current full-time job with another job since she commutes every day from Riga to the Cēsis district. Her specialized education also makes it difficult to find a job in other fields of work. Iveta and her husband are divorced, and she lives with her daughter in an apartment in Riga. Since her daughter is also working they can together manage on their incomes. Iveta claims that if she would have lived on her own, her salary would have just been enough for herself to survive.
Alona is 31 years old and works as a guide at a public museum. For her, tourism is a temporary way of sustaining livelihood, and to find additional income apart from her profession as a freelance author and translator. She has had several temporary jobs within the service sector in Riga in order to support herself as an author, and was offered the job at the museum through a friend and colleague while living in Riga, but did not initially have any plans on taking the job.

At first I did not feel that I wanted to move anywhere, to take all my things and leave, and leave my friends. Then a lot of bad things happened and I lost my apartment and had nowhere to live. Three or four months had passed since the offer, but then I realized that this might be the solution to my problems (Alona).

For Alona, the job at the museum meant both a stable income and a place to live, since she was offered a place to live on the museum premises. Moreover, she describes that the choice of work also reflects a search for freedom and independence, in order to combine her relatively flexible working hours with her interest in writing. Still, Alona claims that she tends to shoulder the role as a ‘state employee’ in a more Soviet-style fashion, which includes doing just as much as you get paid for. She admits that she has a lack of motivation for her job and takes little initiative, with reference to that it is a public institution dedicated to conservation rather than focusing on developing the tourists’ experience of the museum.

This is a state-owned museum; if it would have been a private company or my own business, I would have considered to fix a sauna or feather pens, or all other things that would have been interesting to develop (…) I am not motivated to do more than necessary here; I will not get a higher salary. I do as much as I am paid for (Alona).

In this case, the problems were not considered merely to be related to a lack of money within the public sector, but also to the lack of motivation among the workers. Liga also indicates how the previous Soviet legacies in terms of work serve as obstacles within both her work and livelihood, and claims that she would have another attitude towards her job at the hostel if it had been privatized and provided a higher salary. Liga’s monthly salary is 170 Lats, which is one of the highest wages among the workers at the hostel. She compares her salary from the Soviet period, which corresponded to around 100 Lats, a time when all the employees at the hotel were given the same pay.
In the Soviet period you could make a living out of 100 Lats, but now, the money I receive now, it is hard to make a living on. The inflation is too high. I have the farm here, and have subsistence agriculture. I grow almost all my food here; I do not need to buy anything (Liga).

The staff at the hostel consists almost exclusively of women in their 40s and 50s. Liga claims that the main reason for this is the low salary which does not attract men, who would rather choose unemployment than applying for a job within tourism. Liga claims that the Soviet work attitude still characterizes the public sector, and that she has been told by her supervisor to fire some of her employees, but feels responsible for them since she knows how difficult it would be for the older women to find a job in the local labour market.

We should fire two of our employees, but there is still some sort of Soviet thinking, that you cannot fire a person that easily, before making sure to find another place for them to work (…) There is one woman who is not interested in her work, she only comes to work in order to sit off her hours, just like during the Soviet period (Liga).

Caught ‘in-between’ different ideals of livelihood

Liga expresses that the money generated from her job at the hostel is not enough to support herself and her father who lives with her and for whom she provides. In some respects, Liga now constitutes the family breadwinner and care-giver, shouldering both traditional male and female roles, partly by earning a sufficient income, and partly by caring for her father and taking responsibility for her grandchildren who live nearby. Liga would like to work extra in a restaurant at the hostel in order to achieve a higher income, but the new management of the hostel does not approve of her extra duties.

My old director did not have any problems with that I worked there, but the new director says that I’m first and foremost a manager, and that it is not appropriate for me to work there. “The guests should see you as a manager”, and I interpreted that as a “no” (…) The director wants to raise the standard of the hostel, and that means that they may have higher demands on me, that I should be smarter, and that I need to dress better (Liga).

Liga becomes in some way ‘caught in-between’ different ideals of work and livelihood, partly restricted by structures dating back to the Soviet system in terms of the low status and inflexibility of the public sector, and partly affected by new directives set up in the new market economy, advocating a more rational and economic approach to work and management. Liga claims that she does not feel comfortable in her ‘new’ role as manager, and explains that she works mainly in order to provide the necessary means for her own family rather
than to meet the requirements set up by her director. At the same time she worries about the future, and the risk of losing her job and not finding a new one in the labour market.

With her higher education, Justine tends to be ‘out-of-place’ in the local community. On the one hand, she is over-qualified for some of the jobs offered; but on the other hand, she still finds it difficult to find a job, especially one which would provide enough income to support herself and her family. Justine describes how she tends to be an exception from the younger generation’s migration patterns.

The youths are going to the cities. If I didn’t have a family, I would go to the city. Because here I could do nothing (…) Women have higher education than men and therefore they tend to leave the countryside. All these people who haven’t education; they only have fourth grade in school finished. Also people my age (Justine).

From one point of view, Justine tends to break against more traditional gendered patterns of work and livelihood in her quest to make a career within the tourism sector, which she describes is uncommon among women who have remained in rural areas.

It’s very important for me to make a career. It’s one of my issues. I haven’t discussed it with my boyfriend; maybe he doesn’t like this. He needs more education to make a career himself. I will do it despite of what he thinks. He knows it’s important for me. Because I am like that. What is important is career and education. I like to be independent and to have my own income (Justine).

Despite her quest for a sufficient and more independent income, Justine describes her salary as low in comparison to her previous jobs in Riga. Her boyfriend works as a carpenter; he gets an official minimum wage, but the monthly income is around two or three times higher due to the use of unofficial wages. At the moment, she and her boyfriend provide around equally to the household budget.

My boyfriend does not have a problem with this, even though in Latvia the stereotype is that the man should support the household. Sometimes the men cannot live with the thought that the woman earns more. But I think my boyfriend also would feel bad if I earned more than him; it’s because of the stereotypes inside of us (Justine).

From another point of view, Justine also describes herself as required to live up to more ‘traditional’ gender ideals. She has been required to postpone her career ambitions temporarily due to her obligations in the family and the need to
spent time with her children. Her time for studies, work and the family is constantly being negotiated, often at the expense of her children, which also creates a guilty conscience.

**Rural entrepreneurship within tourism**

A majority of the female employees in the interview study described entrepreneurship within tourism as a ‘positive’ alternative to employment, especially among those working in the public sector. However, starting up one’s own business was considered to be a significant and risky decision, which would require large investments with more uncertain outcomes compared to continuing one’s employment within the public tourism sector. There is a lack of research with focus on rural entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries in general and studies which apply a gender-perspective more specifically (see Henshall-Momsen 2005). Moreover, the limited studies which have been conducted rarely focus on more specific branches within the service sector such as rural tourism. Entrepreneurship in general tends to be based on capitalist norms of profit maximisation as discussed in previous chapters, marking it as one of the central components in order to complete the transition process successfully in post-socialist countries.

Here I will argue that entrepreneurship within rural tourism needs to be analysed from a more diversified approach, including how entrepreneurship is a genderised concept, revealing perceptions of male and female-coded work and activities. I will also raise the question of whether or not rural entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries should be analysed as taking ‘different’ expressions compared with its development in more ‘mature’ economies in Western parts of Europe and Scandinavia. In this case, I will discuss the results of the interview study in relation to previous research, partly in terms of how women in post-socialist countries are ‘pushed’ or ‘forced’ into becoming entrepreneurs due to economic reasons rather consciously choosing this strategy, and partly, I will draw parallels to how research especially in Western European countries has emphasised the social and cultural dimensions of women’s entrepreneurship, which may include more ‘lifestyle-oriented’ motives.

**Gendered entrepreneurship**

Nilsson (2004) emphasises how research on entrepreneurship claims to be ‘neutral’ in its character, but that language, texts and concepts often bear masculine attributes and symbolism, which make women invisible both as entrepreneurs and researchers (Nilsson In: Ericsson 2004). Getz (2004) empha-
Entrepreneurship per definition is often given merely an economic meaning, focusing on individual profit-seeking and innovation. Entrepreneurship is in this context described as a more ‘rational’ and masculine way of doing business. Women on the other hand tend to become ‘invisible’ in their role as entrepreneurs, either in the context of co-ownership within family businesses, or due to their overrepresentation within sectors with less economic ‘status’, such as the service or cultural sector, with a large share of female employees (Getz 2004).

Holmquist and Sundin (1989) claim that women’s entrepreneurship can be described in terms of subordination, adjustment and dependence. Women’s entrepreneurship tends to be underestimated, both in regard to its numbers and economic meaning. Being a female entrepreneur also involves a higher degree of adjustment to family conditions and responsibilities, of which working only part-time could be one strategy. Therefore, men’s entrepreneurship and women’s entrepreneurship have different conditions, and the motives behind starting up a business differ accordingly. In other words, profit-seeking might be of secondary importance, while more family-oriented motives could be more prominent. At the same time, women actively avoid being categorised as entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship is an all too powerful and masculine word, it might threaten the woman’s female identity, the family focus and also the husband’s self-esteem (Holmquist & Sundin 1989 In: Lönnbring 2003:49. Author’s own translation).

This is particularly evident within family businesses, where the ownership tends to be registered on behalf of the husband, but where the husband and wife share work and assignments (Lönnbring 2003). But why then is it central to put focus on women’s entrepreneurship? Holmquist and Sundin (2002) argue that it is not relevant to make women’s roles as entrepreneurs visible, since it might result in highlighting women’s entrepreneurship as something deviant compared to more masculine norms about entrepreneurship. The wish to make women visible in their roles as entrepreneurs is becoming evident within research of entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries (see e.g. Welter et al. eds 2006; Henshall Momsen et al. 2005). Welter et al. (2006) emphasise the need to recognise women in transitional economies in their roles as entrepreneurs as significant contributors in the transformation process, since they generate new economic activities as well as job opportunities (Welter et al. 2006). In this case, entrepreneurship tends to be portrayed as providing purely positive ‘new’ opportunities for women, including work within tourism. It is crucial to
emphasis how entrepreneurship as a concept can be analysed as a social construction, thereby revealing its traditionally and predominately masculine character (Holmquist & Sundin 2002). Ahl (2002) claims that there is a need to avoid analysing women’s entrepreneurship as merely related to a discourse of entrepreneurship as something purely ‘good’, both for the development of the society at large and as a ‘solution’ to women’s advancement in the labour market. Entrepreneurship as such may not always challenge existing gender relations, but may reflect and reproduce unequal power structures between men and women in both the public and private spheres (Ahl 2002).

**Women’s entrepreneurship in the Cēsis district**

In the remaining part of this chapter, focus will be put on the female entrepreneurs who were part of the interview study, in order to analyse their main motives and strategies for becoming entrepreneurs within tourism.

**Table 11: Female interviewees, rural tourism entrepreneurs.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Tourism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Married, three children (18,22,24)</td>
<td>Riga</td>
<td>Holiday home and skiing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brigita</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Married, one son (27)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Country home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elena</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Married, three children (15,20,24)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Camping, tour activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ella</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Married, two children (3,6)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Camping, farm activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evija</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Separated, one child (22)</td>
<td>Cēsis district/Riga</td>
<td>Holiday home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dace</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>Cohabitee, two children (30,28)</td>
<td>Riga</td>
<td>Guided tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helena</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Married, two children (3,9)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Holiday home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilze</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>Married, three children (7,14,18)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Holiday homes, renting out equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristine</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Co-habitee, two children (8,19)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Holiday homes, renting out equipment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liene</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Divorced, three children (12,15,19)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Country home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sandra</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Married, three children (5,3,3 months)</td>
<td>Cēsis district</td>
<td>Holiday home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I will discuss different motives and strategies of livelihood connected to the question of why women have become entrepreneurs within rural tourism. Here, economic motives will be put in relation to more social and ‘lifestyle-oriented’ motives. The interview study includes women in micro-businesses and family businesses as co-owners and owners (including sole proprietors and self-employed). However, some women were not officially registered as co-owners or owners of the businesses, even though they shouldered the majority of their maintenance, both in practical, managerial and administrative terms. Moreover, it is important to stress that entrepreneurship may also include unregistered and unlicensed businesses, which has been a common feature in the development of entrepreneurship in post-socialist economies (see Henshall-Momsen 2005; Welter et al. In: Welter et al. 2006). This also became evident in my case study, even though the rural tourism businesses existed ‘officially’ in tourism magazines and in records of rural tourism businesses provided by the local tourist information centres.

‘Survival’ strategies
In the interview study, more economical and livelihood-related motives and strategies were evident among many of the female entrepreneurs. Some of the female interviewees described how they came to the countryside from Riga or other cities during the Soviet occupation together with their husbands after being sent to work in the local kolkhoz. After independence they had lost their jobs, and starting up a business within tourism had appeared as one of the few income alternatives. In some cases, it even became an acute livelihood strategy, as a response to changing social and economic conditions.

Liene has been self-employed for six years, and runs a small Bed and Breakfast business. She grew up in Riga, but was sent to work in Cēsis together with her husband after finishing art school, where they were given the rare opportunity of buying their own house in the countryside as newly educated specialists at the local kolkhoz. Liene and her husband divorced a few years after the Latvian independence, and she decided to stay in the countryside and keep her house together with her two teenage sons. At this time, she worked at two different elementary schools, but still did not manage to provide a sufficient income for the family. Summer was the period in which she had time off work, and tourism was considered to be one of the few options for additional and seasonal work. Liene explains how she decided to start her own business within rural tourism.
When I got divorced I stopped working within my profession (as a designer). I needed to adjust and figure out what I could do here and now in order to earn money. Rural tourism was one alternative, but our house was too small to receive guests since the second floor of our house was not finished. As a teacher, the spring wage has to be enough for the whole summer, and if you spend all the money on renovations, then you would have to eat grass. So I applied to LC (the national rural tourism association), I didn’t have any money to pay them when they came here, but they said OK, and then we started to receive guests and live in tent. It was a bit extreme; as soon as the guests arrived, we had to move out from our house. We changed the location of the tent after three or four days, so that the lawn wouldn’t become yellow. But my children liked it (Liene, female tourism entrepreneur).

Liene’s story has parallels to previous studies in post-socialist countries which have tended to focus on how entrepreneurship in general and activities within rural tourism more specifically have appeared as a ‘survival’ strategy for achieving new means of livelihood income. Nikula (2004) claims that a majority of the entrepreneurs in rural areas in the Baltic countries can be described as ‘accidental entrepreneurs’, representing “a personal endeavour, taken on by coincidence, or compelled by sub-standard levels of income” (Nikula In: Alanen 2004:136). In other words, starting up a business within rural tourism or other sectors is considered to be a strategy for economic survival and might appear as one of the few ways of securing an income. Thus, the entrepreneur’s own personal interest in the business is considered to be of secondary importance, as well as the expansion of the business, due to a low turnover and a need for re-investments (Nikula 2004 In: Alanen 2004).

The motives for entrepreneurship are often divided into ‘push’ and ‘pull’ factors, of which, for example, economic hardship such as unemployment may be considered to be a negative ‘push’ factor, while a wish for a more independent lifestyle and work may be considered as a more positive ‘pull’ factor. The ‘push’ factors are often considered as having a stronger influence in transition economies, which are considered to create a type of ‘reluctant’ entrepreneurship (Smallbone & Welter 2001). The ‘forced’ entrepreneur in post-socialist countries has also been given more feminine characteristics. Henshall Momsen et al. (2005) describe men’s motives for entrepreneurship as more related to a wish to make economic profits compared to female entrepreneurs who were estimated to constitute a larger share of those ‘forced’ into entrepreneurship due to economic reasons and family responsibilities (Henshall Momsen et al. 2005:76f). I find it important to acknowledge that even if the circumstances surrounding the decision to start a business within tourism might be analysed as ‘accidental’, the strategies used to put the ideas into
practice are far more complex, including overcoming a number of difficulties and obstacles along the way.

Liene experienced several challenges in her aim to start her own business, due to her role as a single mother. It was difficult to get bank credits and loans, and many of her friends and family did not support her decision since they did not believe that Liene would be able to support herself and her children without the help of her husband, and they tried to persuade her to move back to Riga again. Still, Liene wanted to stay in the countryside where she believed it was easier for her to combine work and family than if she would get a new full-time job in Riga. Initially, Liene planned to build a new guest house for the tourists, and wanted to buy an old timbered house which could be taken apart and transported to her property. The plans were not realized and she had to come up with another idea.

My friends and family did not think that I would succeed, “You cannot even hit a nail with a hammer, how would you fix this?” Then some kind of extra organ inside of me started to work, “I can do everything!” (...) I was very, very stressed. I could not sleep and the only thing that helped was hard work. So I went up to the attic and started carrying out all the sand on the second floor. I continued every day from two o’clock in the afternoon until two at night, then I slept very good at night (...) Then I realized that I had removed all the insulation in the house and we started to freeze (Liene).

Liene renovated the attic of her house, and made it into the family’s space, while the rooms on the first floor became guest rooms for the rural tourism business. Even though her strategies to become an entrepreneur were mainly economically related, she had a clear idea of the aims of her project, which also involved creating a livelihood base for her and her children which corresponded to an idea of a better way of life.

I know that some men would not be able to handle this kind of jobs to make such a large renovation, and I had an idea to move a whole house. There are families now in which the women tell their husbands: “Look at (Liene), she has renovated a whole floor and you cannot even renovate a room!” And they reply, “Why are you talking to me, talk with (Liene)!" (Liene).

In some cases, becoming an entrepreneur was described as a strategy for work related to the difficulties of finding work in the local labour market. The women in the interview study described their rural area as decaying due to the migration to Riga or abroad, job losses, and economic and infrastructural decline. Many women expressed a concern that it was more difficult for women
to find work compared to men, which reflects the current labour market situation described in the previous chapter.

Elena runs an agricultural business together with her husband, and combines it with receiving tourists during the summer season. She worked as a communicator during the Soviet period, and claims that her chances to get a job in the labour market are very limited, due to the small number of companies in the surrounding areas. Elena has received a job offer from her previous employer, but turned it down due to the low wage it would generate as an employee within the public sector.

It’s easier for men to find work. My daughter was at the unemployment agency and they only offered work for men, just a few for women. The problem is men’s attitudes, they refuse to work for such low wages. They think it’s much better to sit at home and do nothing. Half of the Latvian population is in Ireland. Whole families are leaving the country. I know many who have left. Many of my daughter’s friends are abroad, but my children are still here (Elena, female tourism entrepreneur).

Despite the fact that women experienced larger difficulties in the labour market, women described themselves as more “active” and goal-oriented than men in their adjustment to the changing labour market, while men were portrayed as passive “victims” with a lack of initiative taking. The women emphasised how many rural residents, and especially men, tended to “fall into depression” and alcohol problems due to the changing rural economic structure.

The tourism sector was also described as one of the few choices for starting a business, given the physical delimitations of the surrounding landscape.

You cannot have stock-raising here; you cannot work as a farmer. Tourism is one of the few options if you want to start your own business. The soil does not have a good quality, and the landscape with the hilly terrain makes it difficult to cultivate. Sheep farming could be one possible option; that is the only thing people could do here (Ilze).

‘Lifestyle-oriented’ strategies

The income-related motives behind the decision to start up a business within rural tourism were important for a majority of the female interviewees. However, the interview study also revealed social and individual motives for entrepreneurship, which could be described as having more ‘lifestyle-oriented’ characteristics. In this case, starting up one’s own business within rural tourism involved different ‘pull’ factors, including how entrepreneurship became ac-
tively chosen for personal fulfilment, reflecting a deliberately chosen ‘lifestyle’ or a wish to be one’s own boss.

In the interview study, many of the female entrepreneurs emphasised how they had deliberately chosen to start up a business within rural tourism since being an entrepreneur was considered to have more advantages compared to working as an employee on a ‘9 to 5 job’. In other words, being an entrepreneur was nothing they felt they had been ‘forced into’ due to economic circumstances. The advantages of working as an entrepreneur were described as involving a lot of freedom, autonomy, flexibility and independence.

Helena, a former family worker in her mid-thirties, who runs a rural tourism business describes the positive sides of entrepreneurship as follows.

Here I’m my own boss; I decide what to do. It’s much better to be a boss than an employee. I like being an entrepreneur, to be a boss. We had an intern here last summer, and I was in some ways her boss, but even if we would have had five employees, I would have managed fine. Having my own business involves independence, you can do what you want, there is no one who gives orders and points at things to do. If I don’t want to work, then I don’t work (Helena, female entrepreneur).

Entrepreneurship within rural tourism was often described as being far from the ‘original’ definition of the word, and some of the female interviewees even considered ‘entrepreneurship’ to have negative connotations. Having a business within rural tourism was regarded as being beneficial in many different ways, but not merely in order to make a great deal of money or to make large plans or projects happen.

Brigita, who owns a Bed and Breakfast business as a complement to an agricultural business, distances herself from the term ‘entrepreneurship’ by the following.

I don’t really see myself as an entrepreneur. I don’t have a set price for guests coming here. If I see that they don’t have so much money, I charge them a bit less. I appreciate the contact with people instead. But the profit-thinking is always there, I’m not working for free! (Brigita, female entrepreneur).

The more ‘lifestyle-related’ strategies behind women’s entrepreneurship have been highlighted in a number of case studies conducted in Western European and Scandinavian countries (see Lönnbring 2003; Foghagen & Johansson 2004; Scholten 2003). Lönnbring (2003) underscores the importance of the socio-cultural context for analysing entrepreneurship, rejecting the idea of entrepreneurship as motivated by merely rational and economic objectives. Moreover,
Chapter nine – Women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism in the Cēsis district

she also highlights the diversified nature of women’s entrepreneurship, in which the decision to start up a business is not merely a question of adjusting to more structural constraints, but may also serve as a tool and strategy for fulfilling personal and individual motives of independence (Lönnbring 2003).

In the following sections, I will give an overview of the more lifestyle-oriented motives behind entrepreneurship which became evident in the interview study, by providing four different examples of strategies within rural tourism; place-related strategies, hobby-oriented strategies, business-oriented strategies, and family-oriented strategies. However, this categorisation is merely used as an analytical tool, with the purpose to extract and explore different livelihood strategies, and should not be viewed as a clear-cut or static classification. The categories are also partly based on previously discussed research of women’s livelihood strategies and female rural entrepreneurship (see Lönnbring 2003; Johansson & Foghagen 2004). The aim is not to make any generalisations about the motives and strategies behind women’s entrepreneurship, and it should be acknowledged that different entrepreneurs might use a multiple set of strategies and motives.

**Place-related strategies**

The distinctions and differences between the ‘urban’ and the ‘rural’ were evident in many interviews, and the ‘rural’ lifestyle was often given more positive connotations in relation to the ‘urban’. This is an interesting contrast or paradox compared to the more negative image of the countryside described earlier, in terms of unemployment and ‘the rural depression’. Here, one important motive for engaging in rural tourism was to be able to continue to live and work in the countryside in order to secure a ‘better’ way of life. More place-related motives behind women’s entrepreneurship have also been evident in other studies in Sweden. Foghagen and Johansson (2004) identify entrepreneurship as a strategy for continuing a way of life in the rural areas on Öland, and as a way of contributing to developing the local community (Foghagen & Johansson 2004). In the interview study, the place of residence was considered as important in many respects, both in relation to the rural natural settings and surroundings and to cultural remains and traditions. Rural tourism as a sector

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86 Based on her empirical material, Lönnbring (2003) identifies four different categories of entrepreneurs: the family oriented business owners, the genuine business owners, the involuntary business owners and the innovative and creative entrepreneurs (see Lönnbring 2003:266f).
87 The study included an interview survey of 57 female-run businesses which were active during Öland’s harvest festival in 2002.
was considered to have an important role in this context, partly by providing a means of livelihood in order to continue an agricultural business, and partly as a way of preserving both cultural traditions and natural surroundings. Some female interviewees emphasised how they or their husbands had inherited land and property through the restitution process at the time of independence, and that one aim was to preserve and continue for example, an agricultural tradition or to renovate the farmstead with careful methods in order to keep its cultural heritage and value.

The wish to continue to live and work in the countryside was especially evident among those who had agricultural activities parallel to the rural tourism business, since rural tourism was considered to be a way of preserving a ‘rural lifestyle’. Engaging in rural tourism could also be a necessary economic complement to an agricultural business. Some of the interviewees had tried to sustain commercial small-scale agricultural activities together with their husbands, but most businesses had been reduced to a self-sufficient basis, mainly due to a too low turnover. Others have received EU-funds for the restructuring of the farm activities, of which rural tourism has emerged as one alternative to traditional farming. The decision to commit themselves to rural tourism can in this case be described as a more long-term strategy, including a more conscious planning process and aim.

Brigita and her husband moved from Cēsis to their farmstead 14 years ago, just after the Latvian independence, with the aim of starting their own agricultural business. They did not have family or friends in the area, but liked the surroundings, and had looked for several houses before they decided to buy their current property. Brigita grew up in the countryside in another part of the region, and moving to the countryside was also in a way a return to an environment where she had lived as a child. During the 1990s, she and her husband ran a larger farm with animals, but have over the last few years switched to organic farming, mainly for self-supporting rather than commercial purposes. In order to make a living out of agriculture, a much more large-scale farm would be needed, with more land and animals. In this process, there was a need for diversifying the income from agriculture, and rural tourism became an option.

If you work with agriculture, it is impossible to make a living; you have to look for another job. We still have agriculture, but there is not enough income from it, so we have to zero on our accounts. We only work the land, so that it does not go into decay (Brigita).
Brigita, just as some of the other female interviewees described the need to keep the landscape open and the wish to continue their agriculture despite economic difficulties. Brigita also sits in a wheel chair since 13 years ago, after a car accident. For her, the opportunities to find work are quite limited, and her sick pension is not enough to make a living.

I have not looked for a job, so I do not know my possibilities. I have found a job myself. I would not want a regular paid job, not considering the pay I would get. It is much better to run your own business (Brigita).

The business is registered in Brigita’s name since four years ago, with the idea that she would have more time for administration and bookkeeping since her husband has a full-time job. Brigita and her husband sold another property and put all their funds into their house, but did not want to take any loans. In this case, they had the possibility to receive funds from the EU, with the aim to restructure the farm for organic agriculture. The benefits cover smaller investments for increasing the standard of the house. They cleared out the attic of their house to make space for guest rooms.

From the beginning we thought that we could offer a place to stay for our friends, but then we decided to rent out the space for tourists. It was my initiative. I had worked with people before and was now sitting at home in my wheel chair; maybe it was the social contacts I missed (Brigita).

Hobby-related strategies
The interviews also revealed rural tourism as an opportunity to combine work and leisure, by developing a personal hobby or interest through the tourism business. As mentioned above, running a business within rural tourism could in itself be viewed as leisure or as a personal hobby. Among the female tourism entrepreneurs there were examples of residents from Riga who had developed skiing and other sport activities in the countryside, and how local residents with an interest in stabling horses developed these activities to include also tourists. The hobby interest could be something individual or something they shared with their husband.

Kristine has had her own business for about ten years, and has gradually developed horseback-riding activities related to tourism, since she and her husband moved to the countryside from Cēsis. Kristine grew up with horses at the farm where she was born, where they were used within agriculture. She is educated within agronomy and trained horses also during the Soviet period, when she also got the opportunity to go abroad and compete in horseback-
riding. Kristine started her business by renting out equipment such as bicycles, tents, boats and canoes to tourists and has diversified her business even further to include horses, which has remained her main personal hobby.

My idea for the business is that I like horses and that it is my hobby. I had decided that when I have my own house, I also wanted horses and that I would offer horseback-riding to visitors. But I realized that it is not profitable to have only horses, just as only renting out boats is not profitable. Therefore, I wanted to offer more products, which would increase the chance for making it profitable (Kristine).

The hobby-related strategies were also found among the ‘urban-based’ entrepreneurs, who could develop a hobby through tourism, and whose work within rural tourism was also a part of their leisure time, and was in itself perceived as a ‘hobby’ compared to the everyday life in the city.

Anna owns a business within rural tourism, offering accommodation and downhill skiing activities for visitors. The interest for downhill skiing comes originally from her husband, who worked in the skiing sector for over 20 years, and saw the potential in developing the skiing facilities locally. Today, Anna and her husband share an active interest in skiing, and they are both involved in the tourism business. Anna lives and works full-time in Riga, but travels to the Cēsis district almost every weekend throughout the year. Working within rural tourism is described as a welcomed contrast to a more ‘urban’ lifestyle.

I like people, and I enjoy the contact with the guests. (...) If I would have had a company in Riga, it would have been a consulting company for bookkeeping or for making business plans, but to receive guests is something totally different. (...) It is better financially in Riga. Here I have only a negative balance in my accounts. But it is better for the brain and the heart here. (...) In Riga I sit at my desk in front of the computer all day long, here I get fresh air. It is a different kind of work; in Riga I have more psychologically demanding work, here more physical. But sometimes it is quite tiresome to have two jobs, since there is no time to rest (Anna).

In this case, the economic motives are of secondary importance. Still, Anna describes her employment and income from her work in Riga as a prerequisite for running her rural tourism business, since the turnover is still low. Anna and her husband have used all the profit from the business for further investments in the property, but they hope that the business will experience further growth and make it possible for them to both live and work full-time in the countryside.
Business-related strategies

For some of the female entrepreneurs, starting their own businesses was considered to be more important than the choice of sector. However, the rural tourism sector was considered to be one of the few alternatives for starting a business in the countryside, apart from an agricultural business. The motives for being an entrepreneur could in this context have more economic dimensions, in addition to involving independence and freedom. The aim of starting up the business within rural tourism was for some a way of realising their own plans and projects, which included investments, profit-seeking and some degree of risk-taking. Rural tourism is in this context viewed as ‘business’ and management, and the female interviewees described themselves as confident in their role as an ‘entrepreneur’.

The interest in rural tourism as a ‘business’ can be viewed as rooted in a higher level of education, as well as being an expression for a more ‘urban-oriented’ lifestyle. Some of the female interviewees had earlier worked and lived in Riga, and had decided to return to their place of birth after marrying or getting a divorce. A few also had the experience of entrepreneurship from working in another form of business or possessing a leading position in the private or public sector. Others had taken courses in business leadership or bookkeeping in order to develop their businesses. The decision to become an entrepreneur was also described as a strategy to avoid more age and gender discriminating structures in the labour market. In this case it was considered to be easier to be a female entrepreneur within rural tourism compared to having a leading position in other sectors.

Anna is 45 years old, has a full-time job as a bookkeeper in the restaurant sector in Riga and claims that being a ‘middle aged’ woman may have more difficulties in finding a job.

Age can be a restriction. There are often ads for bookkeepers, that they should not be older than 35 years, and please send a photo… Why does a bookkeeper need to be a good looking girl? (Anna).

Evija is also in her mid-forties and has had leading positions in both the public and political sector in Riga, but describes the reality as a female business leader with three words: “Discrimination, discrimination, discrimination”. She claims that it is difficult to achieve the same position as men, for example, as a chairperson in different committees, and has now started to limit her political assignments in favour of her work within rural tourism.
Both Anna and Evija find their roles as entrepreneurs within rural tourism as an alternative way of realizing their business plans and interests and to use their experience. In this case, neither age nor sex is considered to be a problem, but rather an advantage for developing their businesses. In this case, the countryside is viewed as a space for opportunities, gaining new possibilities as an ‘urban’ entrepreneur and still maintaining the social and business networks to Riga and other places.

Making a career is important for me. Maybe it’s something I have from my dad. I have always had leading positions within shops, where I have worked as a department manager. I don’t like when someone else controls my work, and I like to work by myself. The best is when you can plan yourself, and no one is controlling. I don’t want to sit at the same place between nine to six; I like to organise and to be in charge (Anna).

Entrepreneurship was described as a sort of self-fulfilment, a wish to find new challenges and personal projects. The female entrepreneurs had many ideas about how to further expand their own tourism businesses, and how to work to further develop the conditions for rural tourism in the local area. At the same time, running the businesses was viewed as a hobby, reflecting a personal interest for business and management. In a majority of cases the entrepreneurship was combined with full-time or part-time employment, together with other activities, such as volunteer work and political assignments. The income and turnover from the rural tourism business was not considered to be crucial for their economic survival and livelihood. Instead, it was viewed as being some sort of ‘bonus’ and a way of achieving more ‘quality of life’, and to increase the standard of living, in terms of more material resources.

Family-related strategies

Getz (2004) highlights the family business as an important part of tourism in general and rural tourism specifically. There is a lack of a commonly accepted definition of what should be included in the term ‘family business’. Some definitions stress the succession of the business within the family, while others emphasise the needs or goals of the family, putting their well-being in focus over time as a kind of ‘family-first vision’. The family-oriented motives can also go hand-in-hand with more lifestyle or autonomy-related motives (Getz 2004). Lönnbring (2003) also emphasises how entrepreneurship may serve family purposes, and becomes a strategy for creating a more flexible way of life, guided by the wish to achieve a good balance between work and family. She also points out that the ‘family entrepreneurs’ tended to be guided by more traditional
gender relations within the family and the community (Lönnbring 2003). The family business as a concept has mainly been used in a Western European context and is relatively new in post-socialist countries. However, the interview study shows that rural tourism is one sector in which family businesses are common. In a majority of cases, the ownership and/or work was officially shared between a married couple or other family members. Mostly, it was the women who had been the main initiative-takers for the business and who were more actively involved in the tourism business. The men usually had another business or activities apart from tourism on a full-time basis, while the women tended to be working mainly within the family business, or have a background as a housewife. Employment within rural tourism was in some cases also viewed as a way of gaining an independent income by those women who earlier had been working as housewives. They were usually highly educated within a profession, but had stopped working when they had moved to the countryside and started a family.

Being a housewife was described as a conscious choice, to be able to have time for the children while they were young and avoid having to commute to work in a larger community. Still, tourism was viewed as a way of combining the daily chores and family with one’s own business and activities.

Helena is an educated nurse, but stopped working within her profession after marrying her husband and moving to the countryside to her husband’s family farm. Her husband started an agricultural business, and Helena worked within agriculture for some time, but became a housewife when the children were born. Helena’s children are now three and nine years old, and she had decided earlier that she would be at home until they were five and could start preschool. She believed that her choice of employment was limited, and that it was not possible to commute to a larger city to work as a nurse. Day care and school for the children are also located seven kilometres from their home and to drive back and forth is the only alternative.

You have to think if it is worth it to have job. You have to pay for transport back and forth, then you will need a baby sitter, and how much does it cost, and is it worth it? You may even earn money by being at home (Helena).

The idea to start a business within rural tourism was considered attractive partly for the possibility of combining the chores as a housewife, family and work within tourism, and partly as a way of gaining more economic independence from her husband.
This is my income, my work; I'm earning my own money. Not only this kind of economic maintenance, this is my work place. It's important for me to have my own income. It's not always money just for myself, but I can buy what I want for me and for my children, and I don't have to ask my husband for 5 Lats to buy bread. (...) I enjoy my work. It's much better being with tourists than milking cows (Helena).

Some of the interviewees emphasised that life in the countryside was something they actively had chosen for themselves and their children, and that work within rural tourism suited their lifestyle.

Ella lived in Riga until she was 22 years old, and moved to the Cēsis district when she met her present husband who is originally from the area. She has a university degree as a teacher, and she continued to work in Riga as a preschool teacher, but is now running a rural tourism business together with her husband, providing camping spaces and farm activities for tourists. Ella has two children under the age of six, and she describes what advantages she considers rural tourism to have for her family and for her children.

I was wearing 'rose-colored glasses', and my family and friends were shocked by the fact that I moved here. And now I cannot even imagine moving back, not for any money in the world. (...) This is my lifestyle; it's not the business, it's a lifestyle. My children have everything; it's not all children who have all this. I give love to my children through tourism, they have all these animals, and I try to give them knowledge and this love. In Riga, children have no fresh air; it does not exist. Children are not allowed to do anything in the city, but here they can do everything they wish (Ella, female entrepreneur).

Sandra is 29 years old and has three children, of which the youngest daughter is only three months old. Sandra and her husband met in Riga when they were studying at a university, and they moved together to the countryside and the area where he was born and raised. Now they live in a house together with his parents. Sandra claims that it was mainly her husband who wanted to move to the countryside.

I thought that I would live in a bigger city and that I would work at a bank, or at a state institution. That was what I had imagined. But that was not what happened. I moved here (Sandra).

Previously, Sandra had a job at her husband's company in Cēsis, and is currently on maternity leave, but runs a rural tourism business providing accommodation for tourists during the summer months, and has been an active entrepreneur for five years. Sandra describes her motives for engaging in rural tourism as to have something to do when she is on maternity leave, and she
thinks that tourism provides relatively flexible working hours. On the one hand, Sandra emphasises the importance as a woman to be at home with her children until they are three years old. On the other hand, she also regards entrepreneurship to be one of the few viable options for work for women with younger children. Sandra claims that it is difficult for women to find work locally, but also in the cities, especially if you have children.

When you go to a job interview and must tell about yourself, they always ask how many children you have and how you will handle work and family. If you have a family it is difficult, and you can just forget about the job (…) They think it is either children or work. The only option is to start your own business or become a manager yourself (Sandra).

For Sandra, work within rural tourism is considered to be a temporary solution, until her children are older, and then she wants to do more challenging work and use her degree in business management. However, she could not imagine only being at home with her children without having another job.

I do not know if I would like sitting at home for three years all by myself and not do anything. Rural tourism is something, an activity to fill my time with, to have something to do, but it is really a step down. If you would be at home for such a long time, you might never find your way out on the labour market again (Sandra).

**Diversifying women’s entrepreneurship**

The interview study revealed both economic motives of ‘survival’ as well as more lifestyle-oriented motives behind women’s decisions to become entrepreneurs. The results of the interview study have parallels to both previous research of women’s entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries as well as studies conducted in rural areas in Western Europe and Scandinavia. I would suggest that highlighting women’s entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries may serve as a way of **diversifying** the character of entrepreneurship, which tends to be based on male capitalist norms and models of economic growth. The emergence of entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries, such as Latvia, may illustrate how the policies and aims of entrepreneurship may have different local outcomes, and interrelate with the socio-cultural and economic context, including existing gender relations. Moreover, I would also argue that drawing parallels between the emergence of entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries and ‘western’ capitalist economies avoids treating the motives and outcomes of entrepreneurship in countries such as Latvia as ‘deviating’ from established norms of entrepreneurship. Below I will highlight and analyse both similarities
and differences between the interview study and previous research in both a post-socialist and a Western European context.

Rural entrepreneurship as ‘development against all odds’

A number of similarities can be drawn between entrepreneurship in Latvia and Scandinavian countries. The ‘profiles’ of the average female entrepreneur share common features, for example, in terms of age (usually in their 30s-40s), family (married with children), company size (smaller compared to men), and usually being within a traditionally female-coded sector such as trade or services (see Welter et al. In: Welter et al. 2006). The norms of entrepreneurship tend to have ‘urban’ rather than ‘rural’ characteristics, highlighting mainly conditions and motives for entrepreneurship in larger cities and towns both in Scandinavian countries as well as in Latvia. However, entrepreneurship also needs to be analysed in relation to a place-specific rural context in which it develops, as has been discussed in the previous chapter of ‘geographies of place’. Even though the rural and urban should not be treated as two separate units or ‘realities’, it is important to emphasise that rural entrepreneurship might take different forms and expressions (see Lönnbring 2003).

Different research studies in Sweden have highlighted how the shift of women’s roles from employees to entrepreneurs tends to constitute an important livelihood strategy in rural areas, as a result of a general restructuring of the rural economy which provides a limited number of job opportunities and employment within the traditional agricultural sectors (see Foghagen & Johansson 2004; Lönnbring 2003; Scholten 2003). Lönnbring (2003) describes how women’s entrepreneurship in rural areas of Sweden tends to increase, even though it can be analysed as developing ‘against all odds’. This includes the fact that female entrepreneurs break against traditional male norms of entrepreneurship, as well as that their businesses rely on an existing poor rural infrastructure, lack of social and economic services, networks, and weak markets compared to the often well-developed business environments found in urban areas (Lönnbring 2003).

In the interview study, the economic and social difficulties in becoming an entrepreneur was emphasised, both in relation to access to capital and social networks in the rural areas. A majority of the female interviewees were reluctant to take loans in order to invest and develop their business due to uncertainties

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88 See also Holmquist & Sundin (1989) for an analysis of the ‘average’ Swedish female and male entrepreneur which also shows similarities with the characteristics provided by Welter et al. (2006).
in terms of tourist demand and turnover, which were considered to restrict their ability to pay back on their loans. Thus, the development of their businesses was described as moving step by step in accordance to the access to income and finances, and that a slower and more careful development of the business was perceived to be more preferable. In a majority of the cases, it was the husband’s financial contribution which was described as the main investment capital for the business, either by his income from a job as an employee or an entrepreneur as the main supporter of the household, or through other sources such as capital generated after selling parts of forest or other property. This was often described as a joint family investment, but also reflected the lack of economic capital among the female interviewees. In most cases, they did not have the same access to property or forest as their male counterparts, and if they had an additional job, it was mainly within a rather low-paid sector.

Access to social contacts and networks with other entrepreneurs as well as organisations for social and economic support locally and regionally also turned out to be weak among the female entrepreneurs. A few of the female entrepreneurs had used contacts within different tourism associations when starting up their own businesses. A majority claimed that they had received little or no support from the local municipality in terms of services, cooperation or education, and claimed that rural tourism was not considered to be a priority on the local municipality level. The problems identified related to poor tourism infrastructure, road maintenance, road signs, provision of tourism attractions, hiking trails for tourists and so on. Still, most of the female entrepreneurs considered the contacts with the tourism information centres in Cēsis or other places to be well-functioning in terms of information and regular contacts.

Recognising the socio-cultural context for entrepreneurship

The development of entrepreneurship as a response to structural change and as a strategy ‘against all odds’ has parallels to the interview study and strategies of ‘survival’ and entrepreneurship as means to secure one’s economic livelihood. However, the descriptions of the ‘forced’, ‘accidental’ and ‘reluctant’ post-socialist entrepreneurs tend to focus on how female entrepreneurs in particular differ from norms of the male entrepreneur in more ‘mature’ economies, in terms of aims of economic growth. Thus, there is a need for diversifying the image of the female post-socialist entrepreneur, which does not merely make a distinction between the ‘forced’ and the ‘voluntary’ entrepreneur as an ‘either-or’ scenario, but rather tries to regard socio-cultural and economic motives as interrelated. Moreover, examples of the ‘reluctant’ female entrepreneur are also
found in studies from Western Europe, both in terms of how women see few alternatives for work and income in the local rural labour market and how entrepreneurship may be the only way of maintaining and preserving an artistic or cultural profession (see Lönnbring 2003; Foghagen & Johansson 2004).

Ateljevic and Doorne (2003) argue that the western norms of entrepreneurship within tourism reflect paradigms of modernisation and development which are considered to be applicable in all social and cultural contexts. With examples from tourism development in Croatia, they claim that the economic focus of entrepreneurship tends to regard entrepreneurs in developing countries and post-socialist countries as deviant from the norm, while not taking into account how the social and cultural context influences entrepreneurial activity.

A solely economic interpretation of entrepreneurship in tourism in this region is clearly insufficient to fully appreciate the cultural complexities surrounding the place as an economy in transition (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003:143).

Ateljevic and Doorne’s critique underscores how entrepreneurship may take multiple and diverse forms and outcomes, which is the case in both more ‘mature’ economies and post-socialist countries. In line with their argument, Lönnbring (2003) emphasises how strategies of entrepreneurship may be a way of preserving a traditional way of life and work. The emergence of women’s entrepreneurship in Sweden is described as a part of neoculturation processes taking place in rural areas, in how it upholds and maintains rural life modes and ideals of independence in times of change when these cannot be put into practice through traditional waged labour (Lönnbring 2003). Thus, there is a need for highlighting the local and regional diversity, in which entrepreneurship does not necessarily need to be a quest for something ‘new’, but can be a way of preserving and continuing existing and culturally anchored traditions, which are closely related to place (Ateljevic & Doorne 2003).

Based on my interview study, I would suggest that the women’s livelihood strategies as entrepreneurs within rural tourism should not merely be analysed as an ‘adaptation’ or ‘adjustment’ to the transforming rural economy, by using entrepreneurship as a ‘new’ source and strategy for income. As has been shown in the interview material, entrepreneurship is also used to maintain different previous traditional economic strategies, for example, by continuing a small-scale agricultural business and a ‘rural way of life’, which has parallels to more

89 See Højrup (2003) and Jakobsen (1999) for a more in-depth discussion of the life mode analysis.
romantised ideals of ‘rurality’ as discussed in the previous chapter. This is reflected in both the ‘place’ and ‘hobby-related’ strategies, in which living and working in the countryside is considered to include personal and lifestyle-oriented advantages. The family-oriented strategies also involve attempts and decisions to create a good environment for children in the rural areas, which were considered to have more advantages compared to the urban environments. Yet, this continuity of the livelihood strategies also includes traditions and ideals rooted in the Soviet past. Women are portrayed as more ‘active’ than men in the interview study, which also has parallels to the empirical material presented in the previous chapter. Thus, women have a strong tradition of work, and becoming an entrepreneur can be analysed as a strategy of continuing this wish to carry on working and earning one’s own income.

Consequently, the quest for entrepreneurship needs to be analysed in relation to the local socio-cultural setting, and not as merely reflecting ‘external’ factors which may ‘push’ women into entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries on an ‘accidental’ basis as suggested by Nikula (2004). Henshall Momsen et al. (2005) describe rural women in Hungary as having different advantages for becoming entrepreneurs due to their previous skills and experience from the Soviet period, based both on the relatively high educational level as well as experience from the service sector.

Many women were employed by the collectives in small manufacturing branch plants, or in services such as child care or retail stores or bookkeeping. These skills can now be transferred to self-employment in the private sector (Henshall Momsen 2005:41).

Smallbone and Welter (2001) also highlight the high educational level of female entrepreneurs in transition economies, which tends to be higher compared to that in western countries, and has its background in the tradition of higher education also during the Soviet period (Smallbone & Welter 2001). These patterns were also reflected in the survey and interview study in the Čēsis district. Thirty-four of the 59 female respondents in the survey stated that they had a higher education (university or college degree), as well as had a majority of the female entrepreneurs in the interview study. Some of them had an education from the Soviet period, which had an orientation towards more agricultural professions. For others, working within tourism had been a change of direction in their professional life, and working in tourism and agriculture could also be described as a more low-qualified type of work compared to their previous skills and education. This was particularly evident among the younger generation of women who had moved to the countryside after finishing their
university degree and in a sense ‘adjusted’ to the opportunities provided locally. Still, some of the interviewees had a more business-oriented education which they had acquired already before their work within tourism, which was considered to be a great advantage in their work as entrepreneurs. Knowledge in juridical matters and bookkeeping was considered to be advantageous. Even though a majority lacked experience of entrepreneurship in general, some of the female entrepreneurs also had previous experience from other service professions, for example work in restaurants and bars. Others highlighted more ‘people-oriented’ professions, such as teaching, child care and health related professions which were considered to be important for their communication skills and service orientation when receiving and working with tourists.

**Conclusion**

The aim of this chapter has been to discuss women’s livelihood strategies within rural tourism, with a particular focus on the background and motives for female entrepreneurship. Based on the interview study conducted in the Cēsis district, entrepreneurship constitutes an important livelihood strategy for women, revealing both economic and social or ‘lifestyle-oriented’ motives behind the decision to start up a business within tourism. The economic motives can be described as responses to women’s difficulties in finding jobs in the rural labour market, or the need for additional income within the household. The difficulties in finding work were emphasised by both employees within rural tourism and the female entrepreneurs. For the employees, the service sector constituted one of the few alternatives for work, and working within rural tourism often included working within the public sector which was described as offering mainly low-paid jobs, and representing ‘negative’ Soviet working ideals. Thus, the alternative of starting one’s own business was described as attractive both among the employees and those who already had taken the step to become entrepreneurs. In this case, entrepreneurship within tourism was perceived as offering possibilities to regulate their own working hours, realising individual aims and achieving more independent and well-paid income.

The interview study showed that the basic economic livelihood for the family or household in most cases already was in place, and work within rural tourism was described more as a means for generating an additional income. Thus, even though the more economic incentives for starting up a business within rural tourism were evident within the interview study, I have suggested that women’s entrepreneurship should not merely be regarded as ‘involuntary’ or ‘forced’ strategies for survival. Emphasising mainly the ‘push’ factors behind
entrepreneurship also tends to portray entrepreneurship in post-socialist countries as ‘deviant’ from norms of the average entrepreneur, and I find it important also to point out that structural and economic constraints which may guide the decision to become an entrepreneur are also found in Western European and Scandinavian countries.

Based on my interview study I distinguish among four different lifestyle-oriented strategies for livelihood: place-oriented strategies, hobby-oriented strategies, business-oriented strategies, and family-oriented strategies. I argue for the need of a diverse approach to women’s entrepreneurship in rural post-socialist countries, including the need for analysing entrepreneurship as a genderised concept, as well as acknowledging the socio-cultural and rural context for entrepreneurship, and recognising the diverse range of motives guiding the decision to become an entrepreneur. Women’s livelihood strategies as entrepreneurs can be analysed as representing a continuity of a more ‘traditional’ rural lifestyle and Soviet ideals of work rooted in the local socio-cultural context. The female interviewees stressed the importance of being able to live and work in the rural area, as well as how small-scale agricultural practices could be maintained through tourism activities.

The emphasis on the family as the main unit for the ‘rural lifestyle’ also reflects more traditional values, including genderised dimensions as discussed in the previous chapter. However, women’s ‘active’ involvement within rural tourism as entrepreneurs also highlights more socialist ideals of work, distinguishing themselves from ‘passive’ men, and underscoring the importance of work both in terms of having an independent income as well as constituting a well-educated share of the rural population. At the same time, the decision to become an entrepreneur was also put into relation to ‘old’ but remaining Soviet ideals of work within the public sector, in which entrepreneurship was considered to bring ‘new’ opportunities of freedom and flexibility as part of the new market economy.
Chapter ten
Balancing everyday life:
Women’s livelihood practices within rural tourism

The present chapter will focus on the female entrepreneurs’ day-to-day livelihood practices within rural tourism, in how they plan and organise their lives in time and space, make their daily priorities and take part in different tourism and non-tourism activities. Here, I will compare the livelihood strategies among the female entrepreneurs described in the previous chapter with their efforts in finding the ‘right’ balance between activities in the private sphere, including household work and family responsibilities, and the public sphere, involving their quest for independent income, career aspirations, leisure time, and social contacts.

Working within rural tourism often means a dissolution of the private and public, since the practices involved within rural tourism may be directed ‘inwards’ to the private sphere and ‘outwards’ to the public sphere at the same time. Within the private sphere, the tourism accommodation is, for example, offered in parts of the entrepreneur’s house. Often the tourists’ stay-overs include a cooked breakfast or another type of meal, which is prepared in the family’s own kitchen, the laundry is done together with the washing of the children’s clothes, the home is turned into a call centre and a reception, and at the same time friends and family pay visits. Tourism is a public activity, and most of the female entrepreneurs in the interview study described their daily routines as ‘going to work’, or ‘starting to work’ within tourism, planning for their activities and trying to separate work, family and leisure activities.

The ‘private’ and the ‘public’ should not be analysed as two separate spheres, and the borders between the private and the public may dissolve through livelihood practices within tourism, and the centre of gravity may be dislocated from one sphere to another. Thus, the public, paid work may become private, unpaid work, and private chores remain private unpaid duties. Within this process, the private and the public are related to different feminised ideals of work and livelihood as discussed in previous chapters, in how different
practices reflect or challenge the more ‘traditional’, ‘modern’ and ‘relic-communistic’ ideals of work and livelihood. Analysing the balance and dissolution between the private and the public also reveals different paradoxes between women’s livelihood strategies on the one hand, and their livelihood practices on the other, which will be discussed in the latter part of the chapter.

Private remains private: traditionally-oriented practices

The original idea described by a majority of the female entrepreneurs was that the rural tourism business should be a ‘common project’, involving all family members, and in some ways contribute to the idea of a ‘better life’ in the countryside. The ‘common project’ was also described in relation to the economic support received by their male counterparts when starting up the business. Still, in a majority of cases, what had been originally a joint project, became in the end mainly work for the woman in the family, with the help of the children or other family members rather than with help from their husbands. A more traditional division of work was described both within tourism-related activities as well as in the household work. Even though some of the female interviewees claimed that their husbands were active in the business, there was a clear division between ‘women’s’ and ‘men’s’ work. This was often claimed as having natural and even ‘biological’ origins.

Maybe women see the nuances in what people want, their needs. Maybe it is some kind of female intuition. All women are like housewives really, they can understand the needs of the guests more, cook, clean and so on; they understand it better than men. The accommodation within rural tourism has a lot to do with caring; women have it inside themselves somewhere, that they want to care for someone (Dace).

The main duties for the women were, for example, to receive and have contacts with the guests, cook and clean the rooms and facilities, do the laundry and go shopping. The men, on the other hand, helped out with more traditionally ‘masculine’ chores, such as construction and repairs, preparing wood for heating, and only occasionally having contacts with the guests. The husband often had a full-time job as an employee or as an entrepreneur, and had often working hours which made it difficult to combine their work with the rural tourism business at least during the summer months.

Ilze’s husband owns a car workshop and works full-time.

My husband works 24 hours a day. Sometimes people even call in the middle of the night. He has not had a vacation in ten years (Ilze).
Helena’s husband works in the wood-processing industry, a sector which was common for some of the female respondents’ male counterparts. She claims that he does not have regular working hours, some days he works more, and some days less; but since he is a manager, he spends a lot of time at work. Helena’s husband is officially registered as the owner of the company, and she is officially the ‘employee’. Still, Helena regards the business as largely ‘her business’, as a contrast to her work as a housewife. Her husband helps out on some occasions, but during the summer months, Helena hires a student in order to manage the extra workload.

The only thing my husband does is to bring the wood down here (to the guest house) and chop it. Nothing more (…) He is involved in the business, but he does not come here to sweep the floor. I manage fine alone. In my family it is women who do this type of job. But if I would be ill or something, he would probably do the chores also (Helena).

Ella describes the division of work between her and her husband as follows.

I’m the boss for the ‘inner’ part of the business; I take care of the animals and the tourists. My husband takes care of the ‘outer’ part; contacts with authorities, marketing and so on. We spend about the same amount of time on the business, if I don’t count household work like cleaning, washing and putting the children to sleep. I do all that and I have to find time for that as well. I’m the first one up in the mornings and the last one into bed at nights (Ella, female entrepreneur).

Ella says further that the division of labour is something that they both have agreed on and has become a ‘natural’ part of their everyday life.

I really like to do the ‘inner’ part of the business. He enjoys going around to different authorities and making contacts. And I think that if we both had been in the inner part of the business, there would have been conflicts. But since he is in the outer part, and I am in the inner part, we like it very much and we both have our own field (…) Everyone should use their own talent (Ella).

Household work

A majority of the female respondents claimed that they spent more time than their husbands on household work, which was also evident in the survey. The survey showed that women spent more time on household work compared to men. Moreover, women also tended to do a majority or all of the work themselves and also engage in many different types of household activities. Fifty-one percent of the female respondents claimed that they did all or a majority of the work themselves, compared to 10 percent of the men (see Figure 17). A
majority of the male respondents (11 out of 27) spent between 1-10 hours on household work per week, while a significant share of women did more than 20 hours a week of household work.

Figure 17: Division of work between the members of the household.

![Bar chart showing division of work between men and women.]

Source: The author’s survey in the Cēsis district

The survey included a question relating to what kind of household work the respondents engaged in, with the following alternatives: agriculture and husbandry (for household needs), cleaning, cooking, and child care. Multiple alternatives could be chosen, and 44 of the women (79%) chose three alternatives or more, compared to six of the male respondents (24%). Cleaning and cooking were the most common activities for both women and men. Latvian national time-use studies also show that women spend more time on household work. A study from 2003 which included time-use diaries from around 1400 respondents in rural areas, concluded that employed women on average spent 12 hours more on household work per week than men, which was equivalent to a total of 25 hours. The survey also showed that employed men in rural areas had more time for leisure activities, just over 27 hours a week compared to 20.5 hours for women (Time use of the population of Latvia 2005). In the interview study, it was also evident that a majority of the female interviewees did a majority of household chores.
Cecilia: How do you divide the household work between you and your husband?
Sandra: It is very simple; he is not here. If I ask him to do something, he might fix a few things. It is my husband's sister and his mother who also help out. Otherwise I would not have managed it on my own.

The female interviewees stressed how their work within tourism was closely interrelated with their household chores, and that it was difficult to draw a line between paid work and unpaid work. Here, it became evident that tourism as a ‘public’, paid job became incorporated into the private arena, and included also to a large extent unpaid work. Some of the female respondents also claimed that starting a rural tourism business both had increased the number of household chores, and the time they spent on household work. Helena, on the other hand, claims that the workload has decreased since only working as a housewife, which is a result of the family also having reduced their agricultural business, and the chores within tourism being prioritised over those of the ‘regular’ duties as a housewife.

I think that I have less household work now. Earlier we had 50 pigs and it took a lot of time to feed them, but now we just have 5. Now rural tourism comes in first place; you can make more money on that than feeding pigs (Helena).

Helena still regards herself as being a housewife, and still does a majority of the household chores, as well as taking care of the farm animals, and a number of wild horses, the family dogs and birds. However, compared to earlier, she gets a monthly income through her work within rural tourism.

Some of the female entrepreneurs pointed out how their household work was given another meaning and purpose within rural tourism compared to earlier.

It’s the cleaning which takes up most of the time. I wouldn’t say that I like cleaning; what kind of a woman really likes it anyway? But you can earn some money, and in some way I’m fortunate to get paid for cleaning the windows! The payment gives me some motivation, but I don’t feel that it’s a duty either (Liene).

Work within tourism was not only described as being dedicated for the tourists, but for the family as a whole. On the one hand, tourism meant more work, but on the other hand, potentially arriving guests was considered to be a good excuse to keep the garden and farm tidy, the lawn mowed and so on.

Brigita also states that work within tourism overlapped with other chores within agriculture.
It is difficult to say what is work within rural tourism and what is work within agriculture. Today I will sort potatoes. When I make marinade and jam, that is also for the tourists (Brigita).

Ilze claims that her husband works too much to help out both within the rural tourism business and to do household chores. She gets help from her 18-year-old son, but describes her daily routine especially during the summer as very stressful, when she spends more than 20 hours on household work every week. The family also owns another house next to their property which is Ilze’s responsibility to clean for guests and other family members.

I get out of bed at 6 in the morning, go to work at 11, come back at 17, and then work until midnight. If I have work I will go to work; otherwise I can spend a whole day on household chores. Then you have to go shopping and do errands. There is only a bank in Cēsis, and you cannot buy fast food around here either, which makes my work more difficult. Going to the store takes me one hour back and forth (Ilze).

‘Bound in time and space’
As has been discussed earlier, many of the female entrepreneurs emphasised the positive sides of entrepreneurship, such as independence, flexibility and freedom, and the wish to combine work and family, as some of the main strategies and motives behind the decision to start a business within rural tourism. However, the reality as an entrepreneur turned out to be far more paradoxical. The female interviewees described very long working days during the summer and how they in some cases adjusted their daily routine to their husband’s working hours, the household demands and agricultural chores, and the tourists’ needs. Consequently, the amount of free time was quite limited, as well as the possibility to take a vacation. The female interviewees described the year as divided into two separate periods of time, summer and winter, each with its own type of rhythm. The high season during the summer months becomes the most hectic period when the majority of the tourists arrive. Some female interviewees explained how they worked twelve hours per day during the summer season, and that they rarely had any free time on their own.

May is a terrible month. Then you cannot even have a cup of coffee. Sometimes we have 600 visitors per day. In the end of May I do not even want to see people anymore (Ella).

For Helena, careful, detailed planning is the key for managing the time puzzle in order to have time for both her work and her family.
When I plan for spare time it exists (…) Mondays and Tuesdays I do not have so much work, but Fridays until Sundays I have more to do. Wednesdays and Thursdays I normally clean the guest house and go shopping. I work with the horses on Saturdays (Helena).

Despite the need for careful planning, Elena also regards her work within rural tourism as more flexible and involving less ‘obligatory’ chores than a ‘regular’ job.

It is not like a state job where I have to be from eight o’clock until five; everything floats together, from early morning to late in the evening. The advantage is that you can decide yourself when you want to do things; if you have planned to do something, you can do it a bit later. It does not become obligatory, as right now, right here (Elena).

On the one hand, time was not considered to be a problem, since the female interviewees claimed that they could plan their daily routine as they wished. On the other hand, they expressed a need for more leisure time so they could spend more time on their hobbies, or have time just for themselves. The main period for rest and other activities was described as the winter season, at least for those who did not have an additional job apart from the tourism business.

Work within rural tourism did not only take a lot of time, but also made some of the women ‘bound’ to the house and their property in a more physical sense during the high season. They were required to be ‘in place’ and available for tourists around the clock during the summer months, in order to answer the phone and take care of arriving guests.

In the summer, it is very tiring to work. You cannot go anywhere; you are stuck here and have no leisure time. It is very stressful since I am alone. I am never completely rested, and then I am off to my second work, and I have not slept enough and am not rested (Ilze).

Apart from combining work within rural tourism with household chores, some of the women like Ilze had a second job, which they had to find time for. Ilze works as a cosmetologist, and has her own practice, which is an advantage since she can regulate her working hours at the salon and adjust them to her work within rural tourism. Ilze has her own car which she goes to work with, and access to a car was considered as being important in order not to get too isolated in their everyday routines, and to manage all the necessary errands.

Sandra is responsible for the majority of the shopping in the family and describes her restrictions as the following when she did not have a car.
You cannot do anything without a car here. When I did not have a car, I went with my husband to do the shopping. He did not have time to do the shopping, so I had to run back and forth with all the bags (Sandra).

Liene, on the other hand, does not have access to a car, and takes the bus every day to go to Cēsis and her two jobs as a teacher. She starts to work at an elementary school from eight o’clock in the morning until 2 pm, and then goes to work at an art school from 3 pm until 7 pm. She also studies pedagogy in Riga, and has to find time to study on weekdays, and then travels by bus to Riga on Fridays and returns on Saturdays. The courses in pedagogy are considered to be obligatory by her employer in order not to lose her job as a teacher. She spends a lot of time on the bus, but also regards it as getting some time for herself.

I have some spare time. I borrow books from the library and read a lot; for example, when I get to the bus stops a few minutes too early, I take out my book and start to read. I stop reading when I get off the bus and go into the woods to my house (…) You cannot separate work and leisure. I only get small moments at the bus stop or when I eat (Liene).

Not having a car requires more planning and time, also in order to complete the chores within rural tourism.

I wash and dry the laundry at home, then I go to Cēsis to have it mangled. It takes a lot of time, I do not have a car, and when I can borrow a car, I take building material and my laundry and drive into town (Liene).

The restrictions in time and space were also considered to create a certain ‘isolation’, with few contacts with friends and social activities in the nearby area. Some of the younger women who had moved to the countryside upon marrying also claimed that it was difficult to get new friends in the area, in their age and with common interests, and that they established their contacts mainly through their husbands. Sandra describes her life as bound to the house and the property she owns together with her husband. They do not have Internet, and have to go to Cēsis to check her e-mail, and also reservations for the rural tourism business.

I have not so many friends here, mainly acquaintances. The personal networks slowly disappear when you move, and it is expensive to make phone calls. There are no people to spend time with here. But I have some contact with my husband’s female colleagues, but not so many others. Our children go to the same day care center and so on (Sandra).
Ella attends folk dancing in a local folk dance group to get to know people, and describes it as very positive for her well-being and for her own leisure time. Ella describes the folk dancing as strong in the countryside, and the aim is to participate in the national song and dance festival.

I am one of the youngest ones, but there are at least some parents who also have children and not only old people. I also learn what is going on in the municipality. I get kind of another perspective, of what is happening right there. I live quite far away, and do not follow what is taking place locally (Ella).

Still, Ella claims that the organizations mainly involve women. In the folk dancing, the organization has problems in recruiting men. Ella also plans to join a local women's club, in order to attend lectures, trips and other activities. On the question of what men do in their spare time, Ella states;

Watch TV, drink beer and pick themselves in their belly buttons. I think women are more social, they have to talk with each other. My husband would be able to live alone out in the woods; he would not need anyone. For women social contacts with others are more important. Men can just sit all alone with a can of beer in front of the TV (Ella).

Combining work and children
Working 'at home' also involved taking a larger responsibility for the children. A majority of the female interviewees with younger children used day nurseries for their children locally during the main part of the year, and was quite satisfied with the standard and services offered. However, the busy season within rural tourism in the summer months also constituted the period when the day nurseries were closed for the summer, and the children spent time at home.

Sandra claims that she has more time for herself during the winter season when her children go to the day nursery, compared to the summer season. She has three children under the age of six, and since she is on maternity leave, she takes the main responsibility of her children during the day. Her husband usually takes the children to the day nursery, which is located around 10 kilometres from their home, and Sandra picks them up in the afternoon. She claims that it is difficult to find a baby sitter in the local rural area compared to the city, but she sometimes takes her children to a friend’s house for playtime. Yet, she would have hoped that her husband would take care of the children more often, but he comes home late after work and has hobbies which take up a lot of his time.
When my husband goes hunting he just leaves, and it is more difficult for me to do so. I do not want to be away too much since my daughter is so small. But it would have been nice to be away for a day or two. There are women who immediately leave their children to a babysitter. It is difficult to get my husband to take care of the children. If I would go to the movies, I would have to go in the middle of the night. I think it would be possible for him to take care of the children more, but he thinks it is impossible. So we quarrel over it (Sandra).

Sandra describes herself as being torn between the responsibility of her children and the wish to have her own business and leisure time, just as her husband has, and she actively raises the topic for discussion. However, for a majority of the women with younger children, there was considered to be almost a ‘natural’ division of work between men and women with not only household work, but also with the raising and taking care of the children. The husbands were described as primarily ‘looking after the children’, while the women actively took the role as ‘care takers’ and ‘nurturers’.

The man just looks at the children in order to see if they are full or hungry. But women keep wondering all the time and ask if they have eaten or not (Ella).

Most women in the interview study did not see a problem in combining their work within tourism and family, and emphasised how the children helped out with different tourism related chores and how there was always something for them to do on the farm, and to help out somehow in relation to the tourism activities. The children were described as social and enjoyed the contacts with the guests. Some women expressed difficulties in balancing two roles at the same time, and they sometimes used time for the tourists which could have been spent together with the children. The lack of time for their children made them feel ‘guilty’, and the daily routine was a constant negotiation of time, to have time for the children, for themselves and for the tourists.

Helena emphasises that the need to have time for herself also interfered with the wish to spend time with her children.

I read a lot. I close the door and tell the children not to come into the room. The children can manage on their own, and then I also get some time for myself. However, it is difficult to tell my youngest daughter who is only three that I want to sit in peace, and that she should not come in (Helena).

Still, Helena points out that the children always come first.
I’m a mother first of all, then an entrepreneur. I guess I’m quite flexible. When I’m cooking I’m the mother to my children and the wife of my husband; but when a guest calls, I’m entrepreneur. I switch between these roles (Helena).

**Public becomes private: ‘relic-communistic’ practices**

As has been discussed above, the interview study clearly showed that many day-to-day practices of the female entrepreneurs was closely connected to the private sphere of the home and family. In this process, the ‘public’ tourism work was turned into a matter of the ‘private sphere’, not only through more ‘traditional’ practices, such as household chores and responsibilities for the family, but also through the way businesses were conducted ‘officially’ and ‘unofficially’. In this case, the family as a unit was described as having another function, as the only ‘reliable’ institution, both in relation to other actors locally, but also in comparison to state authorities. It reflected a wish to do business according to rules and wishes set up by the families themselves rather than by ‘outsiders’, who could not be trusted for a variety of reasons.

Smith (2002) discusses the cultural dimensions of economic practices in post-socialist countries, and rejects the assumption that the focus on ‘survival strategies’ in most types of research often includes merely the responses towards the deteriorated economic situation within the framework of the ‘new’ capitalist structures. He claims that the economy of post-socialist states needs to be analysed as much more diverse and multiple, including not only capitalistic processes which often are described as ‘hegemonic’, but also non-capitalistic practices originating from the communist system, together with an agricultural heritage. In other words, it is not necessarily merely ‘external’ structures that the local inhabitants respond to, but the practices must be analysed in the local socio-cultural context. In this case, the strategies used in times of transformation might actually have a long historical and cultural tradition. Thus, people may use both more ‘formal’ capitalist practices while still holding onto more ‘informal’ practices. Smith quotes Byrne et al. (1998):

> to step outside the confines of economic monoism, where capitalism is everywhere… This entails... re-visioning the economic landscape as a landscape of difference rather than sameness, identifying both capitalist and non-capitalist... activities and the interactions between them (Byrne et al. 1998:2 In: Smith 2002:235).

Smith argues that practices such as subsistence agricultural practices and the exchange of labour between households could be related to a Soviet or pre-Soviet context rather than merely as a response to the difficulties experienced during the ‘new’ capitalist economy. Thus, the practices not only have economic,
but also cultural dimensions. Due to state control of labour and politics in the public sphere, the private sphere received a prominent role during the Soviet period, as kind of a place of ‘refuge’.

I would suggest that Smith’s analysis is useful also in order to understand women’s livelihood practices within rural tourism in Latvia, and what role and functions the ‘private’ sphere are given in the transforming countryside. The more ‘informal’ practices distinguished in the interview study can be analysed as having three main expressions. Firstly, different practices are oriented towards keeping the tourism business as a ‘private’ matter, in terms of unofficial payment transactions. Secondly, and related to the latter, is how the female interviewees tended to emphasise how their business development was constrained but also dependent on ‘problems’ and attitudes towards work in the community, which were considered to date back to the Soviet system. Thirdly, I will discuss how the rural tourism businesses were supported by the use of subsistence agriculture, which not merely was described as having economical but also cultural and traditional meanings.

Rural tourism as ‘informal’ business

The female interviewees expressed a wish to control and regulate their own businesses according to their own aims and priorities rather than by rules and regulations set up by authorities and other ‘external’ actors. Thus, a majority of the female interviewees claimed that they did not pay taxes for a certain share of their income from tourism.

Kristine rents out equipment, such as boats, bikes and tents to tourists, and has to pay 18 percent in taxes, compared to 5 percent for businesses involved in accommodation. Just as a majority of the female interviewees, she is responsible for the bookkeeping within the family business, and claims that half of her income from tourism would disappear through taxes if she would present all her income from tourism.

Two-thirds of our profit is not shown for the state authorities. Naturally I make some adjustments. If I am developing a larger project I present a larger share of my profits and what investments I have made, and pay more taxes (…) Otherwise the question will be where I have got the money from (Kristine).

On the one hand, Kristine claims that the decision not to present all the profits in her bookkeeping is a way for the family to ‘survive’ economically due to the rules and regulations set up by the central authorities. On the other hand, Kristine, just as other female interviewees, also refers to “how things are done”
in the countryside, and that her practices are a part of a general and ‘traditional’ way of doing business, as part of the rural ‘shadow economy’. The material and products she used for developing and investing in her business were also believed to be a part of the shadow economy, which also made it difficult to present the expenses appropriately.

The interviews revealed a pronounced distrust towards the public authorities in terms of how much taxes they paid for their businesses, and how much they actually got back through social services and other benefits.

The state authorities do not care about how people survive; for example, “are you a single mother with three children? How are you doing? How are your finances?”. Instead, you can have real problems if you do not present everything right. But taking my girls to school costs 25 Lats, and there is no one who thinks that I am not doing it for free, that costs too. If I had had four children, I would have had to pay 50 Lats per month, and who cares? No one (Liene).

Other income such as child benefits, was considered to be too small even to count as an income for the household. For Elena and her husband, the child benefit is around 9 Lats each month, which does not even cover the expenses to drive their children to school, including changing the springs on the car every year due to the poor road conditions.

We drive our children to school each day; it is around 10 kilometers to the school. We go there twice a day, so that is 40 kilometers in total. We thought it was a problem, and we asked the municipality if a bus could be arranged, since I have three children and the neighbors have children, so together it would have been 10-15 children. One of our neighbors did not have a car either, so I don't know how they managed to get their children to school. I guess they were delayed. But the municipality saw that we had a car, and said that we had to drive ourselves, and that we also could bring the neighbor's children as well (Elena).

In this case, the image and practices of the entrepreneurs were described as being different from those of the ‘capitalist’ model of entrepreneurship. Instead local traditions of how to run businesses were not only a means to survive financially, but also reflected more cultural dimensions.

I guess entrepreneurs should be able to calculate how much he loses and how much he wins, to take time and do your bookkeeping, but I am not good at that. It is OK that you can control your own time, but at the end of the year when I need to gather all the receipts, then it might be better to die (Liene).
Within the context of developing rural tourism business as part of the ‘informal’ economy, it also has the effect that women to a larger extent than men in some ways became ‘invisible’ as entrepreneurs in the ‘public’ sphere, since they officially were registered as ‘employees’ of the businesses, often for tax reasons, and the men remained the official owners of the tourism business.

In Elena’s case, she is registered neither as an employee nor as a housewife and has in some sense fallen ‘in-between’ the private and the public sphere.

I am not registered as an employee. I just cannot understand certain things; we have had a large discussion with the tax authorities, and now my husband should be registered as the owner, and I should officially be his employee, even though we do everything together. I just cannot understand it. We live here, we have everything together, and the business is not that big. I write all the documents and bookkeeping, but my husband signs them. He does not like paperwork (Elena).

One way of regulating tourism and adjusting it to the family’s needs and aims was to control the tourism ‘carrying capacity’, in how many visitors the families received and what impact they would have. Some of the female interviewees expressed a wish for not attracting “too many visitors”. This had not so much to do with the economic needs of the family, but with social aspects, of how much the family was considered to be able to handle. Therefore, some of the businesses had actively chosen not to do so much marketing activities and participate in tourism associations, but rather trust the mouth-to-mouth marketing.

The general opinion was that “tourists show up anyway”, and that it was important to be able to say “no” to tourists if there was not enough space.

The local as a constraint

As has been discussed earlier, the female interviewees stressed the importance of family labour within the tourism business, even though the work was clearly divided between ‘women’s’ and ‘men’s’ work. The work chores could also involve a number of relatives and friends. On the one hand, the businesses were considered to be too small to have paid ‘official’ employees all year-round. On the other hand, apart from more ‘economic’ motives, there was also the opinion that it was difficult to find ‘reliable’ full-time or temporary employees who could be trusted within the sphere of the family business. This was related to the view of the rural as a ‘problem’ discussed in previous chapters, where rural people in general and men more specifically were not considered to be interested in working. Some of the businesses had ‘unofficial’ employees for their
businesses, especially during the summer, but they were rarely permanent employees.

Ella has engaged six unofficial employees on a temporary basis during the summer months. She claims that the main problem is that some employees, often men, just do not return after being paid, and use the money to buy alcohol. Ella finds it difficult to trust the employees and their work assignments get fairly limited to agricultural chores rather than receiving tourists.

We fired two of our employees. The largest problem on the countryside is not the unemployment, but that people don’t want to work. If people don’t have any other interest than to drink, then I don’t need them here. It’s impossible to find reliable people who want to work (Ella).

In some ways, Ella and other female entrepreneurs made a clear separation between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’, which was reproduced in their daily activities. In this case, the family business and the private sphere became the only reliable unit for their own work and employment, which was contrasted to other members of the community who were not considered to be reliable. ‘Their mindset’ was considered to be different, representing a more ‘Soviet mentality’ of work, with a lack of initiative and goal orientation, in comparison to the family’s own roles as entrepreneurs. In this case, women portrayed themselves as ‘active’, taking on their responsibility for engaging in both the private and the public sphere, which has parallels to more Soviet ideals of work in terms of the ‘brave victim’ as discussed previously. Acting this way, they took on the role as entrepreneurs ‘against all odds’, both constrained and enabled by the local culture.

Only crazy people become entrepreneurs (…) Some entrepreneurs have come up, then they have been pushed down, then come back, and then they are pushed down again (Ella).

Elena and her husband are currently working on renovating an old traditional farmstead into a holiday home for tourists and for their children when they come to visit.

What is difficult is to find people who can work, qualified workers with a high motivation for working. My husband does everything so carefully and well. We do not like when people work too fast and unprofessional. The idea was to hire a company or qualified workers, but it is too expensive, and they are too busy (…) When my husband works on the house, he tries to put his heart and his soul into his work. When workers come they only think of money (Elena).
Additional informal livelihood practices

Apart from the above-described ‘informal’ practices, such as unregistered income and the use of family members as workers within rural tourism rather than official employees, women also used family substance agriculture as an additional source of livelihood. In a case study from Slovakia, Smith (2002) argues that the use of subsistence agriculture is not merely an economic survival strategy in the post-socialist context, but that the tradition of having plots for growing vegetables and other agricultural products for family use was common also during the Soviet period, both in the countryside and in the outskirts of the cities. Smith claims that subsistence agriculture is mainly used as a supplement to food bought in the shops, and that it is also considered to be a hobby, rather than an aim to grow all products for household needs. An argument was also that this food was ‘cleaner’ than food bought in the shops, and therefore more preferable. Smith also states that the work with agricultural products, for example, preserving vegetables, was mainly ‘women’s work’ (Smith 2002). Schwartz (2006) also points out that the Soviet agriculture in Latvia had a ‘dual structure’, and consisted both of large-scale collective farms as well as small plots for household needs, and in some cases also a limited number of animals. The individual plots were sometimes even more productive than the kolkhozes.

Official tolerance of this individual sector allowed a much larger proportion of Latvians to continue farming – and to find it relatively lucrative – than would have been possible in a market economy. The vīnsēta was bulldozed, in other words, but a vestige of owner-laborer’s intimate relationship with the land survived in the form of the household plot (Schwartz 2006:82).

Thus, the use of subsistence agriculture could be analysed as an intermixture between more ‘traditional’ Latvian agricultural ideals and an economic practice rooted in the Soviet period. In the interview study, work within subsistence agriculture was described as an important part of some of the female interviewees’ daily routine. It was especially evident among those who earlier had had a more commercial agricultural farm and now had decreased its size and purpose mainly to merely include products for the household and for visiting tourists. In the survey, 46 percent (27 persons) of the female respondents stated that they engaged in some sort of agricultural activity for household needs. On the one hand, in the interview study, the products generated from agriculture were considered to be an important supplement to the ‘cash’ generated through tourism, but on the other hand, working in the garden and within
agriculture were considered to be a hobby and a way of living in the countryside. The interviewees also stressed the value of being able to offer products to tourists which were organically grown locally. The food from the farm or the garden was considered to be ‘better’, than products imported from other regions or countries. It was also considered important to preserve ‘traditional’ rural practices, made possible through tourism, which thus added a value to the ‘informal’ types of livelihood practices.

Elena cooperates with a local hotel and receives guests for guided tours and lunches at the farm.

When a group of people comes they usually stay for two hours. They are bound to a programme, and here we show them around and provide a meal. They take a look around the farm, to see what techniques we use and we show them our house interior. They are fond of the way we cook, and how we prepare the food, even 60-year-old people cannot remember these methods. One guide said that if you destroy this oven, then we won’t come back! People want to know how we live in the countryside, our history. In the beginning I was worried about how they would perceive us, that everything had to be perfect, but then I realised that it was exactly what they needed to see, the flaws. Still, it needs to be nice and neat (Elena).

She tries first and foremost to use the products from the farm, and tries to buy her food locally, to benefit the local producers.

I usually cook soup, potato wedges, meat fillet and chops. Then a nicely decorated salad. And for the meat dishes I only use my own meat. I usually only use Latvian tomatoes. In the spring it might be more expensive to buy Latvian ones, but I still believe in it (...) The meat you can buy in the store is tasteless; it does not matter what you serve it with. The meat produced here on the farm is much better; it has much more taste (Elena).

**Private becomes public: commercialised practices**

Even though the practices within rural tourism were directed mainly towards the private sphere and the family as the ‘safe’ unit during times of transformation, it was also evident that the practices were oriented towards the public sphere, and became part of a larger context, for example, as part of the ‘regular’ market economy, and as part of the development of the rural community. As has been mentioned above in the discussion of the relation between rural tourism and household work, some of the women described an increased satisfaction with their household work which had gained another status since engaging in rural tourism. By making their ‘normal’ chores, such as cleaning and cooking also directed to tourists, their practices became a part of the public sphere, and could be described as having a set price in the money transfers.
Thus, in some sense, the everyday practices are commodified and commercialised on the market.

Despite the fact that the female entrepreneurs’ day-to-day chores within rural tourism received an economic significance, the income from tourism was in most cases regarded as merely an additional income for the household. In some cases, the interviewees emphasised that the household would manage without the extra income from tourism. This was also evident in the survey, in which a majority of the respondents (63%) stated that tourism was not the main source of income. Most of the rural tourism businesses which were included in the interview study were small-scale businesses with less than 30 beds and can be described as having a low economic turnover. Seventy-two percent of the female respondents and 62 percent of the men stated that they earned 250 LVL a month or less from their work within tourism (see Figure 18).

![Figure 18: Gross monthly income from tourism (Lats).](image)

Source: Author’s survey in the Cēsis district

The interview study showed that it was the men who remained the main supporters of the household. This was also evident in the survey, where 45 percent of the female respondents stated that their husband or partner was the main income provider in the household. Only three out of 28 male respondents claimed that their wives or partners were the main supporters (see Figure 19).
Figure 19: Who is the main income provider in your household?

![Bar chart showing income provider distribution]

Source: Author’s survey in the Cēsis district

In the interview study, women’s work within tourism provided additional income for the household, but it was usually not enough for larger investments. The investments were instead made on the basis of other sources of income, for example, through the man’s own official or unofficial business.

The rural tourism business cannot survive without an additional activity; it's often the man who has his own business and can support this. The man himself does not want to work within tourism since you cannot earn so much money. But women can take care of the business. On the Latvian countryside it's normally the woman who supports the family, but there are also exceptions when the man supports the family. All men drink vodka, and women take a larger responsibility for the family. I'm not talking about my own husband; but if men drink there will be no rural tourism business (Ilze).

However, despite the relatively ‘low’ financial contribution of women, every Lat which they could contribute with was regarded as important, since it also increased their economic independence and gave them more influence over how the money of the household should be spent, and enabled them to use money for their own personal needs and interests.

Dace is a housewife and lives in Riga, but runs an unregistered tourism business during the summer, and has a rather small income from tourism which she is planning to expand when she develops her own business.

It is very important for me to get my own income from tourism, so that I also do something. To not be dependent, but to have money for my own needs. I cannot get what I want; I cannot buy what I want; I have to ask my husband for money. It is not always easy; he keeps
Moreover, even though the female entrepreneurs normally did not contribute as much to the household income as their male counterparts and even though they were officially registered as employees, they often took responsibility for financial and administrative tasks both within the household and for the rural tourism business. This included, for example, bookkeeping, making a budget for the tourism business, setting prices and adjusting to the tourism supply, paying bills and loans and so on. The female interviewees emphasised the importance of careful financial planning due to the seasonal character of tourism. Money needed to be saved for the winter season, as well as be put away for renovation and investments for the business.

In some cases, having ‘too high’ financial aspirations, for example, in relation to wishing to make an ‘individual’ career, was not considered to be appropriate, and that the main aim should be to have time for their family and the men should keep their role as the family breadwinner. Still, this was not the case for all female interviewees. Some of them broke against the ‘norms’ of gender relations with their economic gain from rural tourism.

Kristine works full-time within rural tourism as an entrepreneur and earns more, at least during the summer months, than her husband.

On a Friday and Saturday I can make more money than my husband does for a whole month (Kristine).

Moreover, for the urban-based entrepreneurs, the income and turnover from the rural tourism business was not considered to be crucial for their economic survival and livelihood. Instead, it was viewed as being some sort of ‘bonus’ and a way of achieving an extra ‘quality of life’, to increase their standard of living, in terms of more material resources.

As for Liene, as a single mother of three children, she also breaks the norm of the family breadwinner. She claims that the additional income from rural tourism apart from her two jobs as a teacher is just enough for her family to have a minimum income each month. She has to pay for her education in pedagogy as well, which is a significant cost. She also gets income from her crafts and artistic work; but following her divorce, the financial contribution from her husband has been infrequent.
I have not received child care maintenance from my husband for six years, and he is almost forced to pay the maintenance now, but earlier he just said that he did not have any money (Liene).

Opening up the private sphere for tourists

The commercialisation of the ‘rural’ way of life and its practices also takes other expressions. On the Internet or in brochures, the private and family-owned houses and farmsteads are also made accessible in a more ‘public’ sense. Through links to different associations, such as Lauku Celotajs, it is possible to look at photos of rooms, interiors and gardens, which even might include pictures of the family members. The accommodation alternatives are marketed as a way of experiencing not only ‘genuine’ Latvian culture, but also in some cases ‘family life’, or traditional agricultural practices on a family farm.

In the interview study, inviting tourists to the family houses or farmsteads was described as having positive effects in terms of new social contacts. Most of the female interviewees claimed that they liked the social dimensions of running a tourism business, which involved communicating and talking with arriving tourists, and that it offered contacts outside the immediate family.

Liene receives both domestic and foreign tourists all year-round, and points out that it is the repeated visitors that she appreciates the most.

If I had travelled a lot, I might have met Mexicans or Africans; but since I have not been abroad, they can come to me instead. The right people come to me. People often stay for a longer period of time and a friendship grows, just as with you; you talk a bit more, exchange opinions. Sometimes they call early in the spring; the snow is still left and say that they want to come and help; “We can work hard” (Liene).

Some of the entrepreneurs were even prepared to move out of their houses temporarily if a large group of tourists were arriving, and move in with other family members. It was emphasized that “we have to be able to trust the tourists”, and that giving the tourists free access to the facilities also would result that they would take more responsibility for their actions. The female interviewees also emphasised that the constant presence of tourists within their home or in the nearby area of their home also could be challenging for their personal integrity. This was especially evident among those who offered accommodation in their own house.

One disadvantage is that they (the tourists) turn your house upside down. Some make a lot of noise. There is a dining room in the basement, and our bedroom is placed just above it.
Sometimes it is like sleeping in a discotheque. Fridays and Saturdays are the worst days, but sometimes we do not even notice that we have guests (Brigite).

In some cases, the tourists were described as merely interested in drinking and partying, rather than visiting the surrounding tourism attractions and nature, and that it created an extra workload for the entrepreneurs, for example through cleaning. In this case, it was underlined that “the tourists have to follow our rules”, and adjusting to the family’s needs and regulations.

Adjusting to quality standards
Another example of how the private was made public within rural tourism was how work within the businesses, including traditional household and agricultural chores, constantly had to be adjusted to modern quality standards, which was described to be an effect of the EU-membership. In this case, a paradox could be distinguished between the demand for the small-scale and traditional rural tourism farmstead or holiday home on the one hand, which included homemade food and products, and the need for modern equipment and sanitation regulations on the other. Some of the female entrepreneurs expressed a concern that the rules and regulations had increased in the last few years, including both those membership criteria set up by tourism associations and those set up by the EU in order to receive benefits, such as diversifying their agricultural business.

Elena and her husband have not applied for EU-funding yet, partly because of the lack of starting capital and the administrative workload needed for completing all the documents required, and partly due to the demands within rural tourism, such as increasing the standard of accommodation, because of the tourists themselves and the authorities.

The demands have slowly been raised. In the beginning the rural tourism association did not have these demands. Maybe the lifestyle and demand have changed too. They (the tourists) have other demands; maybe they don’t want to live in tents anymore, and they might want to have cooked food (…) The main problem in developing our business is the tax legislation, and other rules for example concerning sanitation. These demands are comparable with those for a luxury restaurant (…) If I were to hire a chef, he must have his own bathroom and changing room, and then we have to rebuild everything (Elena).

For some of the female entrepreneurs, membership in different regional and national tourism associations was considered to be important in order to attract foreign tourists. However, the memberships also required different forms of quality standards, and in the rural tourism association, Lauko Cebstuje, the busi-
nesses are ranked into different categories depending on their standard. The ranking is set up in relation to surveys conducted among tourists about their own expectations, as well as in relation to other quality criteria used by other European countries. The quality label system of ‘butterflies’ range from “minimum facilities” to “very good” facilities (www.celotajs.lv 2008-04-18).

Helena and her husband have done active marketing for their company in Riga, and are also members of a rural tourism association. They have recently been approved according to different quality criteria, and Helena considers the classification and quality as important for developing their tourism business.

(...) I wanted three, but we got only two “butterflies”. The system ranks from one to four (butterflies); one is almost no amenities at all, only a toilet and a shower. For Latvians it may not make any difference, but the standard is very important for foreigners. Then they know what they get (Helena).

Some of the female entrepreneurs also stressed that a future expansion and modernisation of their business would almost be necessary, partly in relation to the quality demands set up by tourism associations and tourists, and partly due to an increased competition among entrepreneurs offering rural tourism accommodation. Thus, the development of more large-scale facilities was considered to be required, especially among those entrepreneurs having tourism as their main source of income, in order to attract more tourists and to operate on an all-year-round basis, for example, through business and conference tourism. A few of the interviewees expressed a concern for making additional long-term investments in both time and money, due to the uncertain prognosis for actually making a sustainable profit.

Paradoxes of women’s entrepreneurship

Analysing and summing up the above account of women’s entrepreneurship in terms of their strategies and practices, Table 12 illustrates a number of paradoxes which can be identified. Here, parallels can be made to Lönnbring (2003), who emphasises the paradoxical nature of the rural female entrepreneur, between the external image of entrepreneurship as a consciously chosen independent ‘lifestyle’ on the one hand, and the restrictions of their independence in their everyday life due to more structural constraints (see Lönnbring 2003).
Table 12: Paradoxes of women’s entrepreneurship in the Cēsis district.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Flexible work</td>
<td>Inflexible work in time and space</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striding for freedom and independence</td>
<td>Adapting and adjusting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Family business’</td>
<td>Traditional division of paid and unpaid work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women as ‘active’ entrepreneurs</td>
<td>Women as employees and mothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest for independent livelihood</td>
<td>Men remain economic breadwinners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural tourism as ‘visible’ business</td>
<td>Rural tourism as part of the private sphere and the informal sector</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first paradox which can be identified in the interview study is between the idea of tourism as providing ‘flexible work’, and the common outcome of the day-to-day work within tourism which often includes ‘inflexible work’ in both time and space. As has been discussed in the interview study above, the intentions and strategies for working as an entrepreneur within rural tourism were partly chosen due to the flexibility and possibilities of combining family and work, or other forms of employment with entrepreneurship within tourism. Many of the female interviewees expressed a negative attitude towards getting a ‘9 to 5 job’, which would require them to remain fixed at their work place throughout the day no matter how much work was needed to be done. Here, a rejection of the old socialist ideals may be distinguished, and instead there is the goal to find and keep a job which serves one’s own motives rather than others. The interviewees also underscored the possibilities and advantages of planning their own time, doing the chores within rural tourism when they had the energy and motivation, rather than when someone told them to do so. Here, a strong emphasis was put on how work within tourism was a ‘lifestyle’ rather than a ‘normal job’, which also was considered to be more motivating. When it comes to analysing women’s livelihood practices, a discrepancy can be found between the motives behind entrepreneurship in everyday practice, and the actual results of their work on the other. The practices revealed a ‘boundness’ in both time and space, with limited spare time for leisure activities and hobbies, especially during the summer months. The requirements of being available for tourists during the summer months also included spatial restrictions, especially for those female interviewees who did not have access to a car.

Closely related to the discrepancy between ‘flexibility’ and ‘inflexibility’, the second pair of paradoxes which can be identified is ‘striding for freedom and independence’ and ‘adapting and adjusting’. The motives for becoming an entrepreneur within rural tourism were sometimes related to a wish to have one’s own
job and income, and finding alternatives to being a housewife. Yet, the interview study also showed that the day-to-day practices within rural tourism meant a degree of adjustment, to the needs of the family, including the children’s needs and the husband’s working hours. Moreover, the ‘boundness in time and space’, also included an ‘adjustment’ in time and space, to the needs and requirements made by the tourists.

The female interviewees also stated that their participation within rural tourism as entrepreneur was a common ‘family project’, which not only included themselves as individual entrepreneurs but also their husband, children and in some cases other relatives. This was described in positive terms, as a way of realising family ideals, continuing a family agricultural business and being able to work and live in the countryside. In some cases, the idea for the rural tourism business had been the husband’s or some other family member’s, rather than the women’s themselves. Still, the work within the rural tourism business had slowly been taken over by women, or included a rather traditional division of work, in which women took the main responsibility for the contacts with the guests, cleaning and other chores, while the husband’s role remained somewhat ‘passive’ in the tourism business. Moreover, the work within tourism tended to have close parallels to the everyday unpaid work in the household, which still remained ‘women’s work’ and responsibility, as well as did the care for the children. Thus, women were both ‘active entrepreneurs’ at the same time as they gained other ‘official’ status within the household. Some of the female entrepreneurs emphasised that they were first mothers, and then entrepreneurs, prioritising their time with their children and family before the service for the tourists. The role was actively taken, and had a positive meaning, involving a sense of freedom to embrace traditional ideals of femininities. However, the women also stressed the difficulties in balancing work and family, due to the commitment to the rural tourism business and the ‘boundness in time and space’. Even though the female interviewees stated that they switched rather freely between their roles as ‘entrepreneur’ and ‘mother’, they also revealed a frustration due to the fact that they sometimes were officially unpaid ‘helpers’ or ‘employees’, and not ‘real’ entrepreneurs as in the ‘true’ meaning of the word.

One central question of the study was whether work within rural tourism could contribute to a more individual income and livelihood for women. In the motives behind working within tourism, there was a large emphasis on the value to earn one’s own income in order to avoid too much dependency on their male partner. This had both a more symbolical significance, as well as a
material meaning. The independent income marked a valued sense of freedom and independence, at the same time as the female interviewees claimed that they could spend money on what they wanted without their husband’s comments and critique. It was also acknowledged as important to be able to contribute to the household, with money which could be spent on their children and everyday products. In many cases, the income from tourism only constituted a smaller part of the household budget, and was more symbolic than crucial for the family’s livelihood. Of course, there were exceptions from this, especially regarding the single mothers, or those households which relied more on tourism as their main income. In many cases, additional income was considered as crucial, and this was in a majority of cases provided by the man rather than the woman. The main exceptions here were those living and working in Riga, who contributed to the household to the same extent.

The last paradox illustrated in Table 12 is that between tourism as ‘visible business’ and tourism as part of the private sphere and informal sector. Entrepreneurship within rural tourism was considered to be a way of gaining one’s own income, and in some sense then participating in the labour market and the public sphere. In this case, tourism also involved more ‘public activities’, for example, contacts with local authorities, being a member in different tourism organisations, participating in different courses and conferences and marketing. In this sense, the private in terms of the family farm or the guest house in the garden became public. There are also examples of how the private remained private through traditionally-oriented practices and how the public became private through more ‘relic-communist-oriented’ practices. In the former case, the everyday practices within rural tourism uphold the ideals of the private as the traditionally ‘female sphere’, in contrast to the ‘public’ male sphere. Some of the female interviewees remained in the household for a majority of their work within tourism, while their male counterparts had a much larger ‘reach’ in terms of additional employment and other activities. Within rural tourism in the private sphere, traditional ideals of femininities were reproduced through the daily practices within tourism, such as cleaning, cooking and caring for the guests. Some of the female interviewees also emphasised that the work was different from ‘ordinary’ household chores since they paid money, and therefore had a more positive connotation.

For others, the household-related chores within tourism were leisure rather than work, which was especially evident among the ‘urban’ female entrepreneurs, who usually did little or no household work on a daily basis. The practices within rural tourism also illustrated how ‘old’ relic-communist
practices were reproduced through tourism. One example is the practice of distinguishing between the ‘official’ and the ‘unofficial’ income from tourism and the unwillingness to pay taxes. This also reflects a problem and discrepancy between the possibility of making women visible as entrepreneurs in a more ‘public’ context, not only as co-partners with their husbands, but as independent and individual entrepreneurs, and the tendency not to treat women in their roles as entrepreneurs as contributing to the overall local, regional and national development. Even though they still might buy their products locally and contribute to the local development, their ‘visibility’ as entrepreneurs will not be as high and as seriously recognised as other entrepreneurs in other geographical contexts. This might also be related to tourism as a service phenomenon, which does not generate as much ‘visible’ products as other sectors in the Latvian economy.
Part V
Exploring women’s livelihood within tourism in Jūrmala

From the top: (1) Abandoned hotel building from the turn of the century at the beach in Majori (2) Renovated summer house with fences and surveillance cameras, Jūras iela, Majori (3) Former Soviet sanatorium in ruins with graffiti on the beach in Majori. Photos by the author.
Chapter eleven
‘Geographies of place’: transforming Jūrmala as a health tourism resort

The aim of the present chapter is to analyse the emergence of tourism in Jūrmala and provide an overview of the local labour market on the basis of the different gendered ‘geographies’ which were introduced in the first chapters of the thesis. This will in turn serve as a background to the next two chapters which will focus on women’s livelihood and employment within Jūrmala’s tourism sector. I will start by providing a historical context to the development of tourism in Jūrmala, and describe the transforming character of the city in both a physical and socio-economic sense, with examples from the tourism sector and the labour market. I will put focus on three dimensions of the transforming ‘geographies of place’; firstly I will analyse how tourism becomes a way of preserving traditional elements of ‘Latvianness’ through a focus on local natural and cultural resources within tourism, which has parallels to geographies of neo-nationalism. Secondly, I will discuss how tourism in Jūrmala is ‘commercialised’, in the process of positioning the city as a ‘new’ and modern health resort on an international basis, which relates to geographies of Europeanisation. Thirdly, trends within tourism development and the labour market will be discussed as representing ‘continuity with the past’, reflecting geographies of relic-communism.

Jūrmala as a tourism resort – a historical retrospect

Jūrmala has around 55,000 inhabitants and is located on a peninsula between the Gulf of Riga and the Lielupe River, around 20 km from the capital Riga. Jūrmala was one of the largest health resorts in the Baltic States during the Soviet period and attracted visitors from all over the Soviet Union, but the tradition of health and recreation has a much longer history. Jūrmala in Latvian means ‘seaside’, and has been a sea resort for health and recreation since the middle of the 19th century. The name derives historically from a settlement of fishing villages, which were scattered along the coast. Jūrmala initially became known as a health resort when its sulphur-rich mineral waters in Kemerri were discovered, and became incorporated as a health resort within Tsarist Russia in 1838. As in other parts of Europe and Scandinavia, sea bathing became
fashionable in the middle of the 19th century, which brought a mix of Latvian, German and Russian visitors, mainly from the upper and middle classes, who escaped the urban life during the summer months. The summer guests arrived with coaches and later by trains or steamboats, and were at first lodged in the existing fishing villages, but later bought their own pieces of land and built wooden summer houses. The life at the health resort also became more organized and sophisticated, with the establishment of sanatoriums and hotels. The urbanization of Jūrmala was largely an effect of tourism development, and parts of Jūrmala, known as Rigas Jūrmala, gained administrative autonomy during Latvia’s first independence (1918-1940), in order to rebuild the city as a tourist resort after the damage from WW1. During the Soviet regime, Jūrmala was not established as a city until 1959, but was rather early incorporated into the Soviet network of recreation and health resorts. Thereby, all infrastructure for traveling and recreation was nationalized (Petersone In: Slava 2004; Henningsen 1994). Tourism during the Soviet occupation reflected the overall centralised and isolated society, and was merely a way of highlighting socialist ideals and creating employment opportunities. Travel to and within the Soviet Union was strictly controlled by the state and collectively arranged through labour unions for the purpose of rehabilitation for the nation’s workers (see Hall In: William & Shaw 1998; Hall In: Harrison 2001; Hall 2004; Williams & Balaz 2000).

Tourism as a concept was not used as in the western meaning of the word in the Soviet Union. The main focus was on recreation, something opposite of work, for the workers to regain strength and health both physically and mentally and thereby achieve new productivity. The state supported the worker’s holidays through organized vacations and special ‘holiday passes’ were submitted to the workers by trade unions, state-owned companies and ministries; the passes were needed to obtain a stay in sanatoriums and other larger accommodation facilities. The sanatoriums were important backbones of the organised travel within the Soviet Union, with a focus on different forms of medical treatments and specialisations, such as physiotherapy. People could also spend their holidays as “unorganized holidaymakers”, and visit resorts on an individual basis. This became a very popular way of recreation, since the holiday also could be spent together with other holiday-makers in Dachas or other accommodation establishments (Moskoff 1984)90. In Jūrmala, a majority of the traditional wooden summer houses became state-owned property as Dachas.

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90 Dachas can be defined as second homes or summer houses which were offered to visitors within the Soviet Union and Jūrmala, which had to meet the state requirements and restrictions of accommodation.
which constituted a majority of the accommodation facilities in Jūrmala after the Second World War, with around 22-24 000 beds (Henningsen 1994). Due to a constant shortage of accommodation and other health establishments, new large-scale and more standardized sanatoriums and other facilities were built in the 1960s and onwards (Pētersone In: Slava 2004; Henningsen 1994). In the end of the 1980s, Jūrmala had a capacity of around 95 000 bed places during summer and 20 000 all year-round. Statistics from the same period show that the resort had around 500 000 visitors per year (Henningsen 1994). Statistics from Jūrmala City Council from the latter part of the 1980s show that Jūrmala during an average summer day could have up to 260 000 visitors, which can be compared to the city’s own population during that time of 70 000 people (Jūrmala City Council 2007b:29).

**Encountering transformation**

When Latvia regained its independence in 1991, the tourism sector in Jūrmala faced an extensive crisis. The number of visitors fell dramatically, for several reasons. Firstly, the Latvian economy experienced a general downturn in the 1990s, due to high inflation and bank crises, which meant that the Latvian population did not have the financial means to invest in their holidays. Secondly, the border towards Russia was strengthened and a visa regime was introduced, which made it more difficult for Russian tourists to visit Jūrmala, who earlier had been the most important visitors. Thirdly, and as a consequence, the privatization and restitution processes within the tourism sector turned out to be slow and difficult. The larger sanatoriums and accommodation facilities in Jūrmala were difficult to privatize due to the need of large investments for renovation and the uncertain demand for tourism. Jūrmala suddenly suffered an overcapacity in its accommodation, and as a consequence, many large-scale sanatoriums were left empty and abandoned, as well as many of the wooden summer houses (Male representative Jūrmala City Council, May 2004, Henningsen 1994).

Today, Jūrmala is slowly recovering from the downturn of the tourism sector in the 1990s, and since the year 2000, the increase of tourists as well as both local and foreign investments have been significant. In 2007, the number of tourists in accommodation establishments in Jūrmala was estimated to be 128,184 (see Figure 20). The average length of stay in 2007 was 3.2 nights, which is higher than the national average. The main reason for this difference is the focus on health treatments and stays in sanatoriums which often include a longer period of stay. Tourists from Belarus stayed, for example, in average of
15 nights in Jūrmala in different resort accommodations, which can be compared to visitors from the United Kingdom who spent merely 2.7 nights in Jūrmala in 2007.

**Figure 20:** Number of tourists in registered accommodation establishments in Jūrmala 1996-2007.

Source: Jūrmala City Council (2004a) presentation material; Jūrmala City Council (2007b) Jūrmala in Figures 2006. Data generated from LSCB.

Sixty-nine percent of the tourists were of foreign origin, including a majority of Estonians (19%), followed by Russians (14%), Lithuanians (16%), and Finnish tourists (8%). During the last few years, the tourists from Scandinavian countries and Northern Europe have shown a rapid increase. Between 2006 and 2007, the tourists from Norway increased with 47 percent (3311 visitors), and tourists from Sweden showed a growth with 27 percent (1305 visitors). The background to this increase is considered to be related to the development of low-cost airlines from destinations in Scandinavian and European countries, as well as active tourism marketing targeting these markets (www.jurmala.lv 2008-09-29).

The transformation process has left visible physical traces in Jūrmala’s tourism and everyday environment, in several ways. What has been the most lasting impression during all my visits to Jūrmala is the contrasting features of the city; between old and new, between the ‘sleepy’ character of the town and its intensive tourist invasions during the summer months, between rich and poor, between the town as teeming with activities related to renovation and ‘landscapes of abandonment’. In the latter case, these include previous tourism
accommodation buildings which date back to the early period of tourism during the beginning of the 20th century, as well as large-scale concrete buildings from the Soviet period, which have been left to their own fate, and now more resembling ruins, with cracked facades, broken windows, and colourful graffiti paintings.

The ruins include older wooden summer houses which have not yet been renovated along streets such as Jomas or Jurāsa iela, the two main streets in Jūrmala running parallel with the beach. Some of them are for sale or rent; some of them are objects for active renovation according to luxurious modern ideals and design as well as the demands set-up due to their classification as culturally-protected objects. Moreover, large-scale restaurant and accommodation buildings dating back to the expansion of tourism during the 1960s and 1970s are found along the beaches of Majori and Dubulti, some almost covered by the dense pine forest. In other parts of Jūrmala, some of these Soviet buildings still function as more medically-designed, large-scale sanatoriums for visitors, preserving the previous traditions. In Majori, the tourism centre of Jūrmala, some have been renovated to meet the demands of more ‘modern’ spa facilities, with an emphasis on health and beauty treatments, including access to a modern gym, pool and sport facilities. The fast development of Jūrmala in terms of housing and tourism accommodation has also created a division between more exclusive areas of Jūrmala and more peripheral areas for living. In Majori, the
prices for land and property are among the highest in Jūrmala, and walking along streets such as Jurās iela gives an impression of a ‘gated community’ rather than a tourist resort. High fences, video surveillance cameras, guard dogs, and gates for accessing properties are common features among the more exclusive villas along the beach. Still, only around 7 percent of Jūrmala’s population is estimated to live in Majori; a majority live in Kauguri (41%), Pareiże (13%) and Sloka (10%), which include more large-scale apartment complexes dating back to the Soviet period (Jūrmala 2004a).

‘Traditional’ geographies of place

Within tourism marketing, Jūrmala is often described as being ‘in-between’ a rural and urban setting. On the one hand, tourism marketing focuses on nature as the basis for both spa/health tourism and other nature-based activities, such as hiking along the nature trails in Kemeru National Park in the outskirts of Jūrmala. Traditionally, Jūrmala has throughout history constituted ‘Riga’s seaside’, a playground for tourists escaping urban and industrialised settings. Today, Jūrmala is marketed as ‘Riga’s own seaside resort’, with a more relaxed atmosphere.

Spending time in Jūrmala gives not only a positive effect to the human organism, but also a spiritual well-being, resulting from the change of the usual environment, a big quantity of sunlight, stay-away from the big city hustle, good sleep, peace and quietness, sports and meditation, long walks along the beach and good food (Jūrmala City Council 2007c).

On the other hand, Jūrmala is actively being promoted as part of the urban Riga region, tied to its networks of transportation and communication, constituting a modern resort based on urban rather than rural values and characteristics. As has been discussed above, Jūrmala has in some sense been ‘urbanised’ through the development and promotion of tourism, both in its historical and contemporary forms. Apart from the blurred boundaries between the urban and rural environment, Jūrmala is promoted in relation to its ‘unique’ local settings, by emphasising the city’s local natural and cultural resources as well as its historical heritage as a health resort.

Natural elements, such as mineral water and ‘healing mud’ from the area are highlighted, as well as the cultural and medical traditions rooted in the period when Latvia belonged to the Russian empire and during the first Latvian independence from the 1920s onwards. Within tourism marketing, different

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91 See pictures for Part V.
natural elements are described as being ‘therapeutic’ for the visitors, including the Jūrmala’s ‘fresh air, pine forests, and beaches’.

It is like no other smell – it radiates health and rejuvenation. The strength of the land and the sea has been collected for centuries and millennia, and in just a few hours’ time, you will recover your energy and your joie de vivre (LTDA 2007 Latvija The land that sings p. 6).

The focus on ‘local’ resources in tourism marketing can be analysed as highlighting a traditional ‘Latvian’ heritage in terms of both nature and cultural practices. In this case, parallels can be made with ‘geographies of neo-nationalism’ as discussed in Chapter three, and how the rural is highlighted through rural tourism in Cēsis as described in previous chapters. There is a tendency to portray the health traditions in Jūrmala as ‘Latvian’ rather than relying on Russian tradition as has been the case both in the 19th century and during the Soviet period. The focus on beauty and wellness is also considered to originate from Latvian traditions and the Latvians themselves.

Indulge your body. Latvians know how to keep their bodies beautiful. Everyone seeks beauty. Beautiful places and beautiful people. Latvians take pride in both. And it shows. What is their secret? You’ll get many answers in Latvia (...) Latvians spend a lot of time and money on cosmetics, massages, manicures and pedicures. From their head to their toes and everything in between. At surprisingly reasonable prices. It’s a must for groups of women taking a weekend trip to Riga. Men are most welcome too! (LTDA 2004 Discover Latvia p. 20).

The medical and large-scale character of the resort as a heritage of the Soviet model of recreation is often muted in favour of the pre-Soviet traditions and the ancient Latvian landscape. Parallels are also made with other European health resorts, for example, in Germany.

Nature as feminised and ‘healing’
Highlighting nature as the source for well-being and beauty also has more genderised dimensions. The tourism brochures are filled with images of women receiving different kinds of health treatments: a woman on her stomach, eyes closed during a spa treatment, her back covered with mud or hot lava stones, or a woman in a bathtub with a facial mask, her hair wrapped in a towel and surrounded by lit candles. Here, the focus is on the female tourist and the well-being of the female body, in the search for both relaxation and beauty, which is described as originating from nature itself through water, mud or stone massage. The spa products and services can be analysed as having clear feminised characteristics, with focus on manicure, pedicure and make-up. The
spa procedures ‘for men’ are also usually separated from the basic supply of health treatments, meeting the needs of men rather than women. The promotion of spa and health treatments can be analysed as having a ‘double feminisation’. On the one hand, nature itself is portrayed as ‘healing’ and ‘nurturing’ for both the male and the female body with clear feminised characteristics. The tourist brochures describe in a detailed manner how the tourists may benefit from sunbathing and swimming in the sea, in order to gain as much as possible from their stay. One of the distributed brochures from 2004 states that “the best doctor is nature” (Jūrmala City Council 2004b Jūrmala City on the wave).

Climate in Jūrmala is temperate and soft, that’s why even on hot days swimming and sunbathing in Jūrmala is not exhaustive. There are several kinds of climate therapies in Jūrmala: sunbathing, swimming in the sea, sand bathing (psammotherapy), and air therapy (Jūrmala City Council 2007c Jūrmala City on the wave).

Here, parallels can be made between the contemporary tourist and the historical development of the European health resort as a place for recovery, which included the doctor’s recommendations of taking long healthy walks along the beach and breathing the fresh salty air as a way of regaining one’s health (see Lofgren 1999). Moreover, today images of the sea, beach and nature not merely serve as the setting or scene for the spa products and services offered by different hotels and other accommodation establishments, but also constitute a part of their own interior design in a more physical sense.

Hotel facilities provide a wide range of recreational opportunities including spa and beauty treatments, gym services, saunas and pools. The hotel has been decorated using only natural materials – wood and stone - to create a restful and relaxing atmosphere (Hotel Jūrmala SPA www.hoteljurmala.com 2008-10-05).

On the other hand, the process in which nature is given more feminine attributes is further reinforced by the fact that women often constitute a majority of the employees in spa establishments as will be discussed in upcoming chapters. Thus, work itself, as embodied in the female hands providing massage or other spa treatments, becomes part of the natural ‘healing’ process.

**Commercialised geographies of place**

Jūrmala is the city on the wave – on the wave of change and success, on the wave of love and hope (Mayor of Jūrmala Juris Hlevickis In: Jūrmala City Council 2005 Jūrmala City on the wave).
Tourism has been identified as one of the main priorities on the local political agenda in Jūrmala as well as for local entrepreneurs, and is regarded as a tool for economic growth and development. According to The Tourism Development Strategy for Jūrmala 2007–2018 (hereafter referred to as TDS), initiated by the Jūrmala City Council, one of the visions of tourism development is to promote Jūrmala as “an internationally-known resort”, with an emphasis on “qualitative products with high added value” (Jūrmala City Council 2007a:6). The strategic objectives refer mainly to economic growth and development of tourism, with a focus on aims of increasing the number of tourists, their spending as well as attracting tourists during other periods than the high season. The aim is to reach around 140 000 tourists in 2020, of which 90 000 foreigners (ibid p. 7).

Jūrmala city is a rather wealthy municipality compared to other towns and municipalities in Latvia, including the rural municipalities in Cēsis described in previous chapters. In 2006, the municipality revenues of the budget were 35.4 million Lats, of which more than half (56%) was generated from resident income taxes and from property taxes (9.5%) (Jūrmala City Council 2007b:22). The municipality has also been active in investing in infrastructure for tourism, for example, by establishing a public tourism information centre in Jūrmala and setting apart funds for active international tourism-marketing. A representative from the local tourism information centre describes how the funds for tourism promotion have increased over the last few years.

One of the priorities is health tourism, spa tourism. But we have also other priorities, we have many inhabitants, so the priorities are also education and social security. We don’t have so strong entrepreneurs in other fields except tourism. Tourism is the base in the economic field. When we are talking to the city council, they understand that it is a priority. Each year we are asking for more money for our budget, and every year they are giving us more. I think that is one of the improvements (Female representative 1, Jūrmala tourism information centre, April 2006).

92 The Tourism Development Strategy for Jūrmala 2007–2018 was initiated by Jūrmala City Council and developed in cooperation between Jūrmala City Council, "DEA Baltika Ltd", entrepreneurs in Jūrmala and NGOs and state institutions active within tourism development.. The strategy highlights four different programs for implementing its aims and objectives: Resort Development Program, Tourism Marketing Program, Tourism Infrastructure Program, and Program of Hospitality and Education Promotion. These will be implemented over a period of five years and include a number of tourism projects. Jūrmala City Council is responsible for the “implementation, supervision, evaluation and revision” of the strategy document (Jūrmala City Council 2007a:3f).

93 The largest spending was within the educational field (34%), followed by “Leisure time, culture, sports and religion”, which accounted for 13.6 percent of the budget spending in 2006 (Jūrmala City Council Jūrmala in Figures 2006:22).
Moreover, the budget for tourism development and marketing is also generated through a specific public resort tax, partly by a fee for tourists entering the city by car, and partly by a fee applying to all tourists staying overnight (Male representative, Jūrmala City Council, May 2004).

Analysing the Tourism Development Strategy for Jūrmala reveals a clear reorientation towards Western European markets in terms of the development of tourism products such as health and spa tourism. In this case, the tourism-marketing program of the TDS references are made to the demands of “European” tourists, as well as to the aims of creating and improving “Jūrmala’s city image in the West”, and promoting Jūrmala as a health resort with a “modern brand name in the international market”. The EU membership is also described as having positive effects for tourism development in Latvia in general and for Jūrmala in particular, as providing an increase of tourist arrivals since 2004. The Latvian Tourism Development Program 2006–2008 connects this growth also to the development of low cost airlines, as well as the demand for shorter weekend and holiday trips especially to cities within Europe. Jūrmala is considered to benefit from these trends, and identifies aims of increasing the number of foreign tourist arrivals by 15 percent per year, as well as increasing their spending with a corresponding amount (Jūrmala City Council 2007a:12ff).

The need for promoting Jūrmala as a modern and high-quality health resort was also emphasised in the interview study. This was also described as being related to a changing demand from tourists, especially from Scandinavian countries, who tend to ask for more qualitative products and services.

The trend is that people, there is quite a lot of demand for expensive products. People know and agree to pay more in order to get more service. It’s not like all of them are seeking something cheaper, cheaper and cheaper (…) For them (Norwegians), it’s much reduced prices. Of course they can choose something at a very good level here, because this very, very good level will be cheaper than they have there (in Norway). If they have a massage for 100 Euro, here they can get this massage for 30 Euro (Female representative 2, Jūrmala tourism information centre, February 2007).

Another aspect concerning the need for developing health tourism was to avoid the seasonality of tourism. Normally, the trend is that all accommodation facilities are fully booked during a few summer months, when there is almost a shortage of beds for arriving tourists, while the occupancy is much lower during the winter season. One of the problems identified in this context is that private entrepreneurs in the privatisation process tended to develop hotels rather than include spa-facilities and other activities which could attract tourists throughout
the year, and this has contributed to a reliance on summer tourism activities. However, this trend is showing signs of change, since a number of larger spa-hotels have opened in Jūrmala, which also include conference facilities that could contribute to extending the tourist season (Female representative 2, Jūrmala tourism information centre, February 2007).

The economic aims of developing Jūrmala as a tourism resort within the Tourism Development Strategy is also made with clear parallels of ‘Europeanisation’ and ‘Regionalism’ as discussed in previous chapters in Part I of the thesis. One example is the emphasis on how Jūrmala should become competitive in both a European and an international context. The EU structural funds are considered to be an important asset in the aims of realising tourism development in Jūrmala, as well as collaborating with health resorts in neighbouring Baltic or European countries, for example through establishing INTERREG projects (Jūrmala City Council 2007a). The aims of competitiveness within the local economy in Jūrmala in general and within tourism more specifically, are also formulated with references to national and regional planning documents, such as the National Development Plan 2007-2013, and The Development Program of Riga Region 2005-2011, which emphasise economic growth and development. According to the latter program, the vision for the Riga region includes becoming:

In this case, Jūrmala is identified as constituting a part of the wider urban Riga region, with its geographical location and proximity to Riga described as one of Jūrmala’s main strengths in the TDS, providing good infrastructure for tourism development. Tourism is also identified as one of the strategies for regional development according to the development program for the Riga region, in line with aims of “competitive national economy, varied and active entrepreneurship” (Jūrmala City Council 2007a:34). The aims of tourism development as specified in the program mainly relate to developing infrastructure and marketing for tourism in the region, as a way of increasing the number of foreign

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94 The Development Program of Riga Region 2005-2011 has been developed by the Riga Planning Region Development Council and the Riga Region Development Agency. The program consists of three parts: current situation, program, its implementation and monitoring. Five targets of regional development are identified as well as related directions of actions (see Riga Planning Region Development Council & Riga Region Development Agency 2004; 2005).
tourists as well as the turnover of tourism. In line with these objectives, as well as aims relating to developing “high quality human resources” (ibid p. 6), the TDS stresses the need for extending human resources and hospitality within tourism and hospitality as a way of raising the quality level of tourism in Jūrmala, by developing the tourism products and services offered to tourists. This involves strategies relating to the local labour market, including a commitment to fostering educational and trainee possibilities within both hospitality and medical fields in order to develop ‘professional specialists’ within the tourism field. This would comprise establishing a Tourism College in Jūrmala in a long-term perspective. ‘The Resort program’ included in the TDS identifies the potential for developing a ‘resort cluster’ in Jūrmala, with a focus on resort tourism as both economic activities and the development of educational and research activities. Developing Jūrmala as a ‘resort’ is made in the wider meaning of the word, as used for international promotion and branding in order to attract both tourists and investments from the private sector. In this process, cooperation between public and private institutions is encouraged, which also reflects aims set up by the NDP and EU directives. These plans aim at strengthening the ‘scientific’ dimensions of the health resort, for example, within balneology, with a focus on the curing effects of different forms of bath and water treatments, with roots in the 19th century in Latvia (ibid).

Marketing Westernised health tourism
The emphasis on ‘local’ health and spa products for promoting Jūrmala as a health resort does not merely involve highlighting nature and culture in a traditional manner, but also commercialising their contents and meanings in a wider sense, and thus making them available on an international basis. Thus, the emphasis on ‘traditions’ within spa and health products within tourism promotion is combined with keywords such as ‘modern’, ‘quality’, ‘European standards and hospitality’ as well as scientifically ‘medical’ knowledge, including doctors’ and dieticians’ consultations.

Guests of the Spa are invited to embark on a personal journey of well-being. A truly unique array of spa services and products combine the innovations of science, the renewing properties of the sea and the benefits of botanical extracts. Through extensive research, we have created a collection of exclusive sensory therapies to nurture all of your senses (Baltic Beach hotel www.balticheach.lv 2008-10-05).

Moreover, local spa traditions also meet international trends; today, a spa menu in Jūrmala can include everything from Thai, Chinese, Russian, Swedish and
Indian massages, revealing how the services and products offered have been adjusted to meet the demands of foreign international visitors. O’Dell (2007) discusses the development of Swedish spas and claims that spas increasingly have become “commercial institutions”, including commercialisation of hospitality and services. O’Dell emphasises that the spas have moved from being “arenas for social interaction” as during the 19th century, to increasingly focusing on “individually-oriented experiences”, putting the individual in focus based on the idea that wellness should develop from within each person, but also be guided by the spa environment and its employees. This has in turn parallels to general trends of how emphasis is put on consumption and experiences within tourism at large (O’Dell 108f In: Molz & Gibson 2007). In Jūrmala, the shift towards more individual experiences is also becoming evident, but in this case, the main factor of change has been the privatisation of the previous sanatoriums, which are the basis of the development and establishment of more modern spa hotels. Thus, from representing more collective forms of tourism during the Soviet regime, maintained through the state’s ideals of welfare for the socialist population and the organisation of trade unions, spa tourism today serves more individual forms, offering tailor-made services and products for their visitors. From a situation in which the state was considered to contribute to the rehabilitation and health of its citizens, the emergence of spas now reflects more neo-liberal currents in both Latvia and other parts of Europe, which include the need for people to find alternative means for relaxation and escape from the stressful everyday life (see O’Dell In: Molz & Gibson 2007).

The commercialisation of health tourism also has gendered attributes. The promotion of spa and health tourism, may be analysed as marketing a ‘feminised’ environment, reflecting genderised ideals of how women and men should look, which means how their bodies and figures are transformed and ‘made’ in the spa, through different programs of fitness and diets, or hair removals, make-up, and anti-cellulite treatments. In this process, achieving ideals of femininities also comes with a price tag, guided by mass-produced and commercialised services. Here, parallels can be made to previous discussions in Chapter six, in how True (2003) claims that the transformation process in post-socialist countries has included changing patterns of ‘Western’ life-style-oriented consumption, representing newfound ways for women to express their femininity. The development of spa and health products and services rests upon these more ‘Westernised’ and individualised ideals of femininity as a contrast to the previous socialist gender-neutral ideals of collective rehabilitation.
and recreation. Still, living up to these ideals is not possible for each and every woman due to the rather ‘high-end’ character, attracting those with the right capital and time for consumption, which also draws boundaries between groups of women, for example, between those being served at the spa facilities and those working and serving the tourists, as will be discussed in the next chapters.

**Continuous geographies of place**

Despite the reorientation towards Western European markets through the development of spa and health tourism, tourists from Russia and former USSR republics still constitute an important market for the development of tourism in Jūrmala. In the interview study, as well as in the tourism development strategy, the continuous presence of tourists from ‘Eastern’ markets is described as having both positive and negative connotations. In the Tourism Development Strategy, Jūrmala is considered as having a “recognizable image of a resort city in Eastern Europe, Russia and CIS”, which is identified as a strength in the SWOT analysis of tourism in Jūrmala (Jūrmala City Council 2007a:24). Representatives from Jūrmala’s tourist information centre also emphasised the potential for increasing the share of tourists from different post-socialist countries, by marketing Jūrmala based on its ‘old’ and well-preserved reputation as a popular tourism destination during the Soviet regime.

The other markets are former republics of the USSR; these are prospective markets. They are developing; people start to earn money and spending vacation abroad. We had a Jūrmala stand in Uzbekistan; it was very popular. People remember Jūrmala from that time, and they are very happy that there are renovated houses and so on. Everyone remembers that during Soviet times they were here, but already almost 20 years have past, and they haven’t been here, but they would like to come here (Female representative 2, Jūrmala Tourism information centre, February 2007).

Moreover, the Russian-speaking population in Western parts of Europe and the US was described as a new potential tourism segment.

(…) there are many Russians in Germany. Usually you think only of native people there. People were asking for brochures in Russian and there are special tour operators who are run by Russian-speaking people, who are organising trips for former Russian citizens who have emigrated there. For them, again, Jūrmala is something they remember (Female representative 2, Jūrmala Tourism information centre, February 2007).

American tourists with Russian origin were considered to compose an important potential market since they usually stay for a longer period of time, but in
this case, the resources for marketing were considered to be too limited to attract tourists to Jūrmala, and had to be conducted on a national level.

Still, the TDS also states that a “large amount of Russian-speaking events may threaten away tourists from western countries” (Jūrmala City Council 2007a:26). Thus, the presence of large Russian-oriented events is placed under the headline “Threats” in the SWOT analysis of the development of cultural tourism in Jūrmala. One example of the continuous inflow of tourists from Russia and other former USSR republics to “Russian-speaking events” is the organisation of the annual New Wave music festival in Jūrmala. The festival has been arranged since 2002, and continues in some ways the tradition of music festivals in Jūrmala which started during the 1980s95. The intention has been to find and promote new artists from Russia and former USSR republics, as well as other countries in Western Europe and internationally. However, the popularity of the event has been more widespread within post-socialist countries, attracting millions of TV-viewers and many visitors and pop stars from Russia and former USSR republics to Jūrmala each year (Female representative 2, Jūrmala tourism information center, February 2007; www.newwavestars.com 2008-10-02).

Interviews with representatives from the municipality and the tourism information center emphasised that the Russian influences in Jūrmala have continued both through tourism and the overall economic development of the city. During the Soviet regime, Jūrmala was a popular resort for the Soviet elite, and the image of Jūrmala was a resort for the ‘wealthier’ parts of the population from Russia and the Soviet Union, a trend which seems to continue. Many Russians have bought land and summer houses in more prestigious districts in Jūrmala following Latvia’s independence and the privatisation process. In some cases, the interviewees described this as having a ‘negative’ effect for Jūrmala’s economic and political development, by being controlled and influenced by external interests rather than by the Latvian population itself (Female representative Jūrmala City Council, April 2006; female representative 2, Jūrmala tourism information center, February 2007).

Continuity of labour market trends
The interview study revealed a ‘continuity’ of the labour market structures from the Soviet period, including a large dependence on employment within services and tourism.

95 Pop music festival Jūrmala was arranged in Jūrmala between 1986 and 1993 and broadcasted throughout the Soviet Union (see www.newwavestars.com).
There are no radical changes since that time (during the Soviet period), because Jūrmala has always been a resort city, and the economy has tended to be connected to tourism and to the development of the resort. There was a period when the sanatoriums were almost going bankrupt, but now they are starting again to develop (Female representative State Employment Agency, Jūrmala branch, August 2005).

Tourism was described as the ‘most important’ part of the local economy, as the main source of income among both employees and entrepreneurs in Jūrmala. The manufacturing sector in Jūrmala is relatively small and the city has continued its emphasis on services, of which a majority directly and indirectly are related to tourism, as a heritage from the Soviet period. The manufacturing industry is also mainly concentrated to the Sloka district in Jūrmala, while tourism and services tend to dominate the central parts of the city. In 2006, around 86 percent of all employees had their main employment within services in general, and 7 percent worked within hotels and restaurants. Compared to previous years, the latter figure of employment within hotels and restaurants has increased, from constituting around 2.9 percent in 1996 (Jūrmala City Council 2004a, based on LSCB statistics).

The dependence upon tourism and services was not merely described as having positive connotations in the interview study. The job alternatives for the local population were considered to be limited, making tourism one of the few options for work. As a result, a large share of the population is estimated to work in Riga, or to have found jobs abroad. The jobs within the service sector in Jūrmala were also described as generating lower wages than jobs in Riga or abroad, which also motivated people to search for employment elsewhere.

The reason why people are not working in Jūrmala is the salaries; it’s the main reason. The economy is not functioning. People are going to Riga or Europe for work, and Jūrmala is becoming a sleeping city, and a suburb to Riga city. Start ups and entrepreneurship are very low. It is connected to the price of land, and it’s a small local market, that people are spending money in Riga (Male labour market consultant, April 2006).

On the one hand, Jūrmala was described as having advantages in its working environment and not being as stressful as Riga, but on the other hand, Jūrmala was considered to be too expensive for both investing and living, due to the high prices of property, land taxes and difficulties in buying land. Moreover, employment within tourism in Jūrmala also tends to be very seasonal in its character and mainly concentrated to the summer months (Female representative State Employment Agency, Jūrmala branch, August 2005). Consequently, it has been estimated that around 15,000 of Jūrmala’s residents commute to Riga.
on a daily basis for work. The labour market in Jūrmala was described as providing more low-skilled job possibilities compared to Riga, and employers were considered to have difficulties in finding a more skilled workforce which could generate a better business environment. Paradoxically, the high-skilled workforce is living in Jūrmala, but working in Riga. Thus, the municipality tends to benefit from the income taxes of people living in Jūrmala and working in Riga, but from a wider perspective, the low number of business start-ups and employment possibilities also generate a slower economic growth. Within tourism, Jūrmala’s tourism development strategy emphasises the need for attracting a well-educated workforce to the tourism sector in Jūrmala. The current weaknesses are described as including the following:

(…) insufficient quality of hospitality services and shortage of hospitable employees, weak possibilities of local employers to compete with employers from Riga on attraction of corresponding and highly qualified workforce (Jūrmala City Council 2007a:24).

The solution to the dependence on low-skilled jobs and low productivity in Jūrmala was described as creating new work places, especially by attracting more ‘creative’ businesses by initiating technology and business parks, which could afford to choose Jūrmala as a location for their investments and which would attract a more high-skilled labour force (Male labour market consultant, April 2006; Female representative Jūrmala City Council, April 2006).

**Gendered and ethnic dimensions of the labour market**

There is a lack of labour market statistics illustrating the local labour market in Jūrmala based on sex and ethnicity. However, based on the results of the interview study, the labour market was described as ‘feminised’, both in terms of the jobs offered and current unemployment patterns. The strong presence of service related jobs both during the Soviet period and in the contemporary labour market was described as employing many women on the one hand. On the other hand, the downturn of the tourism sector in the 1990s together with the closure of larger factories in Jūrmala were described as resulting in unemployment for many women in Jūrmala.

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96 This figure is based on a labour market survey conducted in Jūrmala in 2005, based on a project funded by the European Social Fund. The aim of the survey was to provide an overview of Jūrmala’s labour market, and included 607 respondents (employees), in the local labour market within all sectors, of which 60 percent were women. Since the survey was only available in Latvian, an interview with a labour market consultant responsible for its implementation and results was conducted in order to gain the main results of the survey.
Chapter eleven – Geographies of place: transforming Jūrmala as a health resort

The factories, the paper and fishing factories also closed down and so many people became unemployed. During the Soviet times there were more working places and less people who were unemployed. Nowadays there are less job opportunities and more people in the unemployment office (Female representative Jūrmala City Council, April 2006).

Manufacturing industries, such as paper and fishing factories, used to employ many women in Jūrmala; “the men caught the fish and the women worked with the cleaning of the fish” (Ibid). Even though the unemployment rates for both women and men have shown signs of a decrease during the last few years, women still constitute a majority of those registered at the local unemployment office in Jūrmala (see Figure 21).

Figure 21: Number of registered unemployed persons in Jūrmala by sex 2001-2008.

Moreover, the number of registered unemployed tends to be higher in the winter months, due to the seasonal character of tourism in Jūrmala. For example, at the end of January 2006, the total registered unemployment rate in Jūrmala was 6.4 percent, compared with 5.7 percent at the end of July the same year. Women’s share of the number of unemployed tends to follow a similar
pattern, in which they constitute around 66 percent of the total number of registered unemployed in Jūrmala (www.nva.gov.lv 2008-10-03).

A female representative from the local branch office of the State Employment Agency in Jūrmala describes the background to the high unemployment rates for women as follows.

Women are more encouraged to come here to register; they have more motivation to go to different courses and so on. The other thing is probably that men do not register, since they may have illegal work. They would lose some of their honour to come here and register as unemployed. There are more women who register. Because maybe you had a baby, you have one year when you have social benefits, and after that you can come and register, and if you have somewhere you can have your baby, you can go to courses. They are using all possibilities that they can (Female representative State Employment Agency, Jūrmala branch, August 2005).

Thus, a similar pattern of unemployment as in Cēsis can be found in Jūrmala: that women tend to register as unemployed to a higher extent compared to men. Just as in rural areas, women were described as more ‘active’ in the labour market, despite difficulties in finding more well-paid jobs. A labour market consultant described it as “women are the best workers, because they work”. Men on the other hand were described as more passive, with parallels to previous discussions of a continuing negative ‘Soviet working mentality’, which results partly in the fact that men are not prepared to take more low-paid jobs offered, and partly by the portrayal of men as the real ‘losers’ of transition, as an effect of a ‘crisis of masculinity’ in the post-socialist period.

(…) it’s an individual choice; women are prepared to work for lower salaries than men. It doesn’t mean low-qualified jobs. They (women) have children and they calculate in a long-term perspective rather than shorttime perspective. Men are more opportunists and they are not ready to work for less money. From the employers’ side, such kind of reaction makes women more reliable as employees. Historically we are used to work here. But men won’t work for that kind of money. It’s not discrimination, but a level of acceptance of the salaries. Men are managers or in the construction business where they can make more money (…) Otherwise they live on social benefits, and have social problems, such as alcoholism. Men are losing their role of being the only breadwinner. The losers end their lives (Interview male labour market consultant, April 2006).

However, more traditional gender relations within the family in which men actively were reclaiming their roles as the main family breadwinner, were also considered to have effects for women’s possibilities to participate in the labour market, in terms of education and work experience.
We also have these tragic situations in some families where the men are earning a lot of money, and he doesn’t allow his wife to earn her own income or learn something new, and something happens to him, and she’s by herself and she has no education, working experience. There are many women who are staying at home with their children until they are eight or nine, and not registered here (Female representative State Employment Agency, Jūrmala branch, August 2005).

The question of women’s and men’s possibilities in Jūrmala’s local labour market also needs to be analysed in relation to ethnicity and Latvian language skills. Today, the Russian-speaking groups constitute a fairly large part of the population of Jūrmala. ‘Ethnic’ Latvians constitute barely a majority of the population with 50.4 percent in 2006, followed by ethnic Russians (35.9%) and Byelorussians (4.1%) (Jūrmala City Council 2007b). When comparing the Russian share of the contemporary population with that during the Soviet period, statistics show a decrease of Russian-speakers from 1989 and onwards. The ‘ethnic’ Latvian population merely constituted around 45 percent of Jūrmala’s residents in 1989, compared with about 87 percent in 1935 (Jūrmala City Council presentation material 2004, based on data from LCSB)\(^\text{97}\). The share of Latvian citizens and non-citizens reflect about the national average; 24.2 percent of the population in Jūrmala were classified as ‘non-citizens’ in 2006, compared to 73.1 percent ‘citizens’ and 2.7 percent ‘foreign citizens’ (Jūrmala City Council 2007b).

Unfortunately, the scarce statistics of employment or unemployment reported by sex does not include figures of ‘ethnic’ Latvians’ and Russian-speakers’ participation in the labour market divided by sex. In terms of registered unemployment, around 60 percent of the total number of registered unemployed in Jūrmala in 2005 did not have Latvian as their mother tongue (see Figure 22). The statistics make a division according to the results of the Latvian language test, ranging from the highest level of Latvian, which means that they are more or less fluent in Latvian, to the lowest level, which correlates to only a basic Latvian vocabulary. The statistics also include those who have not taken a language test and received a certification of their level of Latvian.

\(^{97}\) In 1935, Jūrmala’s population was around 13,600 people compared to 60,600 people in 1989 (Jūrmala City Council presentation material 2004. Data from LCSB).
Chapter eleven – Geographies of place: transforming Jūrmala as a health resort

Figure 22: Share of unemployed persons in Jūrmala by level of Latvian proficiency, 2005 (%).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Latvian proficiency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother tongue</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest level</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average level</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest level</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No certification of Latvian knowledge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Based on the number of unemployed registered at the State Employment Agency, Jūrmala branch in August 2005.

In the interview study, the possibilities for Russian-speakers in the local labour market were described as somewhat contradictionary. On the one hand, the Russian speaking minority was described as having fewer job opportunities compared to ethnic Latvians if they had limited Latvian language skills.

If you are working in Latvia there is an obligation to know the Latvian language, and if you are a foreign-language speaker you have to take this examination, to prove that you know the Latvian language. If you are learning the language and you have not this certificate, you can only work in more low-qualified jobs until you get the certificate (Female representative Jūrmala City Council, April 2006).

On the other hand, the labour market in Jūrmala was described as being affected by the presence of ‘Russian’ businesses, which had contacts with companies in Russia or which served a large number of Russian-speaking clientele, for example, within the tourism or trade sector. Moreover, the Russian-speaking share of the population was portrayed as taking advantage of the employment opportunities provided and as more eager to start up their own businesses, as well as searching for alternative working opportunities both in other parts of Latvia and abroad, compared with ‘ethnic’ Latvians.

Russian people are more entrepreneurial, in terms of how they do business. It’s more cultural training. If you do business in Latvia that will be with Russian people, but if you want to have skilled people, then you will hire Latvians. That is the tendency. But the potential risk to lose
your job was higher among Russians, 53 percent, and 14 percent among Latvians. Meaning that if you don’t speak Latvian, the labour market opportunities are more limited (Male labour market consultant, April 2006).

Conclusion
The aim of this chapter has been to analyse the development of tourism in Jūrmala based on ‘geographies of place’, as related to the previously discussed geographies of ‘neo-nationalism’, ‘Europeanisation’ and ‘relic-communism’. Table 13 provides an overview of the interrelations between the different geographies, with a focus on their gendered and ‘ethnic’ dimensions. Jūrmala has been described as a city with contrasting features which illustrates the intermixture and complex relationship among the three different geographies. More ‘traditional’ geographies of place with parallels to neo-nationalism have been discussed in terms of how tourism-marketing highlights Jūrmala in relation to ‘unique’ local cultural and natural resources. The emphasis on nature reflects a wish to preserve a sense of ‘Latvianness’, both in terms of highlighting the seaside landscapes, and by stressing the heritage of health tourism as ‘Latvian’ rather than Russian. Moreover, the ‘Latvian’ elements of nature and cultural traditions also include representations of the female-coded ‘Nature’ as healing and nurturing for the tourists’ needs and well-being, also as embodied in the caring hands of the (female) spa therapist.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographies of place</th>
<th>Geographies of neo-nationalism</th>
<th>Geographies of Europeanisation</th>
<th>Geographies of relic-communism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preserving ‘Latvianness’.</td>
<td>Commercialisation.</td>
<td>Continuity with the past.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Striding towards becoming a ‘modern’ health tourism resort is strongly expressed in planning documents as well as in the interview study. This has strong parallels with previously discussed ideologies of ‘Europeanisation’, of reorientation towards western European markets and following directives of regional ‘competitiveness’ in terms of attracting both investments and tourists to Jūrmala. This process also involves elements of commercialisation, in how local
natural and cultural resources, such as nature, labour and hospitality, increasingly are commodified and marketed on an international scale. Moreover, I have also shown that this development bears genderised dimensions, in how the health and spa establishments become ‘feminised’ environments, designed to attract female visitors, and reflecting more ‘Western’ ideals of femininities, beauty and consumption.

Even though the spa products and services offered are marketed as originating in a rather ‘traditional’ Latvian landscape, the emergence of health and spa tourism continues to have roots in structures established during the Soviet period. The old sanatoriums from the 1960s and 1970s are today renovated and modified to fit modern standards, and the emphasis on the ‘medical’ and ‘scientific’ elements of health tourism also have their origin in the previous ideals of collective recreation. Moreover, even though the emphasis is on ‘individuality’ and personal service, the mass-produced forms of hospitality and service also seem to continue into the present version of how health tourism is organised. The continuity with the past is also manifested and maintained through the continuous inflow of visitors from ‘Eastern’ markets, which was described in the interview study as having both positive and ‘nostalgic’ elements, at the same time as it was regarded as a ‘threat’ for attracting Western European tourists to Jūrmala. In terms of the labour market, connections with the past Soviet structures show signs of continuing, both in terms of the dominance of the service sector and in the working mentality and ideals, from which women are described as more ‘active’ despite them being over-represented in the unemployment statistics, and men as facing a ‘crisis of masculinity’ and not interested in more low-paid jobs which are the dominant feature of Jūrmala’s labour market. Thus, a ‘feminisation’ of the labour market can be distinguished, in how women adjust to the conditions of employment and unemployment while men tend to seek alternative pathways for their livelihood. Moreover, the possibilities in the local labour market are also governed by ethnicity, in terms of language skills. The interview study revealed how Russian-speakers were considered to have both advantages and disadvantages in their search for employment, partly depending on their language ability and partly depending on the increasing importance of ‘Russian-oriented’ businesses, including trade and services.
Chapter twelve
Women’s livelihood strategies within tourism in Jūrmala

This chapter contains an analysis of women’s livelihood strategies within tourism in the Latvian seaside resort, Jūrmala. Just as in the previous chapter about employment and entrepreneurship in the Čēsis district, the main focus will be put on the background, motives and intentions for employment within tourism. The case study will highlight mainly women as employees within tourism and discuss research questions such as: what is the background for women’s employment within tourism in Jūrmala? What livelihood opportunities does work within more large-scale forms of tourism provide? I will also analyse differences in women’s livelihood strategies and opportunities in terms of ethnicity and age. The chapter will start with a discussion of whether or not the tourism sector constitutes a ‘refuge’ for ‘victims’ of the transition, based on previous studies of tourism in post-socialist countries. I will then provide a general overview of the results of the survey in Jūrmala and discuss the main motives and strategies for work and livelihood within tourism in Jūrmala based on both the survey and interview study results.

Tourism – a ‘refuge’ or a ‘golden road’ for women’s employment?
Szivas and Riley (2002) claim that inter-industry labour mobility from old and declining economic sectors into the new emerging service sector has been a common outcome of structural changes in post-socialist economies, such as, Hungary. A quantitative study was conducted in order to illustrate the motives and effects of labour mobility into tourism from other sectors of the Hungarian economy, based on the hypothesis that tourism was “a refuge for the victims of the transition”, constituting the “least worst” option in the labour market. During the transition process in the 1990s, tourism was one of the lowest paid sectors within the Hungarian economy. The low wages within tourism were not

98 The study was based on macro economic data, including the distribution of 600 questionnaires in four Hungarian regions, to a wide variety of tourism workers, including those working in transportation, hotels and restaurants. Of the total amount of responses, 58 percent were women and 42 percent men.
considered to attract many people from other occupations, but Szivas and Riley claimed that people might choose tourism for other reasons than pure economical ones, and that tourism work must be compared to other sectors of the Hungarian economy. The results showed that tourism labour was recruited from a wide range of industries, of which the trade sector constituted a majority, including retailing and foreign trade companies. The second largest generating category was “Other”, which included those who had been on maternity leave or had been housewives. The mobility into tourism was assumed to include some kind of disadvantage, for example, concerning a lower social status or wage. Still, the employment situation for the respondents seemed to have changed little or not at all, and the majority was satisfied with their job within tourism, compared to their previous employment. The main motives behind working within tourism were captured in statements, such as, “I wanted to have an interesting job” and “I wanted to have a job in which I could deal with people” (Szivas & Riley 2002 In: Hall & Williams 2002).

Szivas and Riley did not apply a gender perspective in their analysis of the data, even though women were overrepresented as respondents in the survey. I would suggest that a gender perspective, as well as an analysis of ethnicity and class, is crucial in understanding the transforming post-socialist labour market and the background and motives for women’s employment within tourism in Jūrmala. The assumption that tourism would constitute a sector for the ‘victims of the transition’ is rejected by Ghodsee (2003; 2005), who claims that tourism in Bulgaria has served as a ‘golden road’ through economic hardships, especially for women, and that tourism has had a long history of offering relatively attractive employment possibilities for women with regard to both wages and working conditions. Work within tourism during the communist period offered language skills, education and other experiences which serve as important cultural capital in the post-socialist period. Tourism has also been shown to be one of the sectors which have absorbed women who lost their jobs within the public sector after the communist regime (Ghodsee 2003; 2005).

**Women’s employment within tourism in Jūrmala in transition**

Parallels can be made between Ghodsee’s study in Bulgaria and the development of tourism in Jūrmala, even though there is a lack of studies and statistics which may illustrate employment within tourism during the Soviet occupation. Interviews with employees and others within the tourism sector revealed that work in sanatoriums and other recreation facilities was female-dominated also during the Soviet period, particularly considering the health and medical ori-
The major differences between tourism development in Bulgaria and Latvia are that resorts such as Golden Sands became major international tourism destinations during the 1960s, while health resorts such as Jūrmala remained fairly isolated within the USSR with only a limited number of foreign tourists. In the interview study, I merely came in contact with only one female employee who had worked within tourism in Jūrmala during the Soviet period.

Sabine started to work as a variety show dancer in 1972 at one of the larger hotels in Jūrmala. She had been dancing since she was seven.

My mother brought me to the school's theatre and dance activities when I was seven, and I saw dance for the first time and fell in love directly, and understood that it was what I wanted to do. My mother said, “With dance you won't earn money; you have to get an education”. So I did exactly what she said; I graduated within a technical college, and became an educated radio mechanic. So after my graduation, I showed my diploma for my mother and went off to dance variety (Sabine).

She had earlier been an active folk dancer, but was offered the job at the hotel through a friend. The hotel was one of the few hotels in Latvia during the Soviet regime opened for a Western audience, as well as for visitors from other parts of the Soviet Union. Thus, the hotel had a rather exclusive status.

I think a majority came from socialist countries; but as you might know, we weren't allowed to talk with the foreign tourists; it was strictly forbidden. We weren't even allowed to come near them. We knew that they were foreigners, but we didn't know where from. But there were people from Finland and other western countries (Sabine).

Sabine worked in the variety show six evenings per week, and describes the shows as becoming very popular, including live music and famous Russian actors and singers. The hotel show was developed through an influential member of the trade union, who had travelled abroad and got inspiration for the nightlife. Other workers also brought western influences.

In those days we had a really popular bartender; he had travelled a lot, worked on different boats and ferries and learned how to fix drinks. Then we heard of Gin Fizz for the first time, chips and hamburgers. He decided to serve hamburgers here also and the bar became very popular (Sabine).

Still, the ‘Russian' and ‘Soviet' influences were dominating.

You could only sing one foreign song per performance, not more, then you had to choose Russian or Latvian music instead. But actually the Russian music was played more than the Latvian (Sabine).
Sabine was employed by the trade union, and got contacts with prominent figures within the state organization. She emphasises that in order to get a job within the hotel or recreation sector during the Soviet period, good connections with the ‘right’ people were required. For example, Sabine and her former husband got the possibility to buy an apartment in Riga through their contacts within the trade union. Sabine was also well-paid compared to other workers in Soviet Latvia, and could earn around 500 rubels per month, which was more than her husband who worked as an engineer and earned 200 rubels, and her mother who worked at a factory and earned merely 90 rubels. As a worker at a more Western-oriented hotel, Sabine had access to other products on the black market which had been bought from Western tourists.

Of course, we were in the centre among people who had access to all types of products; for example, I could buy a bathing suit for 90 rubels, and some people earned 80 rubels, so those kinds of things were not for ordinary people (…) Waitresses were allowed to come close to the foreign tourists, so they were the ones with the right contacts (Sabine).

When Sabine turned 31, she decided to abandon what she terms her ‘bohemian’ life and went into the ‘normal’ civil life. She got a job at a sanatorium in Jūrmala as a secretary, but found it difficult to adjust to the new lifestyle.

There was such a difference between us and them. We had our own language; we had practices together, then we had to sleep before we had our performances; we were together all the time. When we went to the beach we talked about dance and fashion and how we would perform, about our program and news, and when I came to the sanatorium I didn’t know what to talk about (…) I couldn’t sleep for a year when I quit my job as a dancer; I closed my eyes, but I never fell asleep; it took half a year. Then I opened my eyes and went to work. The most difficult was the working hours from eight until five. I felt terrible, I thought I was dying (Sabine).

When the sanatoriums closed at the end of the 1980s, Sabine and around 500 other employees lost their jobs in the privatization process and with the general decline of the tourism sector in Jūrmala. Sabine found other administrative jobs, but finally ended up working as a receptionist at the same hotel in which she had worked as a dancer in the 1970s.

For Sabine and others who worked within tourism during the Soviet period, the economic and human capital for employees within tourism following independence as described in Ghodsee’s study was very limited. Since Russian was the official language, and the contact with foreign guests was restricted and highly supervised by the authorities, Sabine’s knowledge in
English is still low, and she now takes a language course at the hotel. Moreover, the more luxurious lifestyle that she and her colleagues had during their time as variety dancers ended before the time of independence, and she faced a new labour market with new conditions and requirements.

**Exploring livelihood strategies within tourism**

The question of whether or not tourism should be regarded as a ‘refuge’ for the ‘victims’ of transition is complex, but neither Szivas and Riley’s nor Ghodsee’s study supports this assumption. However, I would suggest that the question remains of *for whom* and *why* tourism is considered as attractive, and has to be analysed in relation to gender, class and ethnicity. The following sections will provide an overview of the basic results of the survey and analyse the different motives and strategies for employment within tourism, based on the results of both the survey and the interview study.

The Jūrmala survey comprised a total number of 167 respondents, of which 132 were women (79%) and 35 were men (21%). The respondents proved to have a fairly ‘local’ profile; a majority of the respondents lived in Jūrmala (46%) and Riga (35%). Around 30 percent of both the Jūrmala and Riga residents stated that they were born and/or raised at their current place of residence. The age distribution of the respondents shows an interesting gendered pattern. The box-and-whiskers plot diagram below clearly illustrates how the age range for women is much wider than that for men (see Figure 23).

**Figure 23:** Age distribution of survey respondents by sex.
A majority of men are in their early twenties, while a majority of women are between twenty and forty years old. The minimum age is about the same for women as for men, 17 years and 16 years, respectively, but the age span for women shows a more even pattern than that for men, stretching from around 40 to 62, while the figure for men shows more ‘extreme’ values, with only a few respondents older than 25. The age range was also reflected in the family situation. Around 50 percent of both the female and the male respondents were either married or living in cohabitation, but the share of women who have children was significantly higher than that of men, 57 percent compared to 24 percent.

A relatively significant share of the respondents in the survey stated that they had some sort of higher education (university or college); 53 percent of the female respondents, compared to 25 percent of the male respondents, which also reflect the general pattern that Latvian women tend to have a higher education than men. Only 9 percent of the female respondents (11 persons) and 15 percent of the male respondents (5 persons) specified that they had a higher education within the tourism field. A large majority of both the female and the male respondents had worked at their current tourism job less than one year, which may be explained by the fact that many of the hotels in Majori included in the study were fairly newly opened. Work within tourism was also mainly offered on a full-time and all-year-round basis, for 80 percent of the female respondents, despite the common seasonality of tourism. Consequently, around the same share stated that their work tourism was the main source of income, and only 16 percent of the female respondents specified that they had an additional income.

As in the case study from the Čēsis district, the survey in Jūrmala included 15 different statements relating to the main motives for engaging in tourism work. Just as in the Čēsis district, the survey shows a mix of social or lifestyle-oriented motives and economical factors which are interrelated in the background to work within tourism. These were also evident in the interview study, as different livelihood strategies. In the analysis of the more quantitative material, a focus is put on the female respondents’ replies, in order to draw parallels to the focus on women’s rather than men’s livelihood strategies. Based on the quantitative and more qualitative statements of the survey and the more in-depth interview study, three main categories of livelihood strategies can be distinguished. Firstly, there are motives relating to more ‘economic motives’ for employment within tourism, which constitute a response and solution to a particular problem or situation. Here, more ‘survival strategies’ can be
distinguished. Secondly, the background to work within tourism was also relevant to the nature and content of tourism related work, which will be exemplified through more ‘lifestyle-oriented strategies’. Thirdly, the tourism sector was perceived as a ‘new’ positive and promising sector, which will be discussed also in relation to more ‘career-oriented strategies’. Table 14 provides an overview of the female interviewees, who were part of the interview study, in relation to their family structure, residence and employment within tourism.

Table 14: Female interviewees within tourism in Majori, Jūrmala.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Residence</th>
<th>Employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aleksandra, 22</td>
<td>Boyfriend, lives with her mother</td>
<td>Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma, 26</td>
<td>Divorced, but now cohabitee</td>
<td>Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Erika, 23</td>
<td>Single, lives with her parents</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irina, 29</td>
<td>Cohabitee</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klara, 52</td>
<td>Husband, two children (22,5)</td>
<td>Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matilde, 36</td>
<td>Husband, two children (16,17)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nina, 59</td>
<td>Husband, two children (35,20)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regina, 23</td>
<td>Cohabitee</td>
<td>Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sabine, 53</td>
<td>Divorced, one child (33), lives with her grandson (15)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sofija, 33</td>
<td>Cohabitee</td>
<td>Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vaira, 36</td>
<td>Divorced, two children (13,12)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valentina, 49</td>
<td>Cohabitee, two children (23,27)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vera, 35</td>
<td>Divorced, one child (14)</td>
<td>Riga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Viktoria, 38</td>
<td>Husband, two children (19,15)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaiga, 37</td>
<td>Husband, two children (17,10,5)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zoya, 25</td>
<td>Husband, one child (7)</td>
<td>Jūrmala</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Employment within tourism as a response or solution to a problem

The first set of motives behind employment within tourism identified in the survey and interview study can be described as more economically-oriented, as a response or solution to a problem, for example, unemployment. Thus, working within the tourism sector can be regarded as a possibility to get a job in the labour market for those who may have experienced difficulties in finding a job for different reasons, for example, due to a lack of education and language skills, age, lack of working experience. Tourism can in this context be regarded as a temporary or seasonal employment, as a ‘stepping-stone’, in order to get money and experience in the labour market. Even though a large share of the
female respondents (49%) disagreed in the statement, “I was unemployed and needed a job”, 40 percent ‘agreed more or less’ or ‘strongly agreed’ that they had been in need of a job. Moreover, 64 percent ‘agreed more or less’ or ‘strongly agreed’ in the statement, “I had few other employment options”. Only a smaller share of the female respondents (31%) agreed strongly or more or less in the statement that they “needed additional work”. The more open-ended questions of the survey relating to the background and motives for employment within tourism provided the following answers relating to the need to get an income and employment.

My reason was the need to earn money for myself. And with my education I would not be accepted to any higher positions (Woman, 21, cleaner).
I was unemployed and received this offer (Woman, 53, cleaner).
I needed a job and I applied for this vacancy (Woman, 21, receptionist).
There are little other employment opportunities in Jūrmala (Woman, 45, cleaner).
I needed seasonal employment and by chance came to a hotel. I work in tourism not because it interests me, but to earn additional money (Woman, 21, cleaner).
To ensure the family’s material state (Woman, 38, SPA employee).
It does not seem to be a difficult job for me, and it does not necessarily require previous working experience, which is important in other places. Therefore for young people it is a good possibility to start working (Woman, 25, administrator).

**Survival strategies**

Based on the above survey replies, work within tourism was considered to offer rather low-skilled jobs, which was perceived as being a temporary solution for employment and livelihood. These more ‘economically-oriented motives’ were also evident in the interview study, which here will be discussed as ‘survival strategies’. A majority of the female interviewees described the labour market in Jūrmala as offering rather good opportunities to find a job for both women and men, especially on a seasonal basis due to the presence of the tourism sector.

I've always been able to find a job fast. Those who seek will find… Some say that it's difficult to find a job, but I don't believe that. I don't know if it's easier to find a job in Jūrmala than in Riga. Here it's easier to find a job during the summer, since all hotels need extra staff then, and many shops open their business (Sofija).

However, one of the main problems was considered to be finding a well-paid and more qualified job. The jobs offered were also described as low-skilled and low-paid, which was considered to be a problem in the wish to create a sufficient livelihood base.
You can always find work if you want to. You can find jobs where you’ll get very little paid, but eventually you’ll be able to increase your income. It depends on your own needs and priorities, what demands you have (Zaiga).

Thus, the image of Jūrmala as a ‘tourism town’ was described as having both positive and negative dimensions in terms of the structure of the labour market, and the need for ‘cheap labour’. For some of the female interviewees, work within tourism was considered to be one of the few options of employment, due to their age, education or ethnicity, which will be further discussed below.

For Vaira, tourism appeared as one of the few options for additional work, in an acute situation in her life. She is originally from the western part of Latvia, but has lived in Jūrmala for seven years, and has both her upper secondary education and work experience within the health sector. Currently, she has three jobs, one at a SPA department at a hotel, one at a hospital in Riga, and one job on an unofficial basis within gardening. The need for an extra income apart from her work at the hospital came when she separated from her husband, a relationship which had been characterized by both physical and psychological violence for many years. Vaira describes the decision to leave her husband as necessary for both her and her children, but the consequences were much more difficult than she had imagined. She stresses that protection for women who have been subjects of abuse is non-existent in Latvia, and there is a lack of shelters open for women’s needs. She was forced to live together with her husband for six months until she could find an apartment.

The rents are very high, and it’s very difficult to support yourself and your children. It’s a mystery that I found somewhere to live. It’s a long story. I asked for help everywhere. I distributed leaflets; I sought help at the church; I went to the social authorities, the social ministry, friends… But all these efforts gave nothing (...) In all places I got the answer that ‘we cannot help you’. There were rules and routines, but I wasn't included in them. I wasn't registered in Jūrmala at that time, and I wasn’t an alcoholic or something like that, and my children didn’t live in the streets. I didn’t fit into any of their categories. I only had one choice and that was to leave him, but I had no place to go (Vaira).

Vaira’s husband was never charged or prosecuted for the abuse, and she felt that it was difficult to be taken seriously in her accusations. When Vaira managed to secure a place to live, she also needed a full-time job in order to support her children financially. She applied for the job at the hotel since it represented a rather safe and well-paid job compared to other service and health-related work she had experience with earlier.
The nature and content of tourism work
The second category of motives is related to the character and content of tourism-related work and its working environments, for example, communication with the guests, experience of different cultures and languages, social contacts, variation and diversity of work, and working within a larger team of people. The importance of the social dimension within tourism work was evident in the survey, in which 68 percent of the female respondents ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement “I wanted a job in which I could meet people,” and 77 percent also ‘strongly’ supported the statement “I wanted an interesting job”. Moreover, a large share of the female respondents (73%) strongly agreed in the statement that “work within tourism provides me with new challenges and experiences”, and 78 percent also strongly agreed that they “wanted to work in a pleasant physical environment.” Sixty-one percent of the female respondents also strongly or more or less agreed with the statement “My work within tourism is a reflection of my personal lifestyle and identity.” The statements were also complemented with the following answers.

Communication with different people, using various languages (Woman, 34, SPA employee).
I like very much to communicate with people and to do my best. Willingness to communicate in English, with a great pleasure I tell our visitors what they can see and what places they can visit (Woman, 38, receptionist).

I like to work in a team; work with people (Woman, 49, cleaner).
Tourism is a broadening of horizons, new knowledge and acquaintances with other people and cultures and simply a pleasant relaxation (Woman, 55, cleaner).

Very interesting and responsible job. A lot of communication, a lot of activity. There is a feeling that you are in the rhythm of life and nothing escapes you (Woman, 45, cleaner).

Lifestyle-oriented strategies
From the interview study, it became evident that employment within tourism could be a way of combining paid work with a personal interest or sports hobby, health, beauty etc. Work within tourism could be a precondition for practicing a hobby, or could be a direct expression of the hobby. Work was more described in terms of a lifestyle and could in this respect offer flexible working hours and freedom to decide one’s own work schedule, which was more evident for women in management positions and those who had sports-related activities. Work within tourism could be described as having a more entrepreneurial-oriented, independent character, which involved multiple jobs and activities. Thus, it was not economic profit which was considered as central, but the freedom to practice a hobby.
Chapter twelve – Women’s livelihood strategies within tourism in Jūrmala

Vera is 35 years old and has lived in Riga all her life, and works as a fitness instructor at a hotel in Jūrmala, starting a year ago. She was encouraged by a colleague who had worked at the hotel to apply for the job. She is combining her work at the hotel with a job at a gym in Riga, and is also currently taking health-related courses in higher education part-time. She went to a technical college and worked for some time in the textile industry, but soon realized that she wanted to commit herself to her interest in sports and fitness when those started to get more popular in Latvia.

I was active within sports during my studies and discovered that it was what I liked the best. If it’s a hobby you can make money from, then it’s the best option. It’s very important for me that my work makes me happy and provides money (…) I like my job very much, and it’s more of a lifestyle to have a job like this (Vera).

For Vera, work within the fitness and tourism sector also became a quest for independence, reflecting a strategy to have her own income and develop her own interests and hobbies. Vera, just as some of the other female interviewees had earlier been at home as a housewife. The women described it as both their own wish to be home with their children for a longer period of time, and as their husband’s wish, since the men wanted to take the role as the main breadwinner.

Vera was a housewife for six years, but she and her husband divorced a few years back. During their marriage, she started to work within the fitness sector, but her husband did not approve of her decision to realise her hobby through paid work.

Vera: My work was my husband. My husband worked and he thought that it was enough for us financially, so why should I work? Then I realized that I couldn’t live like that anymore, so that was when I got a job. We did not agree on that; my husband still wanted me to be at home.

Cecilia: Why didn’t he want you to work?
Vera: I don’t know why; maybe it was more convenient for him; you’ll have to ask him. I think that most women strive to do something by themselves, and prove that they can do something. The positive thing was that I never had to think about money, but I realized that it got boring, and just not interesting anymore (Vera).

Vera chose to work, but also underscores that the divorce made it economically difficult. She needed more than one job in order to support herself, and the job within tourism turned out to be a good option, since the flexible working hours fit well with her other job.
When I became single I thought that now I need to start making money. We (women) will have to learn new professions. Men force us to do these kinds of heroic things. I know many women who ended up in the same situation. We are about the same age and got married at the same time, and now we divorce at the same time (Vera).

Klara was also a housewife before starting to work within tourism. She studied three years at a technical college, and is an educated pastry chef. Still, she never started to work within her profession since she got married and had her daughter who has been disabled since birth. Klara was born and raised in the eastern part of Latvia in a small town in the countryside, but when her daughter got older and wanted to apply to the university in Riga, she decided to follow her daughter and live and work in Riga.

It was my own idea and initiative, I said to my husband that “I’m going to Riga with my daughter or we’re getting a divorce.” He had everything there, hunting, the apartment, friends, work, everything. (...) I went to Riga by myself to reconnoiter the city. I got a job, arranged a job for my husband, and found an apartment (...). Everyone found it strange that we left; we had everything there; why would we leave it? We wouldn’t have managed to send off our daughter by herself, now she’s got her own room where she can live and that’s much better. His (her husband’s) parents are very conservative and didn’t think we would leave, everything would be fine, and they more like the saying “where you are born you should live” (Klara).

Klara decided to apply for a job as a cleaner within tourism, partly due to her lack of education and working experience, and partly due to her previous experience as a housewife.

When I sat at home I thought about what I wanted to work with, what I would like. I had my profession as a pastry chef, but I didn’t want to work within my profession. I’ve been at home for so many years; my mother was also ill and had to lie in bed most of the time during a long period, so I took care of her also. This job is not difficult for me. To take care of the guests and the rooms is exactly what I have been doing for so many years. I have many friends who just cannot understand that I could look for a job here. They think this job is below my dignity. They’ve always believed that you shouldn’t work at all or have an easy job. It may sound strange, but I wouldn’t like to sit at a desk; I like taking care of the rooms (Klara).

Tourism as a ‘new’ positive and promising sector
The statements in the survey relating to the motives behind engaging in tourism-related work revealed answers which highlighted tourism as a ‘strong’ sector within both the national economy and in Jūrmala, providing future possibilities both for development in general, and for career and personal development. Jūrmala was portrayed as a promising tourism town, with a lot of potential, and the tourism sector was also in some cases considered to be fairly
well-paid in comparison to other jobs in the labour market. Seventy-two percent of the female respondents ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed more or less’ with the statement “I saw a future in the development of tourism in Latvia,” and nearly a similar share of the female respondents (73%) stated that they ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed more or less’ with the statement “I see good opportunities to make a future career in tourism.” Moreover, 70 percent of the female respondents ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed more or less’ that “working within tourism has a positive image.” There was less consensus concerning whether or not tourism was a well-paid sector; 49 percent of the female respondents agreed to the statement that tourism was well-paid compared to other sectors in Latvia.

Tourism is one of the most developing areas (Woman, 23, receptionist). I live in Jūrmala – a city with a developing tourism sphere (…) I see future possibilities for employment in this area (Woman, 49, administrator).

(…) tourism and hotel businesses are developing fast, good perspectives (Woman, 29, receptionist).

(…) career possibilities determined this choice to stay in the tourism area after graduation (Woman, 36, manager).

(…) to work in a prestigious place with “a name”, possibility to earn – in the perspective to earn well (Woman, 22, SPA employee).

At the moment tourism is a strongly developing industry, where many new and interesting opportunities can be found for yourself and others (Woman, 23, receptionist).

Career-oriented strategies

In the interview study, ideals of career also became evident, especially among those women who had higher positions in tourism, and who possessed the right ‘human capital’ in terms of higher education, working experience and language skills. Tourism was considered as an attractive sector to make a career in, in terms of social contacts, travel opportunities and international character. This also included a positive view of Jūrmala as a growing tourism centre, which provided good chances to make a career within larger hotels and other tourism companies. Having a career was described partly in more lifestyle and identity-oriented terms such as self-fulfilment and wishing to find and conquer new personal challenges, and having a career was considered partly as ‘business’, attractive due to better salaries and advancement in terms of position, and was connected to the wish to be economically independent.

Matilde started to study at the university after finishing upper secondary school, and attended the sports academy. She later found her way into tourism through a more administrative path, after working in the tourism sector in the US for a few months; she also worked as an administrator at a hotel parallel
with her studies at the university. She has worked at the current hotel for four years, and just a few months after her employment, she was offered the position as a director of the hotel. Matilde has two teenage children and has prioritized her education and career when the children got older, and is now studying at a university.

Fourteen years ago in Latvia it was more important to get married when you were young, 21 or something. It's not common anymore. That was what I did too. After that everything was changed, and I had to have education and I keep going. Now everyone thinks about money and their career (Matilde).

Matilde describes her personal aims of a career as the following:

I think and plan how I can climb up the career ladder. (…) I wouldn’t choose a position only in order to make more money. Career is important for me to challenge myself; I don’t think the road in life should go horizontally. I think it is important to grow and develop, and to always find new challenges. For me it’s not about appearing successful for others, but that I enjoy my work (Matilde, director).

Irina is born and raised in Riga. She has a university Master's degree, started her studies directly following upper secondary school, and studied and worked parallel for seven years. Irina worked at the state level for a couple of years but decided to quit her job, even though she was offered positions abroad. She wanted to stay in Latvia, and was offered a job within tourism in Jūrmala. Irina describes Latvian women as in need of higher education in order to get a job in the labour market, and described women as ‘strong’ and ‘independent’.

I think it is more important for a woman to have higher education. In the labour market I think it is important for both sexes; but if you look at the statistics, women have higher education than men. Men work more within construction and don’t need higher education. Women are very independent in our country, sometimes women have higher salaries than men; it’s my opinion. Women want to be independent, and they want to have children. They try to do it all, just to get a good job, but to do that you need a good education (Irina).

**Income from tourism: safe or risky?**

Latvian national statistics from 2007 show that around 31,200 people were employed within hotels and restaurants, of which women represented 82 percent. However, despite their overrepresentation within tourism, women earned only 79 percent of men’s average monthly wage (CSB database, www.csb.lv 2008-05-25). The Survey on occupations in Latvia in October 2005 also shows that tourism includes low-paid jobs compared to other sectors in Latvia. The
average female gross monthly wage in the category ‘Hotel and restaurants’ was 137 Ls, which can be compared to the total female average gross monthly wage of 215 Ls (LCSB 2005 Results of the survey on occupations in Latvia in October 2005). Local statistics for employment within tourism in Jūrmala, showing each sex are scarce. The survey and interview study showed that work within tourism was relatively low-paid (see Table 15).

| Table 15: Gross monthly income from tourism (Latvian Lats\(^{99}\)). |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
|                                    | Less than 100 LVL | 100-250 LVL | More than 250 LVL | Total |
| Women                              | 34 (27%)          | 79 (63%)    | 13 (10%)          | 126   |
| Men                                | 8 (23%)           | 18 (51%)    | 9 (26%)           | 35    |
| Total                              | 42 (26%)          | 97 (60%)    | 22 (14%)          | 161   |

Source: Author’s survey, Majori 2005.

The income figures should be analysed with some caution, since official minimum wages and ‘envelope practices’ appeared to be widespread in the private hotel sector. Usually the employees were paid the minimum wage of around 90 LVL each month, and the rest was paid cash in hand. As a result, the employees were not obliged to pay income taxes and the companies avoided to pay social insurances. In the interview study, this was also considered to include some risk taking, and many of the female interviewees described their income from tourism as unreliable, due to the low salaries and unofficial wages. This was especially evident for older women, since it affected their future social benefits and pensions.

Zoya is in her mid-twenties and earns 150 Lats per month at her current job as a cleaner at a hotel. She claims that she earned more when she worked at a beauty salon, but prefers her job within tourism and does not object to the ‘envelope practices’. This was a common attitude among the younger female interviewees. She describes the procedure with unofficial and official payment as follows:

So that the owner will not have to pay social benefits, we get a part of our payment in envelopes (…) We are many employees, so there is a lot of talk about it. There are many who quit their jobs due to the unofficial pay. Especially those who are older and are soon retiring, for them it would not be much to live from. I haven’t thought so much about it, but I think that they eventually will pay official wages (Zoya).

\(^{99}\) 1 LVL = around 1.40 EUR
Viktoriya works as a receptionist at a hotel, and argues that the practice of unofficial wages is a reflection of the distrust towards the national political system and aims of welfare.

I’m not against unofficial wages. The state doesn’t take care of us. Why should we pay taxes? I think they need to do something; they have to take care of people, and raise the standard of living. Medicine, health care, everything needs to be improved (Viktoriya).

Aleksandra works as an administrator at a SPA department at one of the hotels, and is partly responsible for paying the employees their monthly wages. She claims that the wages start at around 90 Lats a month and that part of the wages as a ‘company rule’ are paid on an unofficial basis. There is a high rotation of staff at the hotel due to the unofficial wages, which makes it difficult to plan and create distinctive routines for her own job. Aleksandra states that it is difficult to find a good and well-paid job within tourism, and she is now looking for a new job.

I think when I find a better job, I will quit this job. I’ve already started to look for a job in Riga. For me, it doesn’t matter if it’s in Jūrmala or Riga. I think it will be my first question to them if they pay official wages. Many employers try to avoid that question (Aleksandra).

Many of the female interviewees did not merely describe their possibilities and strategies in the local labour market, but also compared the wages, working conditions and the possibilities to find a job in Jūrmala or Riga with the chances of finding employment abroad. The well-paid jobs within tourism and other sectors were described as being found in Riga or abroad rather in Jūrmala. A majority of the female interviewees knew at least one friend or relative who lived in a western European Union country, such as England or Ireland, in order to work and earn higher salaries. A couple of the interviewees had already worked abroad for a shorter period of time, while others planned to work abroad within the next few years. The stories and perceptions of opportunities of work and life abroad varied, from a more ‘utopian’ image of the better life to a more nuanced and even critical approach.

Sofija works as a hotel manager and emphasises the large wage differences between other European Union countries and Latvia.

Friends of mine have gone abroad to Ireland to work (…) They left family and children in order to make more money. They earn around 10 Lats per hour, and they work 10 hours a day, so you can imagine how much they earn… They earn 100 Lats per day and here they earn 150 Lats per month (…) I’m OK now, but if the situation would change, then I’ll leave too. Then we’ll see! (Sofija).
Chapter twelve – Women’s livelihood strategies within tourism in Jūrmala

The impression was that both the unskilled and the skilled work force left Latvia for work abroad, but the expectations of a better life were not necessarily considered to be realized. Some of the female interviewees were reluctant to go abroad, partly due to the working conditions which included long working days within unqualified jobs, and partly due to the fact that working abroad might involve being away from the family for long periods of time.

Viktoriya would like to work abroad, but considers it difficult to find a job which would be more qualified and equivalent to her current job within tourism.

I know a lot of people who have gone abroad, many of my friends. Sometimes I think that they aren’t very happy; they move away from their families. The children grow up without their parents, and it’s maybe only the grandmothers and grandfathers who take care of them. The parents they only get to see twice a year, and that’s not normal. Everyone wants to live beautifully, but at the same time they lose something. I don’t think it’s merely money that can make you happy (Viktoriya).

The question of ethnicity
Ethnicity in terms of native language and origin is also an important factor in analyzing women’s employment within tourism in Jūrmala, since the city has a fairly heterogeneous population in terms of the number of ‘ethnic’ Latvians and Russians as discussed in the previous chapter. The survey showed a similar pattern; a majority of the female respondents stated that their native language was Russian; 52 percent compared to 45 percent of the male respondents. The share of respondents who had a Latvian citizenship was fairly high, including 79 percent of the female respondents and 86 percent of the male respondents. The results of the survey illustrated how the work assignments and wages within tourism differed between female Russian-speaking respondents and those who had Latvian as a native language (see Figure 24). A majority of the Russian-speaking respondents (29 women) were found within “Housekeeping”, followed by “Spa” (17 women), and “Administration” (9 women). The work assignments show a different pattern for the female native Latvian-speaking respondents, who were mainly working in “front office” and “housekeeping”, constituting 13 respondents each. The overrepresentation of Latvian-speaking respondents at the front office may be related to the lack of language skills. It should be noted that the survey shows a higher number of Latvian speaking managers, 8 respondents compared to 2 female Russian-speaking respondents.
Chapter twelve – Women’s livelihood strategies within tourism in Jūrmala

Figure 24: Distribution of Russian and Latvian-speaking female respondents based on “Main work assignment” (numbers).

“spa” includes health/spa and beauty treatments, sports & fitness activities.
“Administration” includes IT-work, marketing and bookkeeping.
“Other” includes tour guides and those who specified more than one alternative.
Source: Author’s survey Majori 2005.

The survey also illustrated differences in gross monthly income between the female Russian-speaking and native Latvian respondents (see Figure 25).

Figure 25: Distribution of Russian and Latvian-speaking female respondents based on gross monthly income from tourism (numbers).

Source: Author’s survey, Majori 2005.
For example, 33 percent of the Russian-speaking respondents earned less than 100 LVL per month compared to 20 percent of the Latvian-speaking respondents. This may also be related to the overrepresentation of Russian-speaking respondents within less qualified work assignments such as “housekeeping”.

Language skills in Latvian and Russian were valued differently in different hotels depending on ownership and management, but also the guest target groups. Russian constitutes an important language for business and travel-related work in Latvia, especially in Jūrmala where the Russian influences are strong in the number of Russian-speaking visitors and investments. However, in some of the more ‘Latvian’ hotels, knowledge in Latvian was valued higher, and ethnic Latvians were therefore mainly hired for higher positions. As a result, many Russian-speaking women were found in the lower positions, such as housekeeping. Matilde, one of the ‘ethnic’ Latvian hotel directors described the requirements for employment in terms of language as follows:

Those who have contact with guests should know Latvian, and have it as their first language. Russians usually don’t have good skills in Latvian. I try to hire Latvians only, but they should have good Russian and English skills, too (Matilde, hotel manager).

Some of the Russian-speaking female interviewees claimed that they felt constrained in their search for a job due to a lack of Latvian language skills. These difficulties were especially emphasised among the older Russian-speaking interviewees. Learning Latvian fluently was considered to be difficult for different reasons. Some of the Russian-speaking employees experienced difficulties to learn and use the Latvian language on a day-to-day basis since Russian was the main language spoken within the family, and could easily be accessed through different media. A majority of their friends were also Russian-speaking, and they had earlier studied at a Russian rather than a Latvian school.

Klara has had Latvian citizenship since she was born, since both of her parents were Latvian citizens, but Russian has remained to be her first language. Her father was Latvian and her mother Russian, and after her parents divorced she lived with her mother. Klara still struggles to learn Latvian. She went to a Russian school, and Russian was spoken at home when she grew up, which also contributed to Russian becoming her first language. She holds the second degree of the Latvian language test, which means that she can speak Latvian on an almost fluent basis, but still finds it difficult to speak it on an everyday basis. She claims that a better knowledge in Latvian would be required in order to get a more qualified job.
Actually, I think that the language is inside me somewhere, but I think there is some kind of psychological barrier, which restrains me from speaking Latvian. I speak Latvian on a more basic level, but on a deeper level it’s more difficult. My daughter suggested that we should talk Latvian within our family, but it would be very difficult. I sometimes think that the language is a problem. If I had better knowledge in Latvian, I would be able to step up in my career. Career or no career, the problem still exists. I would like to study more Latvian, but then I would be forced to quit this job. Considering that we have children, I need to try to spend all my spare time with my son (Klara).

Some of the Russian-speaking interviewees had also got their jobs through personal contacts with other Russian-speakers, and some of the hotels were described as being more ‘Russian-oriented’ in terms of the working environment, making the official working language Russian. It was also described how ‘ethnic’ Latvians adjusted and started to speak Russian in the presence of Russian-speakers, rather than having the conversation in Latvian.

Klara works in housekeeping and has both Russian and Latvian-speaking colleagues. She feels that she would like to learn and practice more of her Latvian, but also stresses that it’s sometimes difficult to convince her Latvian-speaking colleagues to talk to her in Latvian rather than in Russian.

It’s around 50 percent of the employees who have Russian as their first language, but I speak mainly Russian. If there are Latvians speaking Latvian and a Russian comes along, they will automatically start speaking Russian. I ask them to speak Latvian, but they think it’s easier to speak Russian (Klara).

The female Russian-speaking interviewees described how their lack of language skills constituted a larger obstacle for their employment and everyday life compared to issues relating to citizenship. Not to apply for a Latvian citizenship was almost described as a political act, in order to manifest and show resistance against the laws regulating citizenship and language policies. Others emphasised how the lack of political rights and influences were not considered to be a potential problem, which in some ways reflected a general distrust against the political regime on both a national and a local level.

Sabine’s mother is from Russia and her father from Belorussia, and they immigrated together to Latvia during the Soviet period. Thus, neither Sabine nor her parents were automatically granted Latvian citizenship following independence. Sabine has not yet applied for citizenship, but has level three on her Latvian language test, which is the highest level, and she is fluent in Latvian.

It’s some kind of contradiction; I’m born here, have lived here all my life, my daughter is a citizen, then why should I apply for citizenship? Maybe it’s wrong but I cannot do anything
about it. I cannot vote (…) but I don’t worry that I cannot vote. If you look at what’s happening within politics, you understand that you cannot do anything about it (Sabine).

While some of the female interviewees described difficulties in their attempts or even resistance to the need to learn Latvian, other respondents emphasised the individual ‘choice’ to learn Latvian, and that it was up to each and everyone to want to speak Latvian, and to adjust to the culture and country of which one was a part of.

Viktoriya was born and raised in Belorussia and came to Jūrmala in 1985, when she was 17 years old, and married her husband who was from Latvia. She had just finished her studies at a technical college, and she was convinced by her father that she would work at the train station, but she soon discovered that it was not a profession she had any interest in. In Jūrmala, Viktoriya soon had her first child and prioritised first her family before both work and education. After a few years of being at home with her children, she started to work as a waitress and searched for other jobs in the hotel sector, and got her current job through a friend. She describes how she was very determined to learn Latvian and English in order to get a job.

The idea was to get a job, but Perestroika was starting, and I had to learn Latvian; that was the main requirement to get a job. I didn’t want to work as a cleaner or something, I wanted a better job. But at the time of independence, my husband understood that it wasn’t only necessary to learn Latvian, but also English, so he forced me to learn it. My husband said that “you will learn English,” and I said that I didn’t want to, and he said, “I’ll pay a teacher who will teach you.” He understood that if I wanted to work as an administrator, it was important to learn English. Now I’m grateful that I learned English. My English isn’t fluent, but I can talk and listen and I would like to learn more (Viktoriya).

Viktoriya applied for Latvian citizenship in the 1990s, and saw it as a natural part of living in Latvia.

It wasn’t difficult to apply for citizenship. I knew Latvian, and the only thing that I had to study was history. If you really want your citizenship it’s no problem. I think that a person who lives in a country should be able to learn the language. Some just don’t want citizenship. They’re also free to apply for other citizenships, but they don’t. If I had wanted to get a Belorussian citizenship, I could have got one. But since I’ve got a Latvian citizenship, I’ve got better possibilities (…) I don’t see the citizenship question as a problem; those who want will get citizenship. But there is no one who will serve it to you on a silver platter (Viktoriya).
Chapter twelve – Women’s livelihood strategies within tourism in Jūrmala

The question of age

Employment within tourism was considered to be one of the few options of work, especially for some of the older female interviewees, who claimed that it was difficult to find work due to their lack of education or language skills, and therefore they had to choose more low-qualified jobs. Figure 26 below illustrates the age distribution of the female respondents according to their native language, revealing a higher share of older Russian-speaking respondents. This pattern was also reflected when analysing their main work assignments. Thirteen out of 29 Russian-speaking respondents who worked within “housekeeping”, and 7 out of 15 respondents within “Spa” were 36 years or older. The opposite was true for front office work, of which 10 out of 13 Latvian-speaking respondents and 4 out of the 6 Russian-speaking respondents were 24 years or younger.

Figure 26: Age distribution of female respondents according to their native language.

In the interview study, some of the older female interviewees emphasised how they felt that they were not able to meet the demands of the contemporary labour market, due to the high requirements on age, looks, higher education and language skills. Their previous working experience from the Soviet period in general and within tourism more specifically was not considered to be a qualification when applying for a job. Thus, employment within tourism was
described as a relatively safe and reliable income by some of the older female interviewees, since it usually offered full-time employment all-year-round.

Sabine is 53 years old and has experienced age-discrimination within other service professions, and was reluctant to apply for her current job at the hotel.

It's even been the case that when I've called in order to apply for a job I've got the question: “how old are you?” They don't even want to look at my previous experience, what I've done or how I look; they only see my age (Sabine).

Today, she is one of the few older women working in the reception and administration, and she felt a bit out of place when she started her job.

There are many young girls working in the reception, and my first thought was, “How will I be able to work with them?” But they have had a very positive approach towards me. No problems at all (Sabine).

For other female interviewees, the question of age went hand-in-hand with the lack of Latvian language skills, and some found it really difficult to ‘start over’ and learn Latvian fluently in order to gain a more qualified profession. Instead, it was considered to be more important to have a ‘safe’ and permanent job, and they chose their employment within tourism carefully, in order to find a job which gave an official wage that would secure their future pension and social benefits if they for some reason lost their job.

Nina only has three years left until she is free to retire, and claims that it is very important for her to keep her current job. She is concerned for her future pension, and is eager to have a job in which state taxes are paid in order to increase her social security. Nina estimates her future pension to be around 100 Lats per month. She looks forward to her pension, but feels that she is required to work a few more years in order to secure a higher income.

I'm an optimist by nature, and I can work and do everything. I'm very energetic and have a strong back. I'm thinking that when I retire I'll go abroad and work to earn money in order to help my children buy an apartment. I wouldn't have been able to be unemployed or to sit at home; then I wouldn't have been able to live, and buy food or pay my rent; it's just not possible when there is only one person working in the household (Nina).

A kind of ‘nostalgia’ for the past could also be found among the older, Russian-speaking female interviewees. It reflected a wish to look back into the Soviet past, and compare the present labour market and welfare system with those of the communist system. This reflected feelings of vulnerability and of being ‘out
of place’ in a more competitive capitalist market, which did not provide the same kind of security as earlier.

Nina emphasises the previous ‘collective’ fellowship at work, and another type of security which meant that you were guaranteed a job, and did not risk unemployment.

It was easier during that period, that’s what I think anyway. All people felt a greater fellowship with each other and worked for a common aim. Now it’s more about people having to live for their own aims, and I think that’s a big difference. Here at the hotel I may lose my job, but in those days work meant more stability, and you couldn’t get fired just like that. Now I can get fired even if I do a good job (...) In those days it was easier to live. We had plenty of money, and you could pay the bills for the apartment and everything else, and you still had money left. Today it’s very difficult. It takes two incomes within the family in order to have enough money (Nina).

Valentina is 49 years old and worked in the tourism sector also during the Soviet period, but quit her job at a hotel a few months back. She claims that the changes in the working environment were too striking for her to continue her work. The organization and ownership of the hotel shifted during the 1990s, and called for renovation and new staff. The previous employees were offered new jobs, but a majority chose to quit. Valentina continued to work as an administrator, but got new work assignments beyond her previous experience and competence. Unofficial wages were introduced, and Valentina emphasises how her working conditions changed compared with the Soviet period when her social security was guaranteed by strong trade unions. If she would have become unemployed after the privatisation of the hotel, she would have had an income of 66 Lats per month.

I quit my job. I realized that I’m rather old; new and young girls will come in my place. I could have changed work assignments, but the attitude of the managers was terrible. All people who get power look down at others (...) The younger girls have language skills and education; that’s important now (Valentina).

Conclusion
Summing up, the purpose of the chapter has been to analyse the motives, background and intentions for women’s employment and livelihood strategies within the tourism sector in Jūrmala, based on a survey and interview study conducted in Majori. The chapter contained a discussion of whether or not the tourism sector constitutes a ‘refuge’ for the ‘victims’ of the transition or if it has served as the ‘golden road’ for women especially, which has been debated
within previous research of employment within tourism in post-socialist countries. The results of the case study do not indicate that women would constitute the ‘losers’ of the transition through their employment within tourism. Work within tourism was described as offering relatively ‘secure’ employment throughout the year, and tourism work was described as having positive connotations in terms of work assignments and future prospects for the development of tourism in Jūrmala.

Compared to other post-socialist countries such as Bulgaria, where female employees within tourism have been portrayed as possessing crucial human capital due to their experience from work within tourism during the Soviet period, women face new requirements within tourism in Jūrmala. Many women lost their jobs during the privatisation of tourism during the 1990s, and since international tourism to Jūrmala was very restricted, knowledge in foreign languages remained low. Thus, I have argued that the analysis of the background and motives to women’s employment within tourism needs to be more diverse than merely including the question of whether or not tourism constitutes a ‘refuge’ for those having problems of finding work in the local labour market. I have analysed women’s livelihood strategies in relation to ethnicity, class and age, and emphasised both social/lifestyle-oriented motives as well as economical factors which guide the decision to work within tourism. Based on the survey and interview study, three main strategies can be distinguished; survival strategies, lifestyle-oriented strategies and career-oriented strategies. The more economically oriented strategies can be analysed as more prominent among for example single mothers, particularly for those with a lower education, and for older Russian-speaking women who lacked both the sufficient language skills and education to find more high-skilled work in the labour market. The latter group also tended to be found within more low-skilled work assignments, for example, within cleaning and housekeeping. Thus, work within tourism was considered to provide a relatively ‘safe’ but lower income, while some women emphasised the risk of unofficial pay which left them little social security in terms of unemployment benefits or future pensions.

The lifestyle and career-oriented strategies were more common among women with a higher education and previous experience from management and higher positions in the labour market, who saw the potential of making a career within tourism and for whom tourism constituted a relatively well-paid job. However, more lifestyle-related strategies were emphasised among women who previously had been housewives, revealing the wish to find their own job and income and not be economically supported by their male counterparts, while
also realising a hobby or being motivated by the social dimensions of work within tourism. The women in the interview study also emphasised how their alternatives for work not merely included the local labour market, but the wages and possibilities to find work were also compared with potential jobs abroad, which on the one hand were described as better paid compared to jobs in Latvia, but on the other hand also would include a number of sacrifices, including being away from family and friends.
Chapter thirteen
Negotiating femininities: women’s everyday livelihood practices within tourism in Jūrmala

The aim of the present chapter is to analyse how women as employees within tourism in Jūrmala respond, relate and adjust to changing genderised ideals of livelihood, in their work within tourism and in their everyday livelihood practices. In the interview study, the female interviewees related differently to prevailing ideals of livelihood and work, which were expressed both in their conception of potential livelihood strategies and their actual means and livelihood practices. Livelihood is in this context not merely analysed in relation to its economic meaning of the concept, but also as guided by family responsibilities and genderised ideals and norms of livelihood and work within both the private and the public sphere. The chapter will focus on how different femininities and ideals of livelihood are reproduced, rejected and challenged through women’s livelihood practices. As discussed in the previous case study of entrepreneurship in the Cēsis district, I will relate the practices to more ‘traditional’, ‘modern’ and ‘relic-communistic’ genderised ideals of work and livelihood, and how they relate to the public and the private sphere. At the end of the chapter, I will also illustrate different paradoxes between women’s livelihood strategies on the one hand and their livelihood practices on the other, and the question of whether employment within more large-scale forms of tourism can be a way of increasing and negotiating the space for women’s individual and independent livelihood.

Traditionally feminised practices
As has been highlighted in previous chapters, work within tourism tends to be ‘feminised’ in different ways, which also became evident in the interview study when analyzing both the structure of the tourism sector in Jūrmala and the female interviewees' day-to-day practices. The survey revealed a high overrepresentation of women in different forms of accommodation establishments and other tourism facilities which were included in the study. Women and men were
also found in different sections and departments of the hotels; women were overrepresented mainly in “housekeeping” (31 percent of female respondents), “Spa” (19%), “front desk” (13%), and “administration” (9%). Men were found mainly in the restaurant (21 percent of male respondents) and at the front desk (21%). Interviews with hotel managers further confirmed the results of the survey, stating that a large majority of the employees within the hotel sector were women, especially in departments such as housekeeping, where the share of women could be up to ninety or a hundred percent.

Ghodsee (2005) emphasises how female employees in Bulgarian tourism resorts described themselves as being more suitable for work within tourism due to their responsibilities in household work, but also because of more ‘biological’ advantages to being a woman, and therefore being able to deal with guests in a “better” way. Just as women were considered to have a ‘natural’ role in the family as mothers and wives, women’s overrepresentation within tourism was also described as having the same ‘natural’ order (Ghodsee 2005). Work within tourism was also described as ‘feminised’ by both the employers and employees in the interview study in Jūrmala. Below I will discuss how women’s daily practices within tourism can be analysed as reflecting more traditional ‘feminised’ ideals of work and livelihood: firstly in relation to men’s and women’s biological role functions, secondly relating to women’s responsibilities within the family and private sphere, and thirdly with reference to more traditional breadwinner models.

**Biological ‘feminine’ advantages**

Interviews with both employees and hotel managers illustrated how a distinction was made between which jobs and positions were considered to be ‘women’s’ and ‘men’s’ work with reference to more biological and physical advantages and delimitations. Some of the female interviewees pointed out that women had better ‘instincts’ for working within tourism, including a more caring approach as well as better communication skills than men, and that they therefore better understood the needs of the guests, especially considering health and spa procedures.

I think the background to why there are many women working within tourism is that they have closer ties to that type of environment, they like talking to people; they’re a bit more open for communication (…) The clients are mainly men and they want to meet a woman, they expect to. But if there is a female guest, she is more open and communicative, and asks where they can get a manicure and pedicure. Women know their needs and what’s the best place. Men wouldn’t be able to explain that for the guests (Viktoriya).
Even though women dominated the work force in the hotels in numbers, some jobs were clearly coded as ‘men’s jobs’, for example, positions at the front desk. The managers claimed that they actively searched for men in these positions since they also included night shifts and security issues, which men were considered as more capable of handling. Moreover, work in the restaurant was described as more physically demanding, in terms of work load, tasks and working hours, and therefore more suitable for men.

Matilde is the director of a hotel where a majority of the bar and restaurant staff are men. She has actively hired men for work in the restaurant, based mainly on the perception that it is a demanding physical job, but also due to the fact that a majority of the educated staff within the restaurant business are men.

When I hire women for the restaurant they should be strong women, so that I get the right contact with them. The work is very intensive and demanding, and I work a lot myself, and if there are men working I can demand much more from them (…) Women might not manage certain things. Sometimes when there are many guests in the bar, you have to be able to clear the tables very quickly, and carry things back and forth. If women can handle it, then fine “go ahead, start to work” (Matilde).

Paradoxically, even though women were portrayed as more suited for ‘lighter’ and social work within tourism compared to men, the interview study also revealed women’s work assignments as very physically demanding. This was especially prominent for those working in the housekeeping or spa sections of the hotel on a daily basis, where they had heavy lifting and inconvenient working positions, which in turn generated sore muscles and work-related injuries, such as back problems.

Vaira provides water massage, which means that she works with the guests in a bath tub. She describes the monotonous and standardized routines of her work, which are physically demanding.

It's the procedures that take up most of the time. The hydro-massage is the most physically demanding; my back hurts from it; it's straining for your hands and very boring in the long run… It's just bodies being exchanged, it’s a rather monotonous job really. There are no artistic dimensions to it (…) It’s usually a fact that if you have problems with your health, they will show you the door (…) It's very, very difficult to prove that the injury is work-related. Everyone has pain in their backs or arms and so on, but I try to do some exercise and move when I have time off (Vaira).
Making household chores ‘public’

Women’s household work and their hotel work also tended to be closely related, in their chores and routines, such as cleaning and housekeeping, all described as ‘women’s work’ in comparison with other work assignments and positions within the hotels. Some of the female interviewees related their previous experience of household work, for example, as housewives, to their decision to work within tourism, as was discussed in the previous chapter. Thus, women were considered to have positive ‘advantages’ in searching for jobs, for example, as cleaners in the hotels, with the argument that the work was ‘easy’ since they already were doing the majority of the household-related work at home. Here, parallels can be made to the previous case study in the Cēsis district, where household work on the one hand was made ‘public’ and commercialised through the female entrepreneurs’ everyday practices within rural tourism. On the other hand, the boundaries between the public and the private sphere tended to be blurred, and the private remained private due to a more traditional division of labour within the household. The interview study in Jūrmala also illustrated how the household work in the private sphere and the chores at the hotel tended to ‘melt together’.

Zoya works as a cleaner at one of the hotels in Jūrmala, and emphasises how she tries to separate her household chores from her work at the hotel.

Even though I say that I forget about my work when I come home, I do some things by force of habit. I usually place the remote control on the TV, and my husband always complains about it; “what's then the point of using it?” … When I change the bed linen, I try not to do it the same way as at work, to do it as fast as I can. Instead, I want to do it slowly, more relaxed. I want it to become another type of work, and more relaxing. … Sometimes I'm more like a machine. It's not that I like or dislike my work at home; it's more like that if I change linen at home, I realize that, well, I've done this already! (Zoya)

Zoya is married and has a six year-old son. Her husband works within the metal industry in Liepaja and commutes back and forth for two hours one-way almost every day, which results in long working days. Just as a majority of the married women in the interview study, Zoya regards household work as the ‘woman’s responsibility’ and takes a larger responsibility for both child care and household chores.

I do everything at home. Cleaning, cooking, doing the dishes, washing, no other than myself does that type of work … I'm the boss at home, and I think that a woman should be the boss at home. Sometimes my husband helps out when he's got the time and feels like it, then he will do something (Zoya).
In the survey, 60 percent of the female respondents stated that they did all or a majority of the work in the household. These results also need to be analysed in relation to the household structure, which is illustrated in Figure 27. Here, a distinction is made among married, single and women living in cohabitation, in relation to the division of household chores. Due to the high number of single-women households, the assumption would be that they did a larger share of household work, but some of them also stated that they shared the work with another household member. This may be related to the fact that many of the younger female respondents still lived with their parents and therefore shared the household work with other family members. The figure also shows that a higher number of married women tended to do all or a majority of the household work (23 respondents), compared to those living in cohabitation (11 respondents).

**Figure 27:** Division of household chores (female respondents).

![Division of household chores (female respondents)](#)

Source: Author’s survey in Majori, Jūrmala.

**(In)visible feminised practices**

Despite the overrepresentation of women within the hotel sector and the promotion and commodification of traditionally ‘women’s work’, work within tourism also tends to be characterized by certain degrees of *invisibility*. In the interview study, the hotel was described as almost having a ‘private’ character, a space meant for the guest first and foremost, to which the employees had to adjust to rather than to control themselves. The female interviewees, especially those working in the cleaning and spa sections of the hotels, described their daily routines at work as characterized by some degree of invisibility, which
included keeping a low profile and adjusting to the rules and regulations of hospitality and service. Some of the hotels had handbooks for the employees, which included directives on how to dress and look appropriately, how to wear the uniform, and how to behave in a ‘correct’ manner towards the guests. A majority of the female interviewees described the rules and regulations as ‘normal’ and ‘obvious’ parts of their everyday routines in the hotels.

Klara works as a hotel cleaner, and emphasises how the employees need to pay attention and respect the hotel as the space of the guests.

I think it’s important to have some communication with the guests when I work, but it shouldn’t be too much. We rarely see the guests; it’s more their space; we should be happy, and greet them, or carry or get something for them. Neither I nor my colleague speaks English, but we have many guests from England or Scandinavia, so then you have to smile a lot, and maybe learn a few phrases (...) We’re not supposed to talk with the guests; we should just say ‘hello’ and ask when we can clean their room. But there are guests who want to talk, and then we have to reply (Klara).

Being a cleaner involves a lot of work ‘behind the scenes’; cleaning the rooms takes place when the clients have left their rooms both temporarily and permanently, and the working hours of the cleaners are adjusted to the routines of the guests. Still, the contact with the guests often took place in the corridors, and they were also sometimes given new roles as guides when the guests asked for directions or information about tourism activities, restaurants and shopping. Not all female employees fully accepted and adjusted to the role of the ‘invisible maid’, but prioritised their efforts to make social contacts, both with other employees and the guests.

Zoya works as a hotel cleaner and does not agree with the hotel’s rules of not speaking with the guests, but values the sporadic contacts with the guests as important elements of her job. However, Zoya also describes how breaking against the rules and norms is not permitted.

There was a man from Russia who stayed at the hotel together with his two sons during mid-summer. Then he asked me what traditions we have, how we celebrate Ligo, and how we jump over the fire… When I talked to him, my boss came by and noticed that I was speaking to a guest, and scolded me for speaking with him. But I couldn’t have told him that “I don’t want to talk with you”, or something like that. I don’t think she was right (Zoya).

The need for ‘invisibility’ was also evident in the spa sections of the hotels. Vaira describes herself as being a part of the spa environment, which is characterized by scents and massage oils, soft music and a quiet way of moving and
being at the work place. Vaira states that the working environment can be tiresome and static in the everyday routine.

You’re not allowed to have shoes with high heels; they would make too much noise, and if the guests are in the bath, they shouldn’t have to listen to the sound of heels against the floor in the corridors. It’s a spa (…) They play spa music here all the time. If you hear the same music somewhere else, you immediately think of the spa; it’s just in your head. It’s a bit peculiar. One of the guest asked what kind of funeral music we played. It's a very boring music; if you hear it too much, you get a bit depressed (Vaira).

Apart from the ‘invisible’ feminised practices, more ‘visible’ practices could be distinguished in the interview study, where femininity in terms of looks and aesthetics had a more prominent role. In this case, tourism work does not include merely the work ‘behind the scenes’, but also work relating to demands of modern hospitality. The hotel managers put emphasis on education and foreign language skills as requirements for work within tourism, especially for work in the reception and for higher positions. One must also have a service attitude and hospitality qualities, where social, personal and aesthetic skills are valued more than basic technical knowledge and experience (see Lucas 2004; Adkins 1995). These skills were considered to be more common among younger women due to their higher level of education.

In the reception, the ability to communicate is the most important quality. They are the face of the hotel for the arriving guests, and they should know directly the needs of the customers. So language and communication are highly valued, as well as some diplomacy. (…) They should be happy and friendly, and do everything in order to make the guest return (Yelena, hotel manager).

I would suggest that this more ‘aesthetic’ femininity has parallels to more ‘Western’ ideals of femininity, in how to dress and behave within tourism-related work. Thus, work within tourism became a way of expressing ‘femininity’, and by doing so, women become active subjects, but also in some ways ‘objects’ for the male gaze.

Vera’s job as an aerobics instructor involves bodily performance, and she is constantly working with her body, at the same time as she is the subject of different forms of ‘gaze’, and becomes in some sense a role model for the guests.

My work motivates me to keep myself in good shape. People look at me all the time, and then you just have to stay fit. But that’s not a problem, I’m a woman! Women always try to look good; that’s normal. When people look at you, they should think, “I wanna look like her!”,
and not be offended by your looks. (...) Women have to look good in all types of situations, no matter if you're happy or sad. Everyone can have a bad day, but when you're at work, you have to get rid of your sad face and meet the people there and put your problems behind. A smile always helps to get rid of the problems, and your mood will improve too (Vera).

The more ‘visible’ feminized practices within tourism also had clear parallels to ideals of new forms and patterns of consumption. As True (2003) emphasises, the new ‘emancipation’ of women in post-socialist countries tends to be manifested through an increased consumption, which involves embracing a more ‘Western lifestyle’ in both a material and an immaterial sense, and has become a hallmark of the newfound freedom. For many of the female interviewees, consumption in terms of a manicure, pedicure and other beauty products were considered as part of everyday life, and an expression of ‘femininity’ which also agreed with their work within tourism.

I buy cosmetics, do my nails, and do my face. I think it is important. In the reception you need it. If you have bad nails, it’s not good. People are always looking at you, especially women; they go, “Oh, so beautiful ring, so beautiful nails”. Even some guys say, “So nice bracelet, where did you get it?” That is why it is important. I feel nice when they say it; it proves that the money for the manicure is not wasted. I don’t know why beauty is important for Latvians, but people look and tell who you are from your shoes, nails, hair and whatever. They think “Nice, you’re a rich girl; ok you are a rich lady, hmmm”’. This is what people value most of all. They are not looking at your insides; they only see your appearance. Maybe it’s bad, but that’s the way it is (Regina).

Apart from being ‘role models’ (mainly for other women), the female interviewees also described themselves as ‘exposed’ in their femininity in different work-related situations. Some of the female interviewees claimed that they had been subjects of different forms of harassment from male guests.

Zoya describes one incident when she was harassed by the male hotel guests as follows.

One time I was attacked at the hotel. There were a couple of guests who locked me into a room so I couldn’t get out. They kept me imprisoned there for a whole hour. The guards did not see anything. They didn’t touch me or something like that, but they called me ugly names. They were very drunk. The next morning I wrote a report, which I tore apart later (Zoya).

Many of the hotels had regulations which required at least one male employee in the reception during the night shifts, which was part of a safety routine. Moreover, some of the hotels had installed surveillance cameras for security measures, problems of theft and people breaking into the hotel rooms.
Regina works in the reception and claims that the presence of male employees provides a higher sense of security than the security cameras.

During the day we have one guy with me in the reception, but of course a man likes it when a woman greets him, talks to him. But everyone is nice... Latvians and Russians might be rude. We have three men in the reception. At night we need men in the reception, because during the late hours it is not so safe to work in the reception, and we don’t have security. We have cameras now, but cameras can do nothing... (Regina).

The female interviewees also stated that the surveillance cameras which were meant to increase a sense of security for the (female) employees, also created a sense of being watched, and that they were not only used for the protection of the employees, but also as a way of controlling the staff and preventing stealing and unwanted behaviour.

We have surveillance cameras everywhere; there is also a bugging system. They listen to everything, the phones, in the staff rooms. You don’t see the microphones (...) We have already gotten used to it; we don’t look at the cameras anymore; we don’t notice them. But they see everything and hear everything (...) We have certain places where they can’t hear us, for example, going to the restrooms or something if we want to talk in private. Then we meet in other places outside the hotel when we don’t work, in cafés and so on (Zoya).

Reproducing the traditional breadwinner model
The feminisation of the tourism sector can also be analysed as related to the low income generated within the tourism sector, which was not considered as ‘appropriate’ for men according to the ideal of the man as the main breadwinner. Men were described as being guided by a more ‘rational thinking’ in their search for work, both in relation to job status and salaries. Working as a chef or a bartender was described as having more status than other jobs at the hotels like the spa or housekeeping.

Many men work as cooks and bar men; our head waiter is also a man. Here I can see that it is very important to be a bar man; it’s kind of this top position. If you work in the restaurant you are able to work wherever, and there’s also the psychological part, “I’m free as a bird and I can do what I want”, which clicks into the idea of work that “I do my kind of temporary work, and I can become something better in the future.” This is very much the men’s ideology. (…) Young men think about fast, big money, and they constantly move to another place where they again can get fast money. They come here without knowledge, get the basic training and then they leave, for example, to Riga, maybe to some discos (Laura, hotel manager).

Men working within tourism were also described as younger, and the managers described a shortage of older men with experience interested in working in
tourism. This was also illustrated in the results of the survey, where the age patterns for men and women differed significantly, and showed that a majority of the male respondents were between 21 and 25 years old, while the female respondents tended to be of mixed ages (see Figure 23 in the previous chapter). The hotel managers described the younger men as being interested in ‘fast and big money’, while women were regarded as searching for more long-term and stable employment, and more willing to invest in higher education.

The service sector is not the most well-paid sector. In Latvia we have the image that the man should support the family, so this is not the right place for a man. It is actually a rather traditional image that we have, that the woman should sit at home and take care of the children and cook. Maybe it’s something with a historical and cultural origin (Matilde, hotel manager).

Moreover, the managers claimed that they struggled with problems of a large turnover of staff, of which a majority were men. Men who had the objective to earn better someplace else, were not perceived as being ‘loyal’ to their work at the hotel.

The travel business is considered a female business. It’s not good for your image to be working in the travel industry. Men don’t find it too serious, and that they actually can achieve something in their positions. It’s like entertainment; it’s not a serious business like other sectors. Men want to do serious business. I think in Riga there are 1001 ways of making serious business apart from the travel industry (Laura, hotel manager).

The interview study showed how the two-person household constituted a strong norm for women’s livelihood among the female employees, partly in relation to traditional family ideals, and partly due to the fact women usually occupied lower-paid positions in the labour market in general and within tourism specifically. Even though some of the female interviewees expressed a wish of becoming more economically independent from their male partners, only a few of them claimed that they would be able to support themselves, let alone a family, on their salary from tourism-related work. Therefore, men tended to remain the ‘natural’ breadwinners of the family, while women were considered to live up to the ideals and roles as the ‘family supporter’, which put emphasis on their social and caring dimensions in the private and domestic sphere rather than their economical contribution in the public sphere.

The interview study showed that a few of the female respondents who were either married or living in cohabitation were the main income provider in the household. This was particularly evident among the married female respondents, of which a majority stated that another household member was the main
income provider, and only six stated that they were the main income provider. As illustrated by Figure 28, the different categories among the female cohabit-ees show a more equal pattern.

**Figure 28:** Who is the main income provider in your household? (female respondents).

![Bar chart showing the distribution of main income providers among married, cohabiting, and single respondents.](chart)

Source: The author’s survey in Majori, Jūrmala.

The norm of the man as the main breadwinner in the family turned out to be strongly rooted among some of the female interviewees who were either married or living in cohabitation and occupying lower positions within tourism. In a majority of cases, the married interviewees had a significantly lower income than their male counterparts, which also contributed to a more traditional view of livelihood.

Viktorija is married and has also a rather traditional view of who should be the main income provider in the family.

I think it’s right that the man earns more. If the man would earn less, he wouldn’t be able to call himself a man. A man should earn more in order to spend money on his wife (Viktorija).

Zoya clearly acknowledges her husband in the role as the main breadwinner, which means that she is also dependent on his income. She claims that it is very expensive to live in Jūrmala, the rent for the apartment is high, and that her own salary would only be enough to pay the rent and the basic bills.

(…) I don’t know the income of my family, and how much my husband earns. My money is my money, but his money is the family’s money (…) The husband should earn more, and the
Negotiating traditional ideals of livelihood

Differences relating to class and family structure became evident in the interview study when analyzing variations of women’s work and livelihood within tourism. The women had different possibilities to affect their livelihood depending on their social positions, access to human capital in terms of education, previous working experience and income. In this case, three groups of women can be identified. Firstly, there is a group of married and cohabiting women, who constitute the ‘norm’ of the two-person household and family structure as discussed above through more ‘traditionally-oriented livelihood practices’. Secondly, there are single women representing ‘non-traditional breadwinning practices’, including either younger women who lacked a sufficient working experience or education, or single mothers who had to find additional income in order to secure their livelihood. Thirdly, there is a group of women with more ‘career-oriented livelihood practices’ who possessed the adequate education for a higher position within tourism, and who would be able to support themselves on their own income regardless of their household structure. Below I will discuss how the female interviewees in the three above-described groups negotiated and challenged more traditional ideals of livelihood.

Negotiating the ‘housewife ideal’

The ideals of the traditional breadwinner model also became evident in terms of the ideal of the ‘modern housewife’. In the interview study, some women claimed that they would consider it ‘normal’ not to work, partly as an effect of the low wages within tourism, and partly due to the more traditional family values and beliefs of the man remaining the main supporter of the household. Some of the female interviewees had also previously been housewives for a shorter or longer period of time, for a variety of reasons. On the one hand, and especially among some of the younger female interviewees, the ideals of ‘the housewife’ somewhat included a wish to be economically supported by their husbands, which also represented freedom and status and a more modern consumption-oriented lifestyle. On the other hand, the female interviewees expressed a need and interest to work, both as a way of earning an income and thereby becoming more independent from their husbands, and to get more social and challenging work rather than ‘just sitting at home’. However, even
though the ideals of the ‘housewife’ were rejected by a majority of the interviewees, it became evident that some of the women’s employment also was questioned and negotiated.

Regina has a college education from the tourism field and works as a receptionist, but explains that her boyfriend is still the main income provider in the household. She put emphasis on the norm of the male breadwinner as something ‘natural’.

He works within the financial sector. It’s a good sector to work in for a guy. Men have to earn a lot, a lot, for the whole family. Women can earn more than their men, but usually they don’t like it when the woman earns more. My husband wants to support me, because he is a guy who wants to be the man in the family. I like it when I can rely on somebody; I can relax and do my own things (Regina).

Even though Regina recognizes her boyfriend as the main income provider, she still wants to contribute with income to the household. Yet, her boyfriend also questions the value of her salary and her job.

We manage well. I’m earning ten percent of my boyfriend’s salary. Yes, it’s true. That’s why he’s sometimes laughing about me and my salary; “what can you buy for your money? You’re working for months and you earn only that little”. I feel bad; that’s why I want to step up in my job, earn more money, so that I can show my boyfriend. “You’re coming home every night, so sick and tired after your work, you earn nothing” (Regina).

For her boyfriend, being a housewife is considered to be an option, which Regina actively rejects due to the fact that she wants to make use of her higher education within the tourism field, as well as getting social contact through her work. Even though Regina’s income from tourism constituted only a small share of the household’s total budget, and that she recognised her boyfriend as the main breadwinner, she, just as a majority of the female interviewees, emphasised that her income had both an economic and symbolic importance. This was also evident among those women who earlier had been housewives before starting to work within tourism.

Vera is a single mother and values her economic freedom highly compared to when she was married.

Men spend a lot of money on buying alcohol, but don’t spend as much money on their wives. So much money for getting drunk… When I was a housewife I had to ask my husband before I bought clothes and prove what I should use them for. He thought that you could use one pair of jeans all year-round. He said, “You’re not going anywhere anyway, why do you need anything more?” (Vera)
Klara’s income as a cleaner is much lower than her husband’s monthly wage from his work within the construction business. However, Klara underlines that the salary represents much more in terms of a social security which was not guaranteed during her period as a housewife;

My husband doesn’t really want me to work; things would have been easier for him if I did not have a job. He says “I’ll pay you 100 Lats for being at home,” but then things would become as before and I don’t want it that way. It’s very important for me to have my own income, also for my future pension. I’ve also taken care of my family for so many years, and I have been more or less forced to do so. Now there is no such need, but I still take a lot of responsibility for my family (…) When I was at home we kept the money in the kitchen cabinet, and we could go there and take money. But for some of my friends it was difficult, since they had to ask for money from their husbands. But now I can take out money myself and buy a present for my husband. Earlier it was not possible to take his money and then buy him a present! (Klara)

Due to the fact that some of the female interviewees’ salaries merely represented a fraction of the household’s income, they also stressed that it was difficult to influence what the income should be used for. Their partner's money was described as his ‘personal income’, and many admitted that they did not even know what their partners earned. The money was used for common household needs and for the children, while the women’s income was considered to be for their own personal needs, including for example money for clothes and makeup.

Balancing work in the private and the public sphere
For a majority of the female employees within the hotel sector, work involved irregular working hours due to shift schedules, which made it challenging to combine work and family. Some of the interviewees, especially those working at a spa, described their routines as very stressful and demanding, both mentally and physically. Thus, the image of the spa as a sanctuary for relaxation for both the body and soul can be put in contrast to the everyday routine of the employees ‘behind the scenes’, which often is far from the idealized image of the spa. As Tom O’Dell (2005) concludes, the employees at the spa are part of creating the ‘magic’ of the spa for the clients as ‘magicians’, as symbols for creating relaxation and escape from the stressful everyday life. Even though they may appear as being individualized and tailor-made for the clients, the activities are bound to a tight time-schedule for treatments, meals and sport sessions, which require punctuality from both the employees and the visitors themselves. The spa resorts tend to reflect both Fordist and Post-Fordist production and con-
Chapter thirteen – Negotiating femininities: women’s livelihood practices within tourism in Jūrmala

sumption patterns, including mass production of services and employees, at the same time as the resorts need to be flexible, in order to respond to different client needs and to regulate the employees according to the tourist demand (O’Dell In: Löfgren & Willim 2005).

Vaira works in shifts with providing different forms of massage, and can work for up to eleven or twelve hours for two days before she gets one or two days off. The schedule may change depending on how many guests have booked procedures, and sometimes the employees change shifts with each other. The routines vary and she explains that working in a spa is far from a regular office job; she does not normally have the weekends off or normally have working hours between 8 in the morning and 5 in the afternoon.

Today I work between eight in the morning until nine in the evening. Earlier we worked one day and had two days off, but that’s not the case anymore. That’s why we look this tired… I don’t know what’s happening, but if I’m off work at nine in the evening and come home at ten, and then do something before I go to bed, I’m tired when I wake up. It’s difficult to say why, but everyone is tired and thinks that she works a lot. You have never time to rest and gather new energy (Vaira).

Thus, Vaira and her colleagues have to be flexible in their work and adjust to the seasonal demands within spa tourism, as well as to the time-schedules set up regulating different treatments. The work load varies, but the hotels also have rules regulating the use of overtime. Vaira works full-time the majority of the year, but tries to avoid working overtime since she will not be compensated in money, but merely through time off work, and regards it more beneficial just to work as much as she is required to. Her monthly income from her work at the hotel is around 200 Lats before taxes, which is about equivalent to the price for a spa weekend in Jūrmala including accommodation, meals and a spa treatment.

Zaiga works at the spa section and has more administrative chores combined with contacts with the guests. She offers the guests different procedures and has also a more medical responsibility as a nurse to administer first aid or respond to other health-related problems. Zaiga works irregular working hours, which also vary over the year depending on the season.

We work 40 hours per week, but we don’t work every day and we may work on weekends, but we are not allowed to work more than 40 hours per week. It differs how many hours we work every month, sometimes it’s public holidays, but you cannot work less than 144 hours. Sometimes I might work two or three days in a row for 12 hours per day, and sometimes like right now I work only eight hours per day (Zaiga).
Chapter thirteen – Negotiating femininities: women’s livelihood practices within tourism in Jūrmala

However, there were also examples of how work within tourism and the irregular working hours had contributed to a renegotiation of the household work within the family, especially among those female interviewees who previously had been housewives.

Klara started to work within tourism a couple of years ago, when she and her husband moved to Riga from the eastern part of Latvia together with their children. She had earlier been a housewife, but then decided to get her own job and income, which meant that her husband also had to adjust to her irregular working hours. Currently she works for two days and has two days off.

I work very late. When I come home late, it’s his responsibility to cook. During the summer we work four days and have two days off. It’s a bit difficult for him when he wants to go fishing and hunting. He goes when I’m off work (Klara).

Klara describes further how the daily routines have changed after getting her job within tourism.

My husband is at home in the evening, and he spends a lot of time with the children. He understands that I need this job in order not to become an outsider in the society. For many years I didn’t have any social guarantees. I couldn’t get unemployment benefits since I hadn’t worked. I don’t work a hundred percent here; I work my hours and then I go home, and there’s no problem. Here it’s more of a routine. I have had many different routines in my life and had very little time for myself. I’ve had little time for entertainment and pleasure. When I came home earlier, before he would let me go and do my sport practice. Now it’s the other way around; I work and he’s at home with the children. I think it might be more difficult for him. He wants to earn money, but also has to spend time with the children (Klara).

Klara claims that she doesn’t have much spare time due to her work, and that her hobbies, such as sport activities, have faded away since the family moved to Riga. She also emphasises that even though her husband takes more responsibility at home, he refuses to do chores, such as cleaning the apartment.

Finding and using child care was not considered to be a problem for the female interviewees who had children, but they stressed that the irregular working hours within tourism sometimes made it difficult to solve the everyday routines of work and family. Some of the women in the interview study described how they relied on their parents, grandparents or nannies for helping out with child care when they and their husbands were working late.

Zaiga has three children, including one daughter aged five who attends day care on the weekdays, usually between 7 in the morning and 5 in the afternoon. Her husband works full-time within the construction business and
has irregular working hours, which may include 12-hour shifts. The family’s solution has been to hire a nanny.

I haven’t had so many problems to combine work and family. I’ve always managed a job where you can take time off. I’ve come up with a solution too. Our children have a babysitter. She’s a retired teacher and she picks up the children at the nursery if I work a bit later. But another thing that gives me a bad conscience is if I use time for myself or others which I could have spent with them, then we would have been able to see each other more (Zaiga).

‘Non-traditional breadwinning practices’
In the interview study, one group of women deviated clearly from the norms of the two-person household and traditional ideals of the male breadwinner, including single women who took on the main livelihood responsibilities for either their children or other family members, both economically and socially. Moreover, these more ‘non-traditional breadwinning practices’ also illustrated the difficulties of supporting oneself and a family based on the income from tourism, which became evident in the interviews with the single mothers and the younger, single female interviewees, who saw no other option than to live with their parents.

Erika is in her twenties and works at one of the tourism attractions in Jūrmala, and lives together with her parents. Her mother has not worked for a few years due to bad health, which is considered to be work-related after 26 years of industry work. Her father is still working in the construction business, but Erika is the one mainly caring for her mother at home and taking care of most household work, which her mother used to do a majority of earlier.

When I come home I start to cook, then I iron clothes and then I usually discover that it’s late in the evening. But when my mother feels a bit better, then we can do something together. If there is food ready when I come home, I know that I will have two hours for myself in the evening (…) My father doesn’t do any household work at home. He is just responsible for repairs, and he paints the ceiling. He cannot even fry eggs; he’s a real man. Or rather, maybe he could fry eggs, but he doesn’t want to (Erika).

Erika works in the public sector and has negotiated about her salary since she started, which has resulted in increased pay. She still thinks that the salary is too low, since a majority of it goes to the family household.

I also give money to my parents. From my salary money goes to pay the rent, gas for the car and the food which we have to buy. In that way I spend almost my entire salary. I don’t know what I live from, but I always manage to fix money. For example, I don’t need to buy any new clothes; I have bought enough (Erika).
Still, Erika would not be able to support herself on her own salary. She works regular office hours on a full-time basis, but does not get paid for working overtime, and is therefore reluctant to work more than she is bound to. Erika wants to have a higher income in order to contribute more to the family household and in the long run afford to buy her own apartment, and for some time has been looking for an extra job in the evenings. However, her current employer has found out about her plans and forbidden her to take another job with the explanation that it may jeopardise her working ability.

For the divorced or widowed single mothers, their more independent livelihood became more of a ‘war and battleground’, in efforts to support themselves and their children. They usually worked full-time within tourism, but were still forced to get a second or even a third job.

Vaira is divorced and lives in Jūrmala together with her two teenage sons. She works in shifts at a hotel and usually starts mornings at 8 and ends her work evenings at 9. Apart from her full-time job at the hotel, Vaira has two additional jobs; she works part-time at a hospital in Riga since a few years back, usually 3 24-hour shifts per month. She has also an unofficial job doing occasional gardening work at a neighbouring farm. Still, she has cut down on her job at the hospital and prioritises the job at the hotel.

I don’t want to work too much and save my energy and body instead. I’ve always had multiple jobs (...) That job (at the hospital) is mainly for stability and safety. If something would happen with my job here (at the hotel) which would mean that I wouldn’t be able to continue to work here, I’ve got the other job (Vaira).

Despite her multiple jobs, her monthly income is around 300 Lats, of which 120 Lats is required to pay the rent. Vaira’s daily routine is more or less a puzzle, to have enough time for her work and children.

My children manage pretty well on their own; they are independent. Or rather, they have to be independent. I have no one else who can look after them. It’s like this morning, when my children asked me if I would work here or at the hospital, and I told them that I would come here. They haven’t had a choice. I would need five additional hours each day. When I get home there is so much to do. I want to prepare the food for my children myself. I don’t allow them to cook since they might use too much food, and we don’t have unlimited supplies. Then I spend time with them, help them with their homework and that kind of thing (Vaira).

Vera is also a single mother and has two jobs within the fitness sector and also studies part-time at a college in Riga. A normal work day during the summer months involves one training session at the hotel, and one at the gym in the
afternoon, followed by studies at the college in the evening. Vera’s wish is to widen her knowledge, not only to be a fitness instructor, but also to gain a more formal education, which may in the end result in a more well-paid profession as a physio-therapist.

It’s very simple, I plan ahead very much. Today I have a meeting with you; then we have a TV broadcast at two o’clock; then I go to a training session. It’s common to have many jobs within fitness, but I don’t know how it’s within other professions. It may also happen that a fitness club will close down, so it’s a bit uncertain, you never know. You don’t earn enough money at one place either; that’s why you have to have at least two jobs (Vera).

Vera has also the responsibility of her 14 year-old daughter who has been disabled since birth, and is not able to talk, walk or sit by herself and lives a very isolated life.

The only help I get is a government subsidy, and my mother helps taking care of her. The subsidy is very limited, just as other state subsidies. Nothing is adjusted to disabled people here. It’s impossible to get access to transportation, and it’s very difficult to handle. Maybe it’s a heritage from the Soviet period, and I think people just don’t accept people who look different (Vera).

Taking care of her daughter, having two jobs and her college studies does not leave much time for leisure. Vera claims that time is not enough, not even for her own studies. Despite her two jobs, and the time invested in the different activities, her income is barely enough to cover the basic expenses in terms of rent and a few bills. Neither Vaira nor Vera owns a car, which is considered as too expensive. Vera lives in Riga and commutes with the minibus when she goes to work in Jūrmala. She does not want to live in Jūrmala, partly due to the expensive housing, and partly due to Jūrmala being considered as a ‘summer town’, which flourishes during the summer months, but does not have many activities during the winter.

I go with the minibus to Jūrmala, and sometimes you can even find a seat… But it’s difficult to reach Jūrmala if you don’t have a car. Women’s position within the fitness business are rather limited. We don’t earn enough money so we can buy our own car. That’s why you have to go with the minibus (Vera).

However, both Vera and Vaira stress that the main problems in their everyday routine have a more economic nature and concern time rather than the mobility in space. Access to both public and private transportation is widespread in both Riga and Jūrmala and is rather cheap in comparison to other modes of travel-
It's difficult to get leisure time, then I go shopping, I go to the library, and do other errands. You have to write a list of everything that needs to be done. I've only got one hour before I go to sleep when the children are not allowed to disturb me; that's my time when I read. I try to get that time everyday. I would need time to sleep and read. Yes, sleeping and reading... (Vaira).

**Career-oriented livelihood practices**

At the other end of the spectrum, another group of female interviewees also challenged the norms of the two-person household in a different way, through more 'career-oriented livelihood practices'. A majority of the female interviewees described their possibilities for making a career as limited due to education, age, language skills or responsibilities in the family. Still, there was also a group of younger women with more pronounced career aspirations, who also held the right 'human capital', in terms of higher education, language skills and work experience, and who already had strong positions in the new Latvian capitalist economy the labour market.

In contrast to the more traditionally ‘feminised’ practices of tourism work discussed above, some women in the interview study related to ideals which put the changing conditions of the public sphere in focus in terms of work, livelihood and individual career. The transformation of the Latvian economy includes changing conceptions of work and livelihood in the transition from socialist working ideals, to a more diversified, competitive and hierarchal labour market within the new capitalist economy. While the domestic and private sphere can be analysed as ‘feminised’, Gal and Kligman (2000) emphasise how the public sphere in general and the private sector more specifically in post-socialist countries often are given more ‘masculine’ characteristics.

(…) it is men more than women who are increasingly associated with the idealised and even romanticised private, the dynamic, capitalist sector of the economy. Indeed, the aggressivity, initiative, and competition that are identified with the market are becoming new representative forms of masculinity (Gal & Kligman 2000:59).

As discussed above, the tourism sector in Jūrmala has remained clearly ‘feminised’, but the ideals and norms which influence work, employment and livelihood within tourism as well as in other sectors of the new economy still carry some more masculine attributes. Tourism as ‘business’ and as the means
of making a successful career became evident in the interview study, through more ‘career-oriented’ practices.

Some of the female interviewees regarded tourism as a suitable sector for business and future career aspirations. Being a woman in a more leading position within private tourism businesses was usually considered as common and ‘normal’. The female interviewees also emphasised that higher positions within tourism did not have the same status as those in other sectors due to the low wages, and the fact that tourism was considered to be a ‘female’ sector.

Matilde works as a manager and describes how the tourism sector is different compared to other sectors of the economy in terms of income and career.

Tourism is not as well-paid as other jobs within business, even though you have a higher position as a manager. A manager in tourism doesn’t equal being a manager in other types of businesses. Tourism doesn’t generate big money (Matilde).

The more career-oriented women often portrayed themselves as ‘strong’ and independent, with a high motivation and commitment in their work, and therefore capable of shouldering the demands of more ‘masculine’ characteristics and roles which were regarded as necessary to the organization.

I prefer to work with men; it’s easier for me. I don’t need so much connection with women; it’s nothing new for me. Men have different views, ways of doing things. For me it’s much more interesting to know more about men, how they work and think. That is maybe what I’m looking for, to make myself equal to men (Matilde).

In this case, the wish to participate in the same ‘division’ as men could be analysed as a striding to achieve prominent positions within the emerging capitalist market, where climbing hierarchies and shouldering more ‘masculine’ business characteristics may be crucial in order to make a career. The wish to make women ‘equal’ with men in the public sphere also in some ways indicates a continuity with past socialist gender ideals, which value women’s active participation in the labour market, while also shouldering their responsibilities in the private sphere. In the interview study, some women regarded themselves as active workers based on rather gender-neutral terms, at the same time as they believed themselves to have some sort of advantage in their ‘biological’ and ‘feminine’ role as women.

I don’t think I have been treated differently as a female manager. There are so many women working within tourism, and women often have these kinds of positions. I rather think that it
is an advantage to be a woman in this kind of position in relation to the men. Women can use their femininity in another way (Matilde).

Women and men were described as having the same opportunities in general in tourism, but when career was discussed, men were considered to have it easier to make a career with regard to contacts and recognition of their work, while women had to work harder to achieve the same positions.

Irina works as a manager, and describes how she experienced difficulties to achieve recognition for her work in the beginning of her career.

It's easier for men to make a career. (…) It is easier for them to be approved as a good worker, and good in their position. You need to work harder and more for this approval as a woman. I could notice this during my first years here. I could notice it in my first years of work (…) Of course I had to show that I could be head of a department, to work hard, but right now it's not that hard, because people know me now very well after four years, and know that I work very hard and have seen my results. But at the beginning, I think it's easier for men than for females in Latvia (Irina).

Quest for more independent livelihood practices
Most of the career-oriented female interviewees already had a higher position within tourism and belonged to the few who could support themselves on their own salaries. They also more clearly made a distinction between their own income and the earnings made by their male counterparts, for example, by separating their expenses within the household from their own personal investments and costs. This was in turn described to be related to a quest for a more independent livelihood, which did not include a reliance on the income from their husbands or boyfriends.

Matilde and her husband contribute economically about the same amount to the household, but they have chosen to have a separate economy.

I don't want his money, but if he wants to give me some I will accept it (…) I think it’s about a feeling of independence. I don’t think it’s right that you put the money together and then sees who has spent it and for what. It’s better that you’re responsible for your own money and if you want something extra, you help each other (Matilde).

Sofija works as a hotel manager and earns a bit more than her husband, and they have a common household budget for their expenses. Half of her income comes from tourism and half from her work as a swimming instructor, which is conducted on an unofficial basis. Sofija relates her quest for independence to her previous career as an athlete.
In some families the women might want to be supported by their husbands, but I don't want it that way. I've worked since I was twelve. All athletes in the Soviet Union received a salary, so you can say that I've got work experience since I was twelve (...) So since I was twelve I've supported myself financially. And that's maybe why it's still important for me to be economically independent since I've been that since I was younger (Sofija).

The more ‘traditional’ division of work in the household was also negotiated to a larger degree among the more ‘career-oriented’ female interviewees. In this case, they made a clear separation between their paid work and household work. Moreover, their husbands or partners were also described as taking a larger responsibility in the home and with the children. Thus, household work was conducted on a more 'equal' basis, partly due to the large time investments the women made in their jobs, which left little time for household chores, and partly due to a more ideological conviction that household work was not merely ‘women’s work’ and should be divided among the members of the household.

Irina has a higher position within tourism and works a lot of overtime.

Overtime? (Irina brings out her calculator.) The work week is usually 40 hours, but I sometimes work 70 hours per week. I’m like a Duracell battery! (Laughs.) We have to work and we need to do this work. I don't know, I think it's normal. If you would like to do qualitative and successful work, you need to put a lot of energy into it (Irina).

Her boyfriend is also working full-time and is making a career, and they try to share some of the household chores due to their long working hours. However, even though Irina and her boyfriend try to share the chores between them, she describes how a certain degree of ‘traditional thinking’ still prevails.

Sometimes he helps and sometimes I tell him what he can do. For some, traditionally and historically, it's considered to be female work. In our case it's not very different. My boyfriend is thinking in that way, too; but since I'm away a lot, he needs to make breakfast and dinner. But when I'm at home, he expects me to do household things. Then I say that he can make it himself. Sometimes I like to make something for him, but sometimes I say, “Sorry, I'm so tired; you can make it yourself” (Irina).

Just as Irina, Emma does not automatically take on the main responsibility for household work. She lives together with her boyfriend, but does not prioritise her time on household chores compared to the time spent at her marketing job at one of the hotels.

I never cook, but if my boyfriend cooks he cleans up after himself. I clean the apartment on the weekends. I eat both lunch and breakfast here at work, and the rest of the day I eat a lot of
candy. At home I just fix something quickly, or we go to the pizzeria (...). I've explained to
my boyfriend that I'm not a maid. I think I've always lived like this, and I don't think that you
should teach people to be lazy (Emma).

Neither Emma nor Irina have children and have prioritised their education,
career and personal ambitions before entering family life. Yet, Irina hopes to
soon have the economic stability and time needed for starting a family.

I need to plan for when I should have a child, because I need to plan for more free time with
child. My work is taking so much time, I don't have time to see my parents, or just relax. For
children I need a lot of time, so I need to plan my time. So that if I get a child next year, I
need to plan with my staff that I can put more energy into my child. From one side we can
work, work, work, but from the other side, if you don't have a family, in the end you'll be an
empty person. You will be no one. Everyone needs a family. Right now I'm making my career
and working, but at some time I will need a family, too. My boyfriend is also planning a fam-
ily... But he's also busy, and we have many ideas of what to do, many projects, but we don't
have so much time to implement it all. I'm a very busy person (Irina).

Just as in the division of work within the household, Irina also hopes that the
family responsibilities and parental leave will be shared between her and her
boyfriend on an 'untraditional' basis.

Matilde has two children and despite her long working hours as a hotel
manager, she does not see a problem in combining her aspirations for a career
with her family responsibilities. Matilde often cooks for the family when she
comes home from work, but she and her husband also try to divide the
household chores between them. She claims that she has time for herself, but
emphasises that her family comes before spending time with her friends. The
children are active within sports, and a lot of time is required to drive the
children to their activities, both during the weeks and on the weekends. She
says that the main obstacles may be of economic character, rather than making
the ends meet in the family's everyday life. Her children are now teenagers, and
their interests for sports and leisure activities create a lot of expenses for the
household.

I don't see any problems in combining work and family. It's not a problem. It's a way of
living. It's a life which consists of different difficulties and successes. Now the children are
older, and it's easier now. I don't think the problem is time, but to have money for your
children (Matilde).
Chapter thirteen – Negotiating femininities: women’s livelihood practices within tourism in Jūrmala

Analysing paradoxes of women’s livelihood

Summing up and analyzing women’s livelihood strategies and practices discussed in the two previous chapters, Table 16 provides an overview of different paradoxes that can be identified in women’s work within tourism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Practice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘Feminised’ tourism work as including a strategic advantage for women</td>
<td>Work and livelihood within tourism as ‘invisible’ practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livelihood within tourism as reliable and ‘safe’</td>
<td>Livelihood within tourism as part of the shadow economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism as providing new opportunities for women</td>
<td>Tourism as revealing differences and inequalities among women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategies for independent livelihood</td>
<td>Dependence and traditional livelihood practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quest for career within tourism</td>
<td>Deviant career and livelihood practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The first paradox illustrated in the Table concerns the overrepresentation of women within tourism, versus work and livelihood as ‘invisible’ practices. As has been discussed in previous chapters, tourism represents a ‘feminised’ sector, both in terms of how women tend to constitute a majority of the employees, and how the work and chores within tourism are considered to be ‘female coded’. The survey and interview study in Jūrmala tended to reflect these patterns, especially concerning work within hotel housekeeping and the spa. Some of the female interviewees also expressed a wish to work within tourism in relation to the type of work it involved, with references to work in the private sphere. However, despite the ‘visibility’ of women in the hotel sector and the public sphere, women’s practices were described more in terms of ‘invisibility’ and adjustments to more or less outspoken norms and regulations. In this case, women’s work within tourism bore more resemblance to work within the private sphere, with the aims of caring and nurturing for others, and thus upholding more traditional genderised ideals of work. There were also exceptions, revealing how the female interviewees used their ‘femininity’ in more ‘visible’ ways, with a focus on looks and beauty, and thus becoming more role models for the female guests. Here, more ‘modern’ and ‘Westernized’ ideals of femininity became evident.

The second paradox relates to the question of whether income from tourism constitutes a safe and reliable income. For some of the female interviewees, tourism represented one of the few alternatives for employment.
in the local labour market in Jūrmala, and some of the new hotels offered full-time employment all year-round which sometimes is uncommon due to the seasonal character of tourism. The practices of how the wages were paid varied among different hotels and other tourism activities. Some hotels paid their employees merely a minimum wage and the rest cash in hand, making tourism part of the shadow economy rather than reflecting the image of tourism as an important part of the national economy. Thus, for some women, especially the older generation, one strategy in their search for employment was to find a job which offered only official wages, in order to secure their future social security. For others, who regarded work within tourism only as a temporary step, the unofficial wage was considered to be a ‘normal’ way of making their livelihood in the labour market. The accepted practices of informal pay within the tourism sector also tend to make it an ‘invisible’ sector, attracting mainly women, due to the low wages and ‘unsafe’ social conditions. Men, on the other hand, were described as interested mainly in more high-status jobs, which also generated higher income.

Related to this, the third paradox illustrated above describes how tourism on the one hand, may bring new opportunities for women in the labour market, but on the other hand also reveals differences among women in terms of ethnicity and class. As discussed in the interview study, tourism was perceived by some women as a suitable sector for work which did not require higher education for certain positions, and provided space for more ‘lifestyle-oriented’ interests in health or sports, based on practical rather than theoretical knowledge. Due to the low-qualified positions within tourism, the sector also reveals a certain imbalance in the labour market. Firstly, as stated in the previous section, men are absent within lower skilled professions, and mainly found within restaurant and bar work. Secondly, especially older women with a lack of knowledge in the Latvian language tend to be found in the lowest positions within tourism, even though they may have a more formal education from the Soviet period. For some, work within tourism appears as one of the few options in the labour market, and does not fulfill the criteria of working within more ‘visible’ work, such as the front desk. However, for those women who had the adequate language skills and the right age, including both native Russian and Latvian-speakers, tourism offers different types of positions and possibilities for a career.

The fourth set of paradoxes includes ‘strategies for independent livelihood’ versus ‘dependence and traditional livelihood practices’. As discussed above, tourism was considered to provide new opportunities for
work in the public sphere, especially for those female interviewees who earlier had been working as housewives. Thus, tourism became a way of breaking free from more traditional gendered ideals of work, which had both a more symbolic and economic importance in terms of contributing to the household and becoming more independent from their male counterparts. Some of the female interviewees also described a changing pattern of their everyday routines, in how their husbands needed to adjust to their new working hours and to take more responsibility for children and household work. For others, household work, just as work within tourism, was considered to be women’s work and responsibility, and the chores in the public and the private sphere tended to become more dissolved rather than separated. The more traditionally oriented practices within the private sphere were more common among the married and cohabiting female interviewees who were occupying lower positions within tourism, and who prioritized the family and the household. Still, the interview study also revealed that the women’s more independent livelihood sometimes was negotiated and questioned by their male counterparts, through the ideal of the ‘housewife’. Most female interviewees rejected this more ‘consumer-oriented lifestyle’, and stressed the need and wish to be active in their work rather than ‘just sit at home’. Despite their quest for independence, it was clear that it was very difficult to support oneself and the household on an average salary from tourism, which also contributed to the norm of the man as the main family provider. Even though the women’s salaries had symbolic importance, they were rarely enough for more than the women’s basic needs. Jūrmala was also described as an exclusive and expensive place to live, which illustrates different ‘gaps’ within the city: partly between the more well-off western and eastern tourists and the employees, and partly between the more well-off segment of Jūrmala’s population who works in Riga and lives in more exclusive areas in Jūrmala.

One group of women which differed from these patterns of ‘dependence’, is the more ‘career-oriented’ employees, who had a higher income and position within tourism, and sometimes even earned more than their male partners. Their quest for independence was clearly outspoken, and they invested a lot of time and effort into their work. The interview study also showed that even though their practices can be described as having more ‘masculine’ characteristics, in reflecting a more individual quest for career and income, they also stated that the tourism sector was considered to be ‘different’ from other sectors of the economy in terms of making a career. This was considered to be partly due to the overrepresentation of women within tourism, and partly due
Chapter thirteen – Negotiating femininities: women’s livelihood practices within tourism in Jūrmala

to the low wages which did not exist similarly in other ‘male-dominated’ sectors. On the one hand, the more ‘career-oriented’ practices can be said to represent ‘Western’ ideals of the ‘modern woman’, eager to make a career on the same terms as their male colleagues. On the other hand, the practices can be analysed as reflecting ‘socialist’ ideals, of how women and men should equally participate in paid work and the public sector. Even though a woman in the role as of ‘career person’ could be described as more ‘individualised’ than representing the socialist ‘collective’, in some ways, the man continues to be the norm of the successful businessman, just as the man remained the ideal for ‘Homo Sovieticus’. The more career-oriented women can be said to be actively breaking more traditional norms of livelihood, due to their more independent income and also, in some cases, the rejection of the ‘natural’ role of women as the homemaker and ‘mother’. The interview study illustrated that they more actively tried to break the traditional division of work in the household, partly due to their lack of time for household chores, and partly due to more ideological convictions of a more ‘equal’ relationship.
Part VI
Curtain call

Art Noveau architecture in Riga. Photo by the author.
Chapter fourteen
Transforming geographies of tourism and gender

The present chapter will highlight the main conclusions of the thesis, and make a closer comparison between the two case studies of women’s livelihood within tourism and the overall theoretical framework. The central aim of the thesis has been to analyse how tourism takes part in and reflects the post-socialist Latvian transformation process from a gender perspective. This has included an analysis of how Latvia is reimagined and reconstructed as both a nation state and as a tourism destination, and how the reshaping of the tourism sector affects women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism. Taking my departure point from feminist geographical theories, I have shown how different gender identities in general and femininities more specifically participate in the general economic, political and socio-cultural societal changes, by reflecting, transforming and affecting their outcomes, within the development of tourism. From a spatial perspective, I have highlighted the diversity and complexity of the transformation process, in how the broader societal processes interact with more place-specific conditions, which together form the outcomes of the post-socialist Latvian society, rather than treat the ‘transition’ as a simple shift between two known circumstances, from the ‘old’ Soviet system, to a ‘new’ capitalist society.

(Re)imagining the ‘national common space’ through tourism
The reimagination and reconstruction of Latvia as a nation state through tourism has been analysed through the use of the concept ‘national common space’, including gendered ‘geographies’, geographies of neo-nationalism, geographies of Europeanisation and geographies of relic-communism (see Table 17). The geographies are my own categorisations, based on my own empirical material and existing post-socialist research, and should not be viewed as ‘static’ categories, but as together constituting an analytic framework for understanding the post-socialist ‘transition’ process and its multiple outcomes and pathways. The geographies, those referring to ‘national common space’ and those relating to ‘Geographies of place’, have been applied as a base for analysing women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism in relation to more comprehensive structural
processes. They each include different perceptions of space and place, in how Latvia is reimagined as a nation state based on different ideological approaches and aims of the transition, including nationalism, neo-liberalism, modernism, regionalism and more path-dependent approaches highlighting continuity with the past. Thus, the national common space can be described as having directional features, pointing out different paths through the transition process. The re-imagination of space also raises questions of identity and belonging: how the borders are drawn around the ‘new’ nation state, thereby defining the values and characteristics of its population, culture and traditions. In more relational terms, the reimaginings of space also reflect how Latvia positions itself in relation to ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ Europe, as well as how the interactions between the local and the global form the outcomes of the transition process. Apart from its directional and relational nature, the national common space can also be analysed as contested and genderised, which will be further discussed below.

Table 17: Reimagining national common space.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourism and ‘national common space’</th>
<th>Geographies of Neo-nationalism</th>
<th>Geographies of Europeanisation</th>
<th>Geographies of Relic-communism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preservation of national and cultural heritage through tourism.</td>
<td>Reorientation towards Western Europe and commercialisation.</td>
<td>Making the past invisible vs. commercialisation of the Soviet heritage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Transitional approaches</strong></td>
<td>Legal continuity’ with the pre-Soviet past.</td>
<td>Modernisation theories.</td>
<td>Continuity with the Soviet past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imaginations of space</strong></td>
<td>‘Geography of border discipline’.</td>
<td>‘Geography of borderlessness’.</td>
<td>‘Geography of spatial legacies’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Femininities</strong></td>
<td>Woman as nation and ‘nature’.</td>
<td>Masculine heritage.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The ‘geographies of neo-nationalism’, can be analysed as reflecting a ‘geography of border discipline’, in which the borders are restored and redrawn in order to serve aims of defining the ‘new’ Latvian nation state, and its population, culture, and traditions. In my analysis, I have found that this includes restoring and reclaiming the ideals of the first Latvian independence, making the Soviet

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100 See Massey (2005) for a discussion of ‘Geography of border discipline’ and ‘Geography of borderlessness’.
occupation an ‘illegal’ time period, and thus advocating a ‘legal continuity’ with the pre-Soviet past. Within tourism-marketing and development, geographies of neo-nationalism are expressed through highlighting the past pre-Soviet cultural and musical heritage, which I have exemplified through a focus on the Latvian folk songs, Dainas, and the national song and dance celebration held every fifth year. Thus, tourism becomes a way of manifesting the interrelations between music and place, by highlighting a local musical heritage fostered by unique ancient traditions, and as constituting the ‘core’ or ‘soul’ of the nation state and its inhabitants, rooted in perceptions of the ‘homeland’ comprising a traditional agricultural landscape.

While the geographies of neo-nationalism largely reflect a wish to rebuild the foundations for the nation state in the post-socialist period by looking back into the past and making parallels to a previous ‘golden age’ in Latvian history, the independence has also included a search for new and alternative models of development. This search has been illustrated and discussed through geographies of Europeanisation, which largely have included a wish for identification with Western Europe and its economic and political structures as well as socio-cultural belonging. The reimagination of Latvia from ‘East’ to ‘West’ tends to reflect a quest for development through modernisation and more liberal economic strategies in the post-socialist period, opening up the Latvian borders for increasing trade with Western Europe, as well as promoting tourism as an integral part of how the economy should be reformed and grow into already-existing capitalist models of development and find its base in service-oriented sectors rather than ‘old’ Soviet structures of the economy.

The growth of the tourism sector has also been evident, for example, through the rise of tourist arrivals from Western European countries, especially since membership in the EU in 2004. Tourism-marketing also reflects a wish to manifest the reorientation towards Western Europe, with a focus on common features between Latvia and other European countries in terms of culture, architectural heritage and Riga as a modern capital. The increasing focus on tourism-marketing and image-building can be said to reflect a need for Latvia not only to recreate its borders as a nation state, but also to take part in active region-building and processes of regionalism within the EU, through more decentralised strategies and an active cooperation among regions and with supranational institutions. Thus, tourism destinations, such as, Riga, further need to mobilise in order to attract both investments and tourists, in order to achieve ‘competitive advantages’, and to position itself as the Latvian centre for continuous economic growth.
Within tourism, the three geographies illustrate how there is a constant negotiation among the rejection, preservation and commercialisation of the ‘Latvian’ cultural heritage. Some dimensions of ‘Latvia’ and ‘Latvianness’ are highlighted and put into focus while others are left on the periphery. Moreover, some cultural elements are considered to be protected through tourism, while others are commercialised and commodified, which also may be considered to be controversial for different reasons. Here, a tension between the geographies of neo-nationalism and the geographies of Europeanisation can be distinguished in terms of tourism development. On the one hand, tourism is portrayed as mainly an instrument for preserving the national traditional values, such as, the song and dance festival and Daïnas; but on the other hand, promoting the image of Latvia as the Land that sings has also increasingly been turned into an international event through the song and dance festival, attracting both foreign visitors and private sponsors, reflecting the desire to make the event more profitable and meet the criteria set up by the market.

Issues of commercialising the cultural heritage also appear as controversial when discussing the Soviet heritage in Latvia. The Soviet period is still embedded in negative perceptions and memories, expressed through a ‘victimisation ethos’, which tends to focus on the collective suffering of ethnic Latvians during the Soviet and Nazi regimes. Thus, the commercialisation of the Soviet period remains controversial, and constantly put in contrast to the geographies of neo-nationalism, with the aims of restoring Latvian traditions, language and values, while also conducting a ‘normalisation of space’, by replacing the physical remains from the Soviet period within symbols promoting Latvian unity and independence. Paradoxically, tourism sites, such as, the Freedom monument, would not embody the same meaning and symbolism without their occupational narratives, something demanded by tourists and something that attracts them. Thus, here lies a tension between making the past invisible and the demands for visibility and accessibility, on behalf of both the local population and foreign visitors.

The geographies of Europeanisation have parallels to what Massey (2005) terms the ‘geography of borderlessness’, where the aims of development already have been set for the world’s developing and transition countries, based on Western, capitalist standards and conducted through the ‘inevitable’ forces of globalisation. In this case, borders are regarded as having a more ‘negative’ meaning, which may hinder the free flows of trade and tourism. Thus, as within the EU, the focus is put on borders to other non-European countries rather than the borders between EU nation states. Both the Europeanisation and the
neo-nationalism approaches tend to disregard the remains from the Soviet period, focusing on a discontinuity with the past. In terms of the neo-liberal strategies, reforms (such as ‘shock-therapy’) advocated a clean break with the Soviet past and replace it with Western European models of development. The neo-nationalistic approach, however, puts focus on restoring the older pre-Soviet societal framework, for instance, through different political constitutions, as well as legislations relating to citizenship and language laws. Still, the analysis of national common space in terms of geographies of relic-communism has shown that it is not possible to reject or disregard fully the remaining structures from the Soviet period, neither in their physical nor their socio-cultural forms.

Here, the ‘geography of borderlessness’ can be put into relation to a ‘geography of spatial legacies’, which can be said to carve out boundaries and barriers within the Latvian nation state itself, based on existing socialist relics. These boundaries may take expression through language regulations and citizenship issues, which tend to identify groups of people as ‘non-Latvians’ due to their positions as immigrants during the Soviet regime. Thus, these types of policies together with other aims of ‘normalising space’ become ways of ‘dealing with the past’, but also indirectly involve reimagining the Latvian nation state as ‘divided’ between ‘ethnic’ Latvians and Russian-speaking minorities.

Throughout the thesis, I have advocated a more nuanced and diverse approach to the transformation process in Latvia, which recognises that post-socialist countries may take different pathways in their transition processes, and that each journey is geographically ‘situated’, which means recognising the local place-specific context for development. Even though I recognise the need for recognising past Soviet structures, I find it important not to get caught in a more deterministic way of interpreting the post-socialist period, but to find ways of analysing how these may be challenged and rejected. My main point here is to underscore how the three geographies interrelate and create a ‘unique’ mix, which brings the transformation process forward, by both having common and conflicting, aims and intentions. Thus, the post-socialist period includes an intermixture of the ‘new’ Western ideologies of Europeanisation, ‘old’ pre-Soviet traditional ideals, as well as ‘relics’ of communism, as traces from the Soviet period. Ideally, this would open up for what Massey terms the ‘geography of multiplicity and possibility’, a post-socialist national common space which does not constitute a tabula rasa, but is open for hybrid and multiple trajectories of development, and recognises contemporary diversity rather than merely clings on to past Soviet or pre-Soviet structures, or chooses already-set models of development.
Chapter fourteen – Transforming geographies of tourism and gender

Femininities and ethnicity

The thesis has illustrated how the different ‘reimaginations’ of Latvia, reflected within tourism, carry genderised meanings and identities, with a focus on femininities and questions of ethnicity. Concepts, such as space and place, are not gender-neutral, which has been a crucial point of discussion for feminist geographers. The wish to draw boundaries or to promote development by advocating one homogenous view of space tends to bear more masculine characteristics, reflecting, for example, the tendency to view the transition process as a simple shift from one state of development to another. The aims of the transition process tend mainly to concern activities in the public sphere, the need for economical and political reforms, for example concerning the ‘right’ level of GDP-growth, while issues relating to the relations between the private and the public, for instance, in terms of welfare and social questions tend to lag behind. Questions of gender and equality tend to be put aside due to the heritage from the Soviet period, when aims of gender-equality officially were on the political agenda, but have very much been regarded as a ‘failed’ project. Thus, opinions that “women should be allowed to be women, and men remain men” have emerged, indicating a restoration of more traditional ideals of femininity.

In my analysis of the three geographies, I have shown how tourism-marketing constructs and reflects different gender identities in general and femininities more specifically. By using the latter concept, the aim has been to recognise multiple sets of gender identities, in which different ideals of femininities may exist parallel and intersect with other social categories, such as, ethnicity. Here, the mutual interrelation between space/place and gender becomes crucial, when marketing a tourism destination with different symbolism and marketing language, thereby creating a relation between the tourist and the destination (including both the physical landscape and the host population) on the one hand, but also between the host population and the destination on the other. The three geographies all reveal different ways of how the relations between space/place and gender are expressed through tourism-marketing. Within the ‘geographies of neo-nationalism’, I used examples of how the cultural and musical heritage was used in tourism-marketing, with parallels to genderised imaginations of place. First and foremost, the reimaginations of the Latvian nation state have clear genderised symbolism, reproducing femininities in terms of ‘woman as nation’, celebrated and symbolic for the new nation state in line with more traditional ideals of femininity. The nation state has been discussed from different perspectives, but I have focused on its more socially-constructed dimensions, which tend to portray the nation state as constantly
being made, involving border and content negotiations. On the one hand, my analysis has revealed that representing ‘woman as nation’ includes a more positive celebration of femininity, in which women are made visible in the public sphere of the nation state, for example, through their participation and over-representation in the national song and dance celebration. On the other hand, the relations between place and gender are mainly connected to the private sphere. Women are portrayed as the reproducers of the nation in times of a ‘demographic crisis’ and low-birth rate, but this function refers to their place in the private sphere. Thus, women are celebrated in their biological and ‘natural’ roles, as mothers and caretakers, positioning women closer to nature rather than culture. In the latter case, women are portrayed as being in need of protection, in their roles as ‘mothers’ within the private sphere, but also in relation to feminised images of the rural agricultural landscape and ‘homeland’, threatened by external forces. Moreover, apart from their biological functions, women also become protectors of cultural values and traditions, and are entrusted with raising the future generations of Latvians, a duty performed within the home and family.

The feminised ideal of ‘woman as nation’ can be placed in contrast to the femininities discussed within the geographies of Europeanisation, which tend to highlight more provocative feminised representations within tourism-marketing. Riga as a tourism destination tends to be constructed based on more exotic and sexualised images, where the city is described as both sinful and dangerous. These representations are reproduced through marketing activities in both the private and the public sector, but also among the tourists visiting Riga, who also discuss their travel experience on different Internet forums. The ‘image’ of Riga as a sex tourism destination is highly complex and controversial, and needs to be analysed in relation to other societal issues, such as, gender equality, economic difficulties, legislation, etc. The potentially ‘innocent’ advertisements of Riga’s rich nightlife also tend to have connections to more organised prostitution and even trafficking. Furthermore, existing studies of prostitution in the Baltic countries have shown that it is not always regarded as a ‘problem’, but as a ‘natural’ effect of the transition process and the new market economy. Consequently, both representations of female bodies and actual sexual services tend to be bought and sold as any other commodity on the ‘free’ market. The tendency has been to ‘normalise’ prostitution, leaving it to the market forces rather than incorporating it as a state responsibility through stricter legislation, or making the male sex buyers (and sex tourists) visible rather than merely the female prostitutes. Despite the quest for more ‘liberal’
attitudes towards prostitution, the perceptions of women’s bodies and sexuality remain controversial. Women’s more ‘liberal’ sexuality in a more ‘public’ context is perceived as a threat to the ideals of ‘woman as nation’. Taking on a more ‘Western’ and open sexuality, which was not the norm during the Soviet occupation and does not correspond to the traditional ideals of femininity, also include making women deviant and sinful, and even responsible for swindling ‘innocent’ foreign tourists with one-night stands, thereby contributing to the image of Riga as a sex tourism destination. Thus, even though women follow the new ‘rules’ of the market economy, they are turned into ‘fallen women’, having lost their moral and judgement, positioned far from the cherished ideals of the ‘mothers of the nation’.

In the debates of sex tourism, the wish to restore Latvia’s ‘Western’ affiliation is not merely described as having positive characteristics. Analysing Riga as a ‘sex tourism destination’ also questions two central assumptions; firstly, it rejects the idea that the transition merely includes a simple shift from an ‘Eastern’ to a more ‘Western’ association. Secondly, it points to the fact that the dualisms between the ‘East’ and the ‘West’ need to be deconstructed and diversified from being treated as two separate, homogenous units. Paradoxically, the image of Riga as a sex tourism destination tends to portray the city as part of the ‘East’, despite its efforts of becoming a part of the ‘new’ Europe through active tourism-marketing, and economical and political networking. Thus, Riga still remains to some extent part of the exotic ‘Other’. This paradox is also evident in the geographies of relic-communism, where the wish to put the Soviet past behind is challenged by the tourists’ fascination for the Soviet relics, which are increasingly used for tourism-marketing and ‘sold’ through tourism activities within the private tourism sector. This heritage bears more masculine characteristics, highlighting remains associated with war, victory and occupation.

Consequently, Latvia in general and Riga more specifically as a tourism destination can be described as being ‘caught in-between’ the East and the West, revealing how ‘Eastern’ and ‘Western’ socio-cultural, economic and political influences are intertwined and mixed. Portraying Riga as a sex tourism destination uses exotic ideals of the ‘Eastern’ Other, but also includes ‘Western’ ideals of femininity and sexuality. Thus, the transition process has not resulted in Latvia automatically becoming part of the ‘West’, which would imply that Latvia merely adopts and adjusts to given ‘Western’ ideals and models. Rather, Latvia still bears traces of its ‘Eastern’ heritage, which is varied and diverse, and in some ways include an unique intermix of ethnic Latvian traditions, Russian
culture as well as Western European, capitalist influences; these all to some degree also shaped the society during the Soviet period. Moreover, by joining the European Union and searching for a more ‘Western’ belonging, Latvia also contributes to highlighting and challenging the ideas and perceptions of the ‘West’ as having a ‘core’ or ‘essence’. Thus, the transition process not merely involves a transformation of the Latvian society, but also comprises a change in the Western European society, affected by Eastern and Central European influences, socio-culturally, politically and economically. This may in turn break up the traditional division and dualism between the East and the West.

Tensions among the different geographies can also be distinguished when analysing more ‘ethnic’ representations within tourism-marketing, which reflect imaginations of the East/West and the ‘reborn’ Latvian nation state. As stated earlier, the reimagining of the nation state within geographies of neo-nationalism and relic-communism include drawing boundaries around and within its population, also identifying who is Latvian and who is not Latvian, based on ethnicity, language and cultural customs. Latvian tourism-marketing in general reflects a wish to manifest an ethnic ‘Latvian’ identity and definition of ‘Latvianess’, based on restoring the traditional pre-Soviet values and traditions which were suppressed during the Soviet regime. Little focus is put on highlighting the diverse minority cultures, including Russian-speaking groups’ traditions and culture. The Latvian population tends to be portrayed as a rather homogenous people in terms of language and traditions, even though the customs have been coloured by Russian influences. This leaves limited possibilities for recognising the Soviet past through multiple interpretations rather than one dominating narrative. Even though past occupational sufferings need to be taken into account, the absence of more open interpretations of the history may also result in more controversial usage of the past, merely focusing on the Soviet period and even glamourifying it, rather than analysing the contemporary situation. Within tourism, this is evident by making the ‘East’ exotic by using stereotypical interpretations of the past, which tend to reproduce the division between the East and the West.

Exploring geographies of gender, work and livelihood
The thesis has analysed the transforming gendered geographies in relation to women’s work and livelihood within tourism, based on two case studies: the emergence of rural tourism in the Cēsis district and the development of health and spa tourism in Jūrmala. The aim has been to put women’s livelihood strategies and practices in relation to the larger structural transformation process,
and discuss how work within tourism reflects or challenges existing gendered ideals of work and livelihood. Based on the three geographies, I have analysed different ‘ideals’ of femininities and work; traditional, Western, and the continuity of socialist ideals, which together also affect the spatial organisation of women’s livelihood, including paid and unpaid work within both the private and the public sphere. Just as with the three geographies, the different ideals of femininities constitute tools for analysis and should not be viewed as clear-cut and separate categories, but interrelated, diverse and multiple. Moreover, they should also be analysed as ‘situated’ and taking different expressions in different geographical, socio-cultural and economic contexts, which have been illustrated in the two case studies, when placing them in relation to ‘geographies of place’. The tensions among the different ideals of femininities also become evident in different ‘paradoxes’ of women’s livelihood, when comparing their everyday strategies and practices within tourism (see Table 18).

**Traditional ideals of femininities**

The ‘traditional’ ideals of femininities relate to the geographies of neo-nationalism and debates of whether women in the post-socialist period increasingly have reclaimed more conservative gender roles and identities, as a reaction to the previous socialist system, its gender neutrality and the ‘double’ burdens within the public and the private sphere. Moreover, the existence of the ideals has further been spurred by a ‘return-to-the-home’ rhetoric on a more political level, as a way of coming to terms with low-birth rates, the ‘demographic crisis’. Thus, there is a movement to reclaim women’s ‘natural’ femininity, as mothers and caretakers within the family and household, rather than promote them as active workers in the labour market, at the same as restoring men’s positions as the main family breadwinners.

An analysis of national statistics in Latvia does not support the assumption that women have increasingly left the labour market since independence. Rather, they show a decrease of female economically inactive persons, and the number of part-time workers is also lower compared to other European countries. Unemployment among women and men also tends to show similar patterns, even though women tend to register as unemployed to a greater extent than men. With this background, is it even relevant to speak of the existence of more ‘traditional ideals of femininities’ in the post-socialist period in Latvia? Based on the results of the interview study, I would suggest that these ideals still linger and are expressed differently in various local
contexts, even though the more extreme ‘return-to-the-home’ rhetoric seems to have had little effect.

Table 18: Interrelations between ideals of femininities and women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 18: Interrelations between ideals of femininities and women’s livelihood strategies and practices within tourism in the Cēsis district and Jūrmala.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographies of neo-nationalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Femininities, livelihood and work</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional ideals of femininities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The (Latvian) Mother.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Male breadwinner /female care-giver model.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>The Cēsis district</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographies of place</td>
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<tr>
<td>Traditional gender relations through the ‘rural idyll’.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practices</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work within the private sphere remains private.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jūrmala</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Geographies of place</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Strategies</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>From ‘housewife’ to ‘hotel maid’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Practices</strong></td>
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Source: Based on the results of the case studies, with a focus on the ‘geographies of place’ and the paradoxes illustrated in the concluding sections of the case study chapters.

In the Cēsis district, women expressed that it was more difficult for women than for men to find work, and that engaging in rural tourism as entrepreneurs became one of the few income alternatives apart from low-paid jobs in the public sector. The more traditional gender relations tend to prevail based on the perceptions of the ‘rural idyll’, which in some sense romanticises the rural way of life, for example, through activities such as rural tourism. Even though
women actively engage in the rural tourism business as entrepreneurs, the motives for entrepreneurship tend to be focused around the family, and become a strategy of maintaining their paid work parallel with taking the main responsibility for household work. Chores are often divided between ‘women’s’ and ‘men’s’ work, at the same time as work within the private sphere tends to remain a ‘private’ concern, due to the close association between chores within rural tourism and ‘regular’ household work, which do not achieve the same status as an ordinary job in the public sphere. Moreover, investments in the rural tourism businesses tend to be financed mainly by men, who normally had an additional job and income, while women’s income from work within the family businesses tended to be treated merely as an ‘extra bonus’ on top of men’s salaries as the main breadwinners in the family.

In Jūrmala, a similar ideal of the ‘female hostess’ within tourism can be distinguished, but in this case in terms of the employee within the hotel and spa sector. In this case, more traditional ideals of femininities were largely connected to the nature and contents of tourism-related work, which also tended to blur the boundaries between household chores and paid work such as cleaning in the hotels. Some of the interviewees also described their motives for working within tourism as relating to their previous roles as housewives, and that chores within tourism therefore were familiar and ‘easy’ to handle. Here a similar paradox can be found in terms of how work within tourism in some ways made ‘feminised’ work activities ‘public’ with a set price, rather than merely an unpaid activity conducted in the private sphere, and how the day to day duties to a certain degree involved ‘invisible’ feminised practices, in how the maids and cleaners had to follow certain regulations in order not to speak or even be noticed by the hotel guests. Moreover, the low wages within the tourism sector in Jūrmala also made it difficult for women to contribute to the household to a greater extent, and the men therefore tended to remain the main breadwinners in the family.

*Western* ideals of femininities

The ‘Western’ ideals of femininities put focus on women’s participation in the public sphere. However, not in terms of socialist ideals, but as effects of the financial reforms in the post-socialist period, which focus on promoting economic growth, competitiveness and entrepreneurship. This is related to geographies of Europeanisation, and EU-directives of how the European labour market should develop, and how the ‘Eastern’ new membership countries should ‘catch up’ with the ‘old’ EU-countries in terms of employment and un-
employment statistics. These strategies tend to appear as ‘gender-neutral’, but reveal rather masculine characteristics, for example, in the policies for promoting the new ideals of the competitive, rational and successful ‘entrepreneur’. Moreover, the increasing inflows of ‘Western’ consumption products have also paved the way for more ‘Western’ ideals of femininities; these include a reaction against the old gender-neutral communist ideals, and making each and every woman free to express her femininity through consumption, which further illustrate the importance of making money in the new labour market.

In the Čēsis district, the interviewees related in different ways to the ideal of the entrepreneur, but mainly through rejection, as they described themselves as ‘deviant’ from their perceptions of entrepreneurship. This was mainly based on the fact that only a few of the rural tourism businesses were driven by aims of profit-maximation and reinvesting their capital in the businesses or taking loans for extending their activities on a more large-scale. Rather, a majority of the female entrepreneurs referred to other motives for starting up their businesses, for example more ‘lifestyle-oriented’ motives, such as, sustaining livelihood and work in the countryside or more family-oriented motives. Thus, the rural entrepreneurs positioned themselves far from the ‘gender-neutral’, rational ideals of entrepreneurship. Still, I find it important in this context not to treat these forms of entrepreneurship as ‘deviant’ from the dominating ideals of entrepreneurship, but to analyse them as closely related to the rural socio-cultural context, as a way of using existing traditions of work and related gender relations as a way of ‘preserving’ the ideals of more traditional ideals of rural life. There were also exceptions to how female entrepreneurs, often those only temporarily residing in the countryside during the summer seasons, had more business-related strategies in their motives for work within rural tourism, including shouldering more ‘masculine’ ideals of doing business and making a career. Moreover, women’s work within rural tourism indirectly also had to be adjusted to more ‘modern’ and ‘Western European’ quality standards by following rules and regulations as well as the tourists’ requirements when organising and running their businesses.

In Jūrmala, the more ‘Westernised’ ideals of femininities were more evident in terms of how the tourism sector has developed into more commercialised forms during the last few years, in striding towards becoming a ‘modern’ international spa and health tourism resort. In this case, both natural and cultural resources, including labour and hospitality are commodified, and actively marketed on an international scale. The hotel and spa environment itself has also tended to constitute a rather ‘feminised’ environment, partly in
relation to the products and services offered, mainly targeting female tourists, and partly through the over-representation of women as employees within the spa hotels. However, the feminisation of tourism was not only referred to as reflecting more traditional ideals, but also as an arena for expressing femininity based more on commercialised ideals, making femininity visible in terms of looks and aesthetics. This also turned out to have more negative effects, since the employees expressed a concern that they also had rather exposed positions, and also became ‘objects’ for the male gaze and harassments. The more ‘Westernised’ ideals of femininities were also expressed through more career-oriented strategies, especially among those interviewees who had a higher education, and had actively chosen to make their individual career before starting their own family.

Continuity with socialist ideals of femininities
The third ideals of femininities relates to the geographies of relic-communism and highlights how previous socialist ideals of femininities and work have lingered in the post-socialist period; partly in how one of the main challenges for women has been how to balance work and family, indicating that women still face ‘double burdens’ which were evident in the post-socialist period. Partly, the labour market in Latvia and other post-socialist countries is still characterised by structures which date back to the Soviet period, in terms of occupational segregation, of which tourism is one example and pattern that has remained and where women still constitute the majority of the employees.

The continuity of a segregated labour market was evident in both the Jūrmala and the Cēsis district case study. In the latter region, the labour market was described as clearly divided between ‘men’s’ and ‘women’s jobs’, portraying men as more suitable for physical work within agriculture and the timber industry, while women’s place had remained in the more administrative jobs and service sector since the Soviet period. In Jūrmala, the service-oriented structure of the labour market remains a heritage from the Soviet period, in which women still constitute a majority of the employees within the tourism sector. The interview studies also revealed a continuation of old Soviet gendered working ideals in both Jūrmala and in the Cēsis district, where women were described as more ‘active’ compared to men in their search for employment or in taking up educational activities as an alternative for unemployment or being housewives. Women still tended to take on the roles of ‘the brave victim’, both caring for the family and maintaining their work in the public sphere for economic and traditional reasons. Women’s participation in
the public sphere was regarded as something ‘natural’ in a majority of cases, but also as a consequence of men not always taking their responsibility as the main family breadwinner. Thus, women were considered to be more eager to take more low paid jobs, while men struggled with a ‘male depression’, rooted in a loss of their breadwinning roles, even though men, especially in rural areas, were described as having an advantage in the local labour market. In Jūrmala, the quest for a career among some of the female interviewees may also be analysed as a continuation of socialist working ideals portraying women as men’s ‘equals’ in the public sphere, who should also have the same opportunities in making a career. In this case, the efforts also involved adjusting to more ‘masculine’ norms, in terms of leadership and management, while still maintaining their ‘femininity’ in the private sphere.

In the Ļēsi district, women’s livelihood practices tended to relate to more socialist ideals of how public work was made a ‘private’ concern, portraying the private sphere as the only reliable place for economic activities. This was described as connected to how the rural areas constituted means of restraint rather than opportunities in developing their rural tourism businesses, portraying the population as ‘unreliable’ and ‘passive’ when it came to employment or other jobs. Thus, a majority of the work within the rural tourism businesses was conducted within the family sphere. Moreover, the female interviewees also described how their businesses tended to operate on the border between the official and unofficial business sphere, due to a lack of trust in the economic and legal system governing the business environment. The use of private plots for family subsistence agriculture can also be analysed as a continuation of practices introduced during the Soviet period and as a preservation of more ‘traditional’ agricultural practices, rather than merely a strategy for economic ‘survival’.

In Jūrmala, the interview study also raised questions of ethnicity, as another dimension of a continuity of structures of the labour market rooted in the Soviet period. For some of the Russian-speaking interviewees, tourism constituted one of the few alternatives of employment due to insufficient Latvian language skills, and tourism was also perceived as a ‘safe’ option for work due to all year-round employment. Questions of ethnic minority possibilities on the Latvian labour market remain rather unexplored and also rather controversial since they touch issues of citizenship and language laws. Still, in the survey and interview study, it became evident that Russian-speaking women were over-represented within more lower-paid and lower-skilled professions within the hotel sector, such as cleaning or spa activities. On the
other hand, some of the Russian-speaking interviewees also described themselves as not having problems in finding jobs, and that the segregation also could have more positive dimensions, including working in a familiar Russian-speaking environment, and that they had use for their Russian language skills in the contact with foreign guests.

**Negotiating women’s ‘livelihood action space’**

The thesis has analysed the relation between ideologies and ideals of livelihood (through the three different geographies) on the one hand, and women’s livelihood practices and strategies on the other, exemplified through different means of livelihood (as entrepreneurs, employees or combining different forms of livelihood) in two separate regional contexts. One central question in this context has been to analyse how women’s individual ‘livelihood action space’ is negotiated and affected by their engagement in the tourism sector as employees or entrepreneurs. Does work within tourism provide a basis for more independent livelihood, and what ideals of femininities are challenged, rejected or adjusted to in relation between the public and the private sphere?

As has been discussed above, the interview study has shown how women relate to different ideals of femininities in their everyday lives within tourism. Analysing the relation between women’s livelihood strategies and practices has also revealed a number of paradoxes, between the quest for more independent livelihood while facing the restrictions of livelihood. These may be related to more structural constraints in terms of wages and employment conditions, but also to the local socio-cultural and economic context, as well as to family needs in terms of gendered ideals of work. Moreover, I have also shown that the possibility for women to negotiate their livelihood action space is related to other characteristics, such as class, family structure, age and ethnicity.

In the Cēsis district, women’s possibilities to negotiate their livelihood action space were mainly related to how they influenced their positions within the private sphere, since being an entrepreneur within rural tourism tended to blur the boundaries between the private and the public, and be based on a more traditional division of labour between women and men within the family. Even though the female entrepreneurs’ livelihood strategies involved a clear quest for freedom and economic independence, the day-to-day practices tended to involve certain degrees of adjustment in both space and time, constantly being tied to the home environment and continuing to take the majority of the responsibility for the household and children, first and foremost in their roles as ‘mothers’. Here, a paradox can be distinguished between entrepreneurship as
a consciously chosen ‘lifestyle’ in comparison to an ordinary office job, and a rather inflexible everyday life routine. However, there were also examples of how the more traditional division of work was challenged, and how entrepreneurship within rural tourism also provided more independent forms of livelihood. The more ‘urban-based’ and ‘business-oriented’ entrepreneurs tended to make a clearer division between work within tourism and their household routines, in which tourism-related work became more of a ‘hobby’ as well as a way of realising individual plans and projects. Moreover, even though the economic contributions women made to the household through their entrepreneurship were described as limited, the income had a symbolic importance as well, and gave them increased possibilities to invest in their own activities and have a say about how the household money should be used.

The limited space for more independent livelihood action space is rooted in the traditional gendered ideals of work and livelihood as discussed above, which tend to be pronounced in the rural areas, where the private sphere and family have remained to be an ‘escape’ and ‘sanctuary’ from an all too dominating state, such as during the Soviet period. Thus, in this case, the quest for reclaiming more ‘traditionally Latvian’ values in a more agrarian ideal fits well into socialist remains which valued the private over the public. There is still not a issue about a full return of conservative gender ideals, since the ideal of the active woman still lingers and guides women actively to find work and livelihood opportunities. Still, the ‘invisibility’ of women as entrepreneurs tends to be evident, which is mainly related to overall weak structures in the rural community as a whole, which do not fully recognise the local potentials, but still hope to attract external resources for development instead of creating supportive functions for both local female and male entrepreneurs.

In Jūrmala, the differences among women became even more evident than in the case study from the Cēsis district, in terms of age, class, family structure and ethnicity, which largely guided their possibilities to create more independent means of livelihood. In the Cēsis district, a majority of the female respondents were ‘ethnic’ Latvians, usually in their thirties and married with larger families. The survey in Jūrmala showed more diverse patterns, in which the age span of the female employees was much wider, as well as the family structure and with an almost equal share of both ‘ethnic’ Latvians and Russian-speaking respondents. Thus, the ways in which women negotiated their livelihoods were much more complex. On the one hand, the structural constraints for women’s livelihood can be described as more evident in Jūrmala compared with the Cēsis district, since tourism offered relatively low-paid and
low-skilled jobs, which automatically made it difficult for women to support themselves and their families based on their monthly wages. On the other hand, just as in the Cēsis district, the measures to affect the system were also evident through the use of unofficial payments, which for some of the interviewees provided opportunities for higher salaries without having to pay taxes. For others, this system involved a certain ‘risk’, since it also could jeopardise their future pensions and unemployment benefits. Those who struggled most with their livelihood practices were mainly older and Russian-speaking interviewees who in a sense got ‘caught’ in more low-paid jobs, due to a lack of education or language skills. Moreover, for the single women with children, a job within tourism was not enough to support the household, but they had to take on multiple jobs. At the other end of the spectrum, there were female interviewees who saw possibilities to make a career within tourism and who had the right educational and language skills to succeed and who also earned a higher income within tourism.

The interview study also showed that women had difficulties in negotiating their livelihood action space as employees in relation to the persistence of more traditional gendered ideals of livelihood. A majority of the married or cohabiting female employees tended to be responsible for a majority of the household chores, and relied on ideals of the ‘male breadwinner’. It was considered ‘natural’ that men would earn more than women, but the ideal of the ‘housewife’ was being negotiated and rejected, since it would contribute to a greater degree of dependence on their male counterparts. Thus, there was a delicate balance between the wish to be supported and the need for economic independence. The traditional ideals of femininity were mainly challenged and rejected by younger and career-oriented women, partly due to their higher income from tourism and partly due to the fact that they invested more time in their work compared to their unpaid work within the private sphere.

Looking beyond the horizon
Summing up, what have been my main contributions, in terms of the results of my study? Theoretically and empirically, I would claim that the study demonstrates the need for applying a feminist-geographical perspective on research of the post-socialist transformation, in Latvia and in other countries. This also includes tourism research of gender and work, which has mainly focused on Western European countries and developing countries. Through the use of the concept ‘national common space’, including the three geographies, I have also opened up for a more nuanced approach for analysing the transition by
Chapter fourteen – Transforming geographies of tourism and gender

illustrating how different economic, political and socio-cultural processes inter-relate and have spatial and genderised expressions, while also pointing out tensions among multiple ideological agendas, which are expressed and made visible within tourism development and marketing. By connecting the three geographies to different ideals of femininities and work and livelihood, the study has also contributed to the need to diversify both gender and work as theoretical categories. In both cases, I would say that my study has made women visible as individuals rather than as a group in the post-socialist transformation process, by focusing on their own day-to-day practices, rather than merely on the changes taking place on an abstract and institutional level. As has been underscored throughout the thesis, I find it central not to treat women as victims of the transition, but as active subjects and ‘agents’, who through their actions participate in affecting the outcomes of the transformation process. The women do not merely respond to the structural changes taking place in the labour market and within tourism, for example, through economic ‘survival strategies’, but also use situated socio-culturally embedded measures to face the new conditions in both the private and the public sphere.

The negotiation of women’s livelihood action space clearly illustrates how they actively participate in both adjusting to and challenging different ideals of femininities in the post-socialist period. Through the feminist-geographical approach, I have illustrated the need for recognising the mutual interrelationship between gender and place, with a focus on the spatial variations of how women negotiate their livelihood and different femininities in various forms in the rural Cēsis district and in Jūrmala. Thus, the femininities are also place-specific, rooted in a socio-cultural context, and take diverse forms, for instance, reflecting genderised perceptions of rurality and work, in relation to the public and the private sphere. The study has also highlighted questions of ethnicity and the labour market, which remain rather unexplored in terms of more qualitatively oriented studies. Therefore, issues of how different Russian-speaking minorities, both women and men, navigate in the labour market and what conditions for livelihood they find and use, would need to be researched in more depth.

The tourism sector, neither in its more small-scale nor large-scale form, should not be analysed as a ‘refuge’ of the ‘victims’ of the transition process, but instead provides different means of livelihood based on individual actions in relation to structural constraints and opportunities. In the interview study, discussions with local labour market representatives, as well as the female employees and entrepreneurs themselves, have stressed the role of women as
‘active survivors’, who have had it easier to find new ways of livelihood in the new market economy compared to their male counterparts. Consequently, it has been men who have been described as the potential ‘losers’ of the transition, and who have not fully found their roles either in the contemporary labour market, or in the family. This ‘crisis of masculinity’ has not been one of my focal points, but would need further analysis and research of how different masculinities are reproduced and constructed in the post-socialist period within tourism and other sectors.
Summary

This thesis explores different geographies of tourism, gender, work and livelihood in post-socialist Latvia. The study takes its departure point from the overall transformation process which has taken place since independence, with a focus on the reshaping of the tourism sector and women’s changing conditions for employment in the labour market in general and within tourism more specifically. The case studies illustrate how tourism both reflects and contributes to socio-cultural, economic and political change, including mirroring and transforming different gender identities and femininities. The thesis contains an analysis of women’s employment and livelihood within the tourism sector based on its ‘feminised’ character, in terms of women’s over-representation as employees, and how work within tourism often is given a ‘female-coding’.

Purpose and research questions

The general aim of the dissertation is to analyse the development of tourism in Latvia from a gender perspective in order to understand how different gendered identities in general, and different ‘femininities’ more specifically, are reflected, transformed and challenged within tourism. This more comprehensive purpose can in turn be divided into two separate and more specific aims; firstly, the aim is to analyse how tourism takes part in the reimagining and construction of the Latvian nation state, and how different spatial tourism representations in turn carry genderised meanings and identities. The second purpose relates to the transforming Latvian labour market and women’s work and livelihood within tourism. The purpose is to analyse how the reshaping of the Latvian tourism sector affects women’s livelihood strategies and practices, and how they in their turn reflect or challenge more dominating and gendered ideologies of livelihood and work.

The analysis of women’s work and livelihood within tourism is based on two case studies: entrepreneurship within rural tourism in the Cēsis district, and employment within the tourism sector in Jūrmala. In the case studies, the following research questions are highlighted:

• What are the motives and strategies for women’s employment and entrepreneurship within tourism? What differences and similarities can be distinguished between the rural and the more urban areas?
• How do place-specific traditions and conceptions of work and livelihood affect women’s livelihood possibilities?
Summary

• What conditions, possibilities and restrictions are implied in women’s everyday life by their employment and livelihood within tourism?
• Do women’s livelihood practices within tourism challenge or merely reflect traditional gender relations and identities based on prevailing norms about livelihood?

Theoretical framework
The thesis incorporates theories within feminist geography, with a focus on three interrelated concepts: gender identities, femininities and livelihood. Feminist geography applies a spatial perspective to feminist theory, in which place and space are not merely given physical attributes, but also genderised meanings, which means that (in)equality between the sexes varies across different spatial contexts. Gender identities are used in order to make a more diversified analysis of women’s employment, which focuses on the differences among women, rather than treating them as one homogenous group. Thus, every individual may inhabit a more diverse set of identities, and gender also intersects with other identities, such as ethnicity and class. The gender identities are illustrated as different femininities, which underscores that there is no single identity shared by all women, but that different norms of femininities exist parallel and vary across different contexts. The thesis explores a diverse set of femininities, including more ‘traditional’ ideals of femininities, some with roots in Latvian culture and with a focus on women’s roles within the family. Other ‘Western’ ideals of femininities also appear in terms of new lifestyle and working ideals, while the ‘old’ socialist ideals of femininities and work linger and are being negotiated, rejected and reproduced.

Livelihood is a central concept for the thesis, in order to analyse both paid and unpaid work within both the private and the public sphere, and its spatial dimensions in the mutual interrelations between work and home/family, which together set the framework for women’s livelihood possibilities. Livelihood has both social and material dimensions, which may include supporting both oneself and others in an economic sense, but also as a more social responsibility and care for children or other family members.

Methods and case studies
The thesis has mainly a qualitative approach, including semi-structured interviews and text analysis, but is also based on more quantitative data, in the form of a survey and Latvian statistical data, for example, encompassing tourist arrivals, and labour market statistics. The qualitative approach is rooted within
feminist methodology, as a way of acknowledging how the research process itself is subjective, situated and genderised. The case studies of the dissertation can be grouped into two main parts: firstly a section which focuses on how Latvia as a nation state and tourism destination in general and Riga more specifically are marketed and represented within tourism. In this case, the empirical material consists of a qualitative text analysis of tourism-marketing material as well as policy planning documents published by different state institutions regarding both tourism development and questions relating to the labour market. Complementary semi-structured interviews have also been conducted with different public actors responsible for these issues. Secondly, the thesis includes two case studies of women’s work and livelihood within tourism; one in the Cēsis district in the central/eastern part of Latvia which illustrates the development of more small-scale rural tourism, and the other in the city of Jūrmala, where large-scale health and spa tourism have emerged. The case studies in both the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala have had a similar design and aim, consisting of a survey and an interview study with both female employees and entrepreneurs within tourism, as well as representatives from local tourism organisations and municipalities.

(Re)imagining the national common space through tourism
How Latvia is reimagined and reconstructed both as a nation state and as a tourism destination is made through a framework based on the concept ‘national common space’, which consists of three different genderised ‘geographical imaginations’ of the Latvian nation state: geographies of neo-nationalism, geographies of Europeanisation and geographies of relic-communism. The three geographies are my own categorisations, constituting analytical tools for understanding the spatial dimensions of the Latvian transformation process, and are also based on existing post-socialist research, as well as my own empirical material. They denote how different aims and priorities for Latvia’s transitional process are revealed and prioritized, including what common national values are highlighted within tourism marketing, such as culture and traditions, which involve questions of belonging and transforming national, ethnic and genderised identities. Each of the three geographies can be viewed as constituting diverse ideological projects, for example, originating within nationalism, neo-liberal capitalism and multiple views of ‘development’, where each holds a certain imagination and conception of space and place. The aim is to illustrate the complexity and diversity of the transformation process, in how different post-socialist countries take multiple pathways depending on their national and local context. Thus, the transition is
illustrated as a dynamic and constantly on-going process, rather than merely a completed one-way shift between two known economic and political systems.

The ‘geographies of neo-nationalism’ are analysed as reflecting a wish to define the core elements of the ‘new’ Latvian nation state, its population, culture, and traditions, by reclaiming ideals from the first Latvian independence. Within tourism-marketing and development, geographies of neo-nationalism are expressed through highlighting the past pre-Soviet cultural and musical heritage, which is exemplified in the thesis through the Latvian folk songs, Dainas, and the national song and dance festival held every fifth year. Thus, tourism becomes a way of manifesting the interrelations between music and place by highlighting a local musical heritage as being fostered by unique ancient traditions, and as constituting the ‘core’ or ‘soul’ of the nation state and its inhabitants. The reimaginings of the Latvian nation state have clear genderised symbolism, reproducing femininities in terms of ‘woman as nation’, celebrated and symbolic for the new nation state in line with more traditional ideals of femininity, highlighting their biological and ‘natural’ roles as mothers and caretakers, positioning women closer to nature rather than culture.

The ‘geographies of Europeanisation’ include a wish for identification with Western Europe and its economic and political structures as well as socio-cultural belonging. This is evident through a quest for modernisation and neoliberal economic strategies in the post-socialist period, as well as in promoting tourism as an integral part of how the economy should be reformed and grow into already-existing capitalist models of development. Tourism-marketing reflects a wish to manifest the reorientation towards Western Europe, with a focus on common features between Latvia and other European countries in terms of culture, architectural heritage and Riga as a modern capital. Still, Riga as a tourism destination tends to be constructed based on more exotic and sexualised images, where the city is described as both sinful and dangerous. The thesis highlights how Riga struggles with an image of being a ‘sex tourism destination’, and how representations of female bodies and actual sexual services tend to be bought and sold as any other commodity on the new capitalist market. The tendency has been to ‘normalise’ prostitution, while condemning women’s more ‘Western’ and open sexuality which was not the norm during the Soviet occupation and does not correspond to the traditional ideals of femininity, which tend to make women deviant and even responsible for swindling ‘innocent’ foreign tourists with one-night stands.

Within the geographies of relic-communism, the transformation process is analysed as reflecting a ‘continuity of the past’, in how different legacies of the
Summary

Soviet past are still evident in post-socialist Latvia. Tourism has been affected by a general ‘normalisation’ process of ‘the post-socialist space’ in Latvia, including a removal of material ‘relics’ of communism and replacing them with symbols manifesting a newly established nation state. The remaining Soviet legacies are used and negotiated through tourism development and marketing, including processes of commercialisation within the private sector. Still, the use of the Soviet heritage within tourism remains a controversial question, especially by local inhabitants and public institutions, for whom it still contains more negative perceptions and memories of the past. The re-interpretations of Latvian culture and history within tourism tend to be selective rather than open and multiple, based on a ‘victimisation ethos’, with a focus on past sufferings of ‘ethnic’ Latvians. Thus, the absence of interpretation of a more diverse socio-cultural ‘Russian’ heritage in the public sphere opens up for more commercialised and stereotypical versions of the past. These more ‘masculine’ forms of Soviet heritage also reinforce the ‘East’ as a ‘playground’ for Western (male) tourists, providing adventure activities which may be combined with more sexual services.

Exploring geographies of gender, work and livelihood

The three geographies are also related to different ideals of femininities, work and livelihood in both a socialist and a contemporary Latvian context. The thesis relates the transforming gendered geographies to women’s livelihood strategies and practices, and the question of how their work within tourism reflects or challenges existing genderised ideals of work and livelihood. The livelihood strategies refer to the background and motives behind women’s employment or entrepreneurship within tourism, which do not necessarily have to involve merely rational, strategic and conscious planning, but may be guided by the place-specific contexts, and different possibilities at hand. The outcomes of the strategies may differ from the original intentions, and therefore the case studies also put focus on women’s everyday livelihood practices in relation between the public and the private sphere. Here, the thesis includes an analysis of what space for women’s more independent livelihood is created in relation to their practice orientations within tourism.

Based on the three geographies, three different ‘ideals’ of femininities and work are distinguished as part of national common space: traditional, Western, and the continuity of socialist ideals, which together are expressed through the spatial organisation of women’s livelihood, including paid and unpaid work within both the private and the public sphere. Together with ‘geographies of place’,
which constitute the local physical and socio-cultural context for livelihood, the femininities are analysed as constituting the ideological and structural framework for women’s livelihood. Women relate to these ideologies in their everyday life, but also take part in shaping the femininities through their practices.

The ‘traditional’ ideals of femininities have parallels to geographies of neo-nationalism and focus on reclaiming women’s ‘natural’ femininity, as mothers and caretakers within the family and household rather than promoting them as active workers in the labour market, while restoring men’s positions as the main family breadwinners. In the Cēsis district, the traditional gender relations tend to prevail based on the perceptions of the ‘rural idyll’, which in some sense romanticises the rural way of life. Here, the motives for entrepreneurship tend to be focused around the family, and become a strategy for maintaining their paid work parallel to taking the main responsibility for household work. In Jūrmala, more traditional ideals of femininity were largely connected to the nature and contents of tourism-related work, which also tended to blur the boundaries between household chores and paid work such as cleaning in the hotels.

The ‘Western’ ideals of femininities are related to geographies of Europeanisation, and EU-policies of employment and entrepreneurship, which tend to appear as ‘gender-neutral’ with aims of increasing women’s participation in the labour market, but reveal rather masculine characteristics in terms of the competitive, rational and successful ‘entrepreneur’. Moreover, the increasing inflows of ‘Western’ consumption products have also paved the way for more ‘Western’ ideals of femininities which include a reaction against the old gender-neutral communist ideals. In the Cēsis district, the interviewees related in different ways to the ideal of the entrepreneur, but mainly through rejection, as they described themselves as ‘deviant’ from their perceptions of entrepreneurship. Still, there were also exceptions to how female entrepreneurs took on more business-related strategies in their motives for work within rural tourism, including shouldering more ‘masculine’ ideals of doing business and making a career. In Jūrmala, the more commercialised ideals of femininities, were evident through making femininity visible in terms of looks and aesthetics.

The interviewees also expressed more career-oriented strategies and practices, especially those interviewees who had a higher education, and had actively chosen to make their individual career before starting their own family.

The socialist ideals of femininities relate to the geographies of relic-communism and highlight how ideals of femininities and work rooted in the Soviet period have lingered in the post-socialist period. These were evident, for
example, through the continuity of a segregated labour market based on sex, in which women have remained within ‘female professions’ such as service and tourism, even though the official Soviet ideology advocated a challenge of traditionally male and female professions. The interview studies also revealed a continuation of old Soviet gendered working ideals in both Jūrmala and in the Cēsis district, where women were described as more ‘active’ compared to men in their search for employment or for educational activities as an alternative to unemployment or being housewives. Women’s participation in the public sphere was regarded as something ‘natural’ in a majority of cases, but also as a consequence of men not always taking their responsibility as the main family breadwinner.

**Negotiating women’s ‘livelihood action space’**

The analysis of the relation between women’s livelihood strategies and practices reveals a number of *paradoxes*, between the quest for a more independent livelihood while facing the restrictions of livelihood. These may be related to more structural constraints in terms of wages and employment conditions, but also linked to the place-specific, socio-cultural and economic context. The mutual interrelationship between *gender* and *place* became evident in the case studies, showing spatial variations of how women negotiated their livelihood and different femininities between the rural Cēsis district and Jūrmala. Gender also intersected with other traits, such as class, family structure, age and ethnicity. In the Cēsis district, women’s possibilities to negotiate their livelihood action space were, for example, mainly related to how they influenced their positions within the private sphere, since being an entrepreneur within rural tourism tended to blur the boundaries between the private and the public and be based on a more traditional division of labour between women and men within the family. Even though the female entrepreneurs’ livelihood strategies involved a clear quest for freedom and economic independence, the day-to-day practices tended to involve certain degrees of adjustment in both space and time, constantly being tied to the home environment and continuing to take the majority of the responsibility for the household and children. In Jūrmala, tourism offered relatively low-paid and low-skilled jobs, which automatically made it difficult for women to support themselves and their families based on their monthly wages. The custom of unofficial payments within the tourism sector, was for some of the interviewees regarded as advantageous since they did not pay taxes; but for others, it involved a certain ‘risk’ since it also could jeopardise their future pensions and unemployment benefits. Those who struggled most with their
Summary

livelihood practices were mainly older Russian-speaking interviewees who in a sense got ‘caught’ in more low-paid jobs, due to a lack of education or language skills. Moreover, for the single women with children, a job within tourism was not enough to support the household, but they had to take multiple jobs. Even though the economic contributions which women made to the household in both the Cēsis district and in Jūrmala was limited, the income had a symbolic importance as well, and giving women increased possibilities to invest in their own activities and have a say in how the money for the household should be used. In a majority of cases, the ideal of the man as the main breadwinner was maintained, but more conservative ideals of femininities, such as the ‘housewife ideal’, were negotiated and rejected, since they were considered to contribute to a larger degree of dependence on their male counterparts.
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Female representative, Latvian rural tourism association, August 2005.
Female representative 1, Ministry of Welfare, August 2005.
Female representative 2, Ministry of Welfare, August 2005.

\textsuperscript{101} See chapter 2 for an overview of the interview study, and chapters 9 and 12 detailed lists of interviewees in the Jūrmala and the Cēsis district case studies.

The Cēsis district:
Chairman 1, rural municipality, August 2005.
Chairman 2, rural municipality, August 2005.
Chairwoman, rural municipality, August 2005.
Female Tourist Information Centre employee, rural municipality, August 2005.
Male representative, Cēsis tourism council, August 2005.

Jūrmala
Female representative 1, Jūrmala tourism information centre, April 2006.
Female representative 2, Jūrmala tourism information centre, February 2007.
Female representative, Jūrmala City Council, April 2006.
Female representative State Employment Agency, Jūrmala branch, August 2005.
Male labour market consultant, April 2006.
Male representative, Jūrmala City Council 2004.
Appendix 1: Interview themes female entrepreneurs within rural tourism

**Background**
- Education: (Field/subjects, occupational/academic education, courses etc.).
- Previous working experience: (Employment and unemployment. Experience of entrepreneurship? Occupational background of parents?)
- Family: (Household structure, children, childcare, husband's occupation and working hours).
- Rural residence: (Background to rural residence, “local”/”in-mover”. All year-round residence? Former place of residence, motives to moving to the countryside. Connection/attachment to place of residence).

**The rural tourism business**
- Company structure: (Type of business, ownership, location).
- Rural tourism activities: (Services, products, seasonality).
- Visitors: (Yearly distribution, domestic/international visitors, marketing).
- Employees: (Recruitment process, type of employment. Full-time? Unofficial, official basis? Women/men, work assignments).
- Financing/investments: (Background to ownership and acquirements of property/house. Access to EU-funds, problems/possibilities when starting up the business, risk taking).
- Contacts and networks: (Support and business contacts with municipality, local organizations, support from family/friends/neighbours).

**Motives for starting the business**
- The main ideas behind the business: (Main initiative taker. How has former working experience and/or contacts influenced the decision?).
- Main motives: (The main driving forces? Why is it attractive to have one’s own business?)
- Entrepreneurship: (Self-image: being an entrepreneur? Restrictions and possibilities of being a female entrepreneur in the countryside?).
- Rural tourism: (Why is rural tourism important and attractive as a business opportunity? Potentials and problems).
The local labour market  (Restrictions and possibilities for working and living in the countryside. Women and men's positions and possibilities on the local labour market. "Traditional" employment?).

Current work within rural tourism
Main work assignments  (The daily routines, an "ordinary day at work", contacts with guests, positive and negative experiences).

Working conditions  (Working hours, seasonality, stress, flexibility. Tourism as 'women's work'? Combining entrepreneurship and family, access to childcare and services).

Division of work  (How is the work within the family business divided between the family members?).

Leisure time  (Extent, activities, restrictions and possibilities).

Additional work
Additional employment  (Background, main work assignments, working hours. Problems/possibilities in combining entrepreneurship with other employment?)

Household work  (Time spent on household work, daily routines, division of work between family members. Status of household work).

(Housewife)  (Background to becoming a housewife, work chores, advantages/disadvantages).

Income and livelihood
Income from rural tourism  (Distribution throughout the year, effects of seasonality, expansion, risk taking?).

Livelihood  (Direct and indirect dependence of income from tourism, unofficial/official income, distribution of individual/household income, sufficient in terms of expenses?).

Additional income  (Income from employment, pension, social benefits, main income provider?).

The future
Individual goals  (Personal aims and scenarios, challenges and opportunities).

Business goals  (Plans of expansion, new projects, career, potentials and problems).
Appendix 2: Interview themes female employees within tourism

### Background

**Education**
(Field/subjects, occupational/academic education, courses etc.).

**Previous working experience**
(Employment and unemployment. Occupational background of parents?)

**Family**
(Household structure, children, childcare, husband’s/boyfriend’s education, occupation and working hours).

**Place of residence**
(Background to place and type of residence, “local”/”in-mover”. Former places of residence. Connection/attachment to place of residence).

### Current work within tourism

**Main work assignments**
(The daily routines, an “ordinary day at work”, contacts with guests, positive and negative experiences).

**Working conditions**
(Working hours, seasonality, stress, flexibility. Rules, demands and regulations. Social/physical working environment. Tourism as ‘women’s work’? Combining paid work and family, access to childcare and services, commuting).

**Leisure time**
(Extent, activities, restrictions and possibilities).

### Motives behind work within tourism

**Main motives**
(Why tourism/services? Choice of sector, is tourism attractive, why/why not? What qualifications are needed?).

**The local labour market**
(Restrictions and possibilities of finding employment on the local labour market. Women and men’s positions and possibilities on the labour market. Discrimination? Positive and negative experiences).

**(Ethnicity and citizenship)**
(How/when acquired citizenship, motives why/why not applied, language knowledge, networks with Russian and Latvian-speakers, restrictions and possibilities for employment).
**Additional work**

Additional employment (Background, main work assignments, working hours. Problems/possibilities in combining different forms of employment?).

Household work (Time spent on household work, daily routines, division of work between family members. Status of household work).

(Studies) (Background, subject/program, time and costs, routines).

(Housewife) (Background to becoming a housewife, work chores, advantages/disadvantages).

**Income and livelihood**

Income from rural tourism (Distribution throughout the year, effects of seasonality?).

Livelihood (Direct and indirect dependence of income from tourism, unofficial/official wages, distribution of individual/household income, sufficient in terms of expenses?).

Additional income (Income from employment, pension, social benefits, main income provider?).

**The future**

Individual goals (Personal aims and scenarios, challenges and opportunities).

Work-related goals (Plans of new employment, education, career, potentials and problems).
Appendix 3: Questionnaire for survey of employment within tourism in Jūrmala and in the Cēsis district.

1. PERSONAL BACKGROUND
   As an introduction to this survey, please tell us a bit about your personal background, including information about your family and household.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Options/Instructions</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Sex</td>
<td>Woman, Man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2 How old are you?</td>
<td>Age:___________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 What is your native language?</td>
<td>Latvian, Russian, Lithuanian, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 What other languages do you speak fluently?</td>
<td>Latvian, Russian, English, German, Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4 Do you have a Latvian citizenship?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If your answer is No: What is your citizenship?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 What is your current place of residence?</td>
<td>Name of city/town/village:________________________ Postal code ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6 How long have you lived at your current place of residence?</td>
<td>Number of year(s):________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7 Were you born and/or raised at your current place of residence?</td>
<td>Yes, No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If your answer is No: What is your place of birth?</td>
<td>Name of City/town________________________ Postal code:______________________________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.8 What is your marital status?
- Never married
- Married
- Divorced/widowed
- Cohabitation

1.9 Do you have children?
- Yes
- No (please go to question 2.1)

*If your answer is Yes, please specify:*
Number of children ______________
Age __________________________

1.10 Does any of your children still live in the household?
- Yes
- No

1.11 If you have pre-school children, how do you solve daytime childcare?
- Public childcare
- Private childcare
- A nanny takes care of the children
- I take care of the children myself
- My husband/wife takes care of the children
- A friend/relative takes care of the children
- Other ________________________________

---

1 In the Latvian version of the questionnaire, this question included two options for cohabitation: (1) Ir civilsieve/civilvīrs (2) Kopdzīve ar kādu.
## 2. EMPLOYMENT WITHIN TOURISM
The following section is aimed at gaining insight to your current work within tourism, your field of work, working hours, wage etc.

### 2.1 What is your current employment situation within tourism?

- [ ] I am permanently employed
- [ ] I am temporarily employed (as a substitute or within a project)
- [ ] I am seasonally employed
- [ ] I am a company owner (with 1 employee or more)
- [ ] I am an owner of a family business (shared ownership between husband and wife or other family members)
- [ ] I am self-employed (no employees)

Other: _________________________________
_____________________________________

### 2.2 In what sector do you work?

- [ ] In the public sector
- [ ] In the private sector

### 2.3 In what field of tourism do you work?

Your field of work can include both tourist related products and services. 

(More than one option may be marked)

- [ ] Accommodation (Hotel, guest house, holiday home, camping etc.)
- [ ] Sightseeing (Incoming tour operator, guiding, rental etc.)
- [ ] Conference and event
- [ ] Tourism attraction (Museum, amusement park etc.)
- [ ] Tourist information centre
- [ ] Public planning department
- [ ] Handicraft/art (Wood carving, painting etc.)
- [ ] Agricultural products (Mushroom picking, vegetables)

Other: _________________________________

Please describe your field of work in more detail:

_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________
_____________________________________
### 2.4 What is your main work assignment?

**Your main work assignment is what takes up the most of your time when working within tourism**

(Please choose only one alternative!)

- Guest booking (over the phone or the Internet etc.)
- Cleaning
- Restaurant or kitchen work (cooking, waitressing etc.)
- Bar
- Construction work/technical repair
- Health treatment/SPA
- IT/computer work (website etc.)
- Front office (reception work etc.)
- Administrative work (accounting, book keeping etc.)
- Marketing
- Management (supervision, recruitment etc.)
- Guiding
- Other: __________________________________________

Please describe your work assignments in more detail:

_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________
_______________________________________________

### 2.5 For how long time have you worked at your current place of work?

- Less than 1 year
- 1-2 years
- 3-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

If you have a family business, who took the main initiative for starting your business?

- I did
- My wife/husband did
- Someone else did (friend, relative etc)

### 2.6 How many employees does your current place of work have?

**Please specify the number of employees in high season**

- 0 employees
- 1-9 employees
- 10-20 employees
- 21-50 employees
- More than 50 employees
### 2.7 Where is your current place of work located?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of city/town/village</th>
<th>Postal code</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 2.8 Do you work within tourism all year around?

- Yes (please go to question 2.9)
- No

*If your answer is No: What month(s) do you generally work within tourism? (More than one option may be marked)*

- January
- February
- March
- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December

### 2.9 When working within tourism, how are your working hours officially regulated?

- On a full-time basis (40 hours/week)
- On a half-time or part-time basis
- On an hourly basis
- I decide my own working hours as self-employed or as a company owner

*If you are not full-time employed: How many hours per week in average do you work?***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(hours/week)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

### 2.10 How much overtime do you work in average each week?

- I do not work overtime (40 hours or less a week)
- I work **less** than 10 hours overtime a week
- I work **more** than 10 hours overtime a week

*Overtime is here referred to as tourism related work exceeding more than 40 hours a week, which can be both paid and unpaid.*

### 2.11 What is your average monthly income from work within tourism?

- Less than 100 LVL/month
- 100-250 LVL/month
- 250-500 LVL/month
- 500-700 LVL/month
- More than 700 LVL/month

*Please estimate your monthly income (before taxes) during high season*
3. ADDITIONAL WORK AND INCOME

Work within tourism is often seasonal in its character, and other income sources may therefore be necessary. This section investigates whether or not you have additional work and income besides your work within tourism. Some questions are also related to unpaid, household work.

### 3.1 Is work within tourism your main source of income?

- Yes
- No

The main source of income is here referred to as 50 percent or more of your total annual income.

### 3.2 Do you have additional paid work besides your work within tourism?

- Yes
- No (please go to question 3.6)

*If your answer is Yes: What is your employment situation at your additional job?*

- I am permanently employed
- I am temporarily employed (as a substitute or within a project)
- I am seasonally employed
- I am self-employed
- I am a company owner
- I am an owner of a family business
- Other

*From which sector is your additional income generated? (more than one option may be marked)*

- Agriculture, hunting and fishing
- Forestry
- Manufacturing
- Health
- Social work and child care
- Education
- Public administration
- Transport, storage and communication
- Construction
- Real estate, renting and business activities
- Trade (retail and wholesale, repairing)
- Domestic services
- Artistic work or handicraft
- Other: ________________________________________
  ______________________________________________
3.3 Do you have additional paid work all year around?

- Yes (please go to question 3.4)
- No

*If your answer is No: What month(s) do you generally have additional paid work?*

(More than one option may be marked)

- January
- February
- March
- April
- May
- June
- July
- August
- September
- October
- November
- December

3.4 How are your working hours officially regulated at your additional paid work?

The officially regulated working hours are those set up by your employer or company

- On a full-time basis (40 hours/week)
- On a half-time or part-time basis
- On an hourly basis
- I decide my own working hours as self-employed or as a company owner

*If you are not full-time employed: How many hours per week in average do you work?*

__________________ (hours/week)

3.5 What is your average monthly income from additional paid work?

Please estimate your monthly income (before taxes)

- Less than 100 LVL/month
- 100-250 LVL/month
- 250-500 LVL/month
- 500-700 LVL/month
- More than 700 LVL/month

3.6 Do you receive any governmental subsidies?

Government subsidies are here referred to as social and economic benefits from the state on a national, regional or local level

- Yes
- No

*If your answer is Yes: What type of subsidies do you receive?*

- Unemployment subsidy
- Pension
- Sick leave subsidy
- Student grant
- Agricultural subsidy
- Company related subsidy
- Other: _________________________________________
### 3.7 Who is the main income provider in your household?

The main income provider is here referred to as the person whose wage constitute the majority (50% or more) of the household’s total income.

- [ ] I am the main income provider *(please go to question 3.8)*
- [ ] My husband/wife/partner is the main income provider
- [ ] My husband/wife/partner and I contribute an equal amount of income to the household *(please go to question 3.8)*

If your husband/wife/partner provides the main income, within what sector does she/he work? *(more than one option may be marked)*

- [ ] Agriculture, hunting and fishing
- [ ] Forestry
- [ ] Manufacturing
- [ ] Health
- [ ] Social work and child care
- [ ] Education
- [ ] Public administration
- [ ] Transport, storage and communication
- [ ] Construction
- [ ] Real estate, renting and business activities
- [ ] Trade (retail and wholesale, repairing)
- [ ] Domestic services
- [ ] Artistic work or handicraft
- [ ] Tourism
- [ ] Student
- [ ] Pensioner
- [ ] Other: _______________________________________

### 3.8 Do you engage in any additional unpaid housework?

Unpaid housework is here referred to as unpaid, domestic chores such as cleaning, cooking or agricultural work for household needs.

- [ ] Yes
- [ ] No *(please go to question 3.10)*

If your answer is Yes: What does the unpaid household work include? *(More than one option may be marked)*

- [ ] Agriculture *(for household needs)*
- [ ] Husbandry *(for household needs)*
- [ ] Cleaning
- [ ] Cooking
- [ ] Child care
- [ ] Other: _______________________________________
### 3.9 How many hours per week in average do you spend on unpaid housework?

Unpaid housework is here referred to as unpaid, domestic chores such as cleaning, cooking or agricultural work for household needs

- 1-5 hours/week
- 6-10 hours/week
- 11-15 hours/week
- 16-20 hours/week
- More than 20 hours/week

### 3.10 How are the domestic chores divided between the members of the household?

Domestic chores are here referred to work such as cleaning, cooking or agricultural work for household needs

- I do all the work myself
- I do the majority of the work
- I share the work equally with my husband/wife/partner/other member of the family
- My husband/wife/partner/other family member does a majority of the work
- My husband/wife/partner does all the work
- A housekeeper does the majority or all of the work
- Other: ___________________________
4. FORMER EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

As a background of your employment within tourism, the following question will relate to your former employment situation and educational background.

4.1 Level of education

- Compulsory school (grade 1-9)
- Upper secondary school
- Higher education (university, college, etc)

4.2 Do you have a higher education from the tourism field?

Higher education is here referred to as a college or university degree

- Yes
- No (please go to question 4.3)

If your answer is Yes:
Please specify the college/university and year of your degree:

University/College____________________
____________________

Year____________________

How quickly did you find a job within tourism after your degree?

- After 0-6 months
- After 7-12 months
- After 1-2 years
- After more than 2 years

4.3 Before you got your current job within tourism, what was your employment situation?

- Permanently employed
- Temporarily employed (as a substitute or within a project)
- Seasonally employed
- Self-employed
- Company owner
- Owner of a family business
- Family worker (house wife etc.)
- Student (please go to question 4.6)
- Unemployed (please go to question 4.6)
- Pensioner (please go to question 4.6)
- Other____________________

---

2 In the Latvian version of the questionnaire, this question included two separate options for upper secondary school: special/technical college (Speciālā izglītība) and regular upper secondary school (Videjā izglītība).
| 4.4 Within what sector did you work? | □ Public  
□ Private  

*Please specify:*  
□ Agriculture, hunting and fishing  
□ Forestry  
□ Manufacturing  
□ Health  
□ Social work and child care  
□ Education  
□ Public administration  
□ Transport, storage and communication  
□ Construction  
□ Real estate, renting and business activities  
□ Trade (retail and wholesale, repairing)  
□ Domestic services  
□ Artistic work or handicraft  
□ Tourism  
□ Other ________________________ |

| 4.5 Where did you work or study? | City/town/village: ________________________  
Postal code *(If possible):* ________________________ |

| 4.6 Where did you live while working or studying? | □ At my current place of residence  
□ Other *(Name of city/town/village):* ________________________ |
5. A BACKGROUND TO YOUR WORK WITHIN TOURISM
The motives behind the decision to work within the tourism sector vary, and might be related to a personal interest. Tourism might also appear as one of the few options for economic livelihood. This section contains questions and statements relating to possible motives and reasons that might have affected your decision to work within tourism. Some questions also relate to your opinions about your current work within tourism.

5.1 What were the reasons behind your decision to work within tourism? Please comment each of the following statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>I strongly agree</th>
<th>I agree more or less</th>
<th>I only partly agree</th>
<th>I disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I was unemployed and needed a job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I saw a future in the development of the tourism industry in Latvia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I had few employment options except within the tourism sector</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I wanted a job in which I could meet people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I wanted to work in a pleasant physical environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I needed additional work</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I wanted to both work and live in the countryside</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I wanted to start my own business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I wanted to make my own career</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I wanted to have my own independent income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I wanted to be able to combine work and family by working at home</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I wanted a work alternative or complement to traditional agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. I wanted an interesting job</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I wanted to have a safe and reliable income</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I wanted to continue a family business</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Please describe your motives for working within tourism in more detail: __________________________

___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________

5.2 What is your opinion about your current work within tourism? Please comment the following statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>I strongly agree</th>
<th>I agree more or less</th>
<th>I only partly agree</th>
<th>I disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I enjoy working within the tourism sector</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Work within tourism is relatively well paid compared to other jobs in Latvia</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I see good opportunities to make a future career in tourism</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My work within tourism is only temporary</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Working within tourism includes taking some economic risks</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Work within tourism is traditionally associated with “women’s work”</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I have use of my skills or education in my work</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My work provides me with new challenges and experiences</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Work within tourism involves freedom and flexibility</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. My work within tourism is a reflection of my personal lifestyle and identity</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Working within tourism has a positive image</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3 How would you describe your current work within tourism?

*Please choose 5 of the following statements*

- Stressful
- Independent
- Social
- Creative
- Challenging
- Modern
- Time consuming
- Rational
- Traditional
- Hierarchal
- Flexible
- Personal
- Secure
- Varied
- Profitable

Other comments: 
__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________

Thank you for your assistance!

*If you have comments about the questionnaire or your work within tourism, please specify them here:*
__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________  
__________________________________________________________________________

May we contact you later for an interview?
- Yes
- No

Contact details:
Telephone number: __________________________
E-mail: __________________________
Transforming geographies of tourism and gender

Latvia has experienced extensive political, economic and social transformation in the period following independence. From being a centrally-controlled tool for socialist ideals, tourism today is often viewed as a means for creating national and regional economic growth and employment possibilities. This thesis explores how tourism takes part in the transformation process, in how Latvia is reimagined both as a nation state and as a tourism destination, by analysing its genderised and spatial dimensions. Using a feminist-geographical theoretical approach, the study analyses how gender identities in general and femininities more specifically are reflected and negotiated within tourism marketing and women’s employment and livelihood practices within tourism. Based on three interrelated ‘geographies’, the thesis illustrates how tourism becomes an arena for reclaiming a Latvian national identity rooted in a pre-Soviet past, while also manifesting a Western European identity, and negotiating the remains of the controversial Soviet heritage. This process reveals, for example, traditional feminised characteristics of the nation state. Two case studies of female employees and entrepreneurs within rural tourism and spa/health tourism also show how women negotiate different ideals of femininities, including ‘traditional’, ‘Western’ and ‘socialist’ ideals, through their everyday livelihood strategies and practices within both the public and the private sphere.