

# Latgalian CV



Rēzeknes Augstskola  
(Rēzekne University College)

# Latgalian CV

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IEGULDĪJUMS TAVĀ NĀKOTNĒ

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„Teritoriālās identitātes lingvokulturoloģiskie  
un sociālekonomiskie aspekti Latgales reģiona attīstībā”

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# ◆◆◆ Introduction ◆◆◆

## VASALS LATGOLĀ!

Latgale is one of the four regions of Latvia. In many respects, the culture, the socioeconomic characteristics and the history of Latgale differ from the other regions of Latvia. The inhabitants of Latgale have their own traditions, mentality and also their own language. As the philosopher Pauls Jurevičs wrote: *“Europeans have more or less the same attitude to us [Latvians] as we have to Latgalians – they are more warmhearted, more emotional, more sensitive than we are”* (Jurevičs 1973).

The aim of this brochure is to give you an impression of the beauties of Latgale, to introduce you to Latgalian cultural wealth and diversity in linguistic, ethnic and religious terms. In addition, you will get an overview of important developments in the history of Latgale and of the magnificence and the functionality of the Latgalian language and literature. The chapters on Latgalian music and media will tell you about contemporary genres, rhythms, feelings and ideas in Latgalian culture. Finally, you will be able to pick up a few important phrases and individual expressions in Latgalian.

We believe that the region of Latgale has a lot to offer, can prepare itself for a successful future and we are happy that the people of Latgale have neither lost their wish to maintain their cultural heritage nor to develop new values and ways of expressing themselves. We hope that the information in this brochure will give you an insightful introduction to or a deeper understanding of Latgale and its inhabitants, that you will be able to find out if stereotypes that you might have are true or not, and that you will understand the particularities of Latgale and its potential to compete within Latvia and Europe.

Enjoy reading – enjoy Latgale!

The authors



## ◆◆◆ Basic Data ◆◆◆

### LATGALIAN (LATGALIETIS)

❖ The name *Latgalian* derives from the name of one of the most ancient and biggest Baltic tribes – *latgaļiem*. The version with an e in the first part – *Letgola* – appears for the first time as *лѣтъгола* in the 11th century in the Nestor Chronicle. The oldest source using the Latin alphabet is the 13th century Livonian Indriķa Chronicle, where the terms *Letthi* and *Lethigalli* are used as synonyms of the term Latvians (*latvieši*).

❖ Into modern writing the term Latgalian (*latgaliētis*) was introduced at the beginning of the 20th century. The publicist and politician Francis Kemps used the terms *Latgale* and *latgalieši* in the newspaper „Baltijas Vēstnesis” (Baltic Herald). In 1910 a book called „Latgalieši” was published. Until the 1930s this term was used parallel to the term *latvīts*. During Soviet times, the tradition to refer to the inhabitants of Latgale as Latgalians was strengthened. Today this term is used in two ways – both for referring to Latvians of Latgale and as a name of all inhabitants of Latgale.

❖ Today’s territory of the Latvian regions of Vidzeme (Livonia, Northern Latvia) and Latgale (Eastern Latvia). Originally East of the Daugava River – between the settlements of the Finno-Ugric Livonians in the West and Slavonic tribes in the East. Archaeological findings indicate that the first human settlements in the area were located at the coasts of the Lubana, Dviete and Liela Ludza Lakes. Research suggests that Latgalians entered the territory in two waves. In the first, they came at the turn of the 6th and 7th centuries AD from South Eastern Europe through today’s Lithuania and settled in today’s Augšzeme, in the South East of Vidzeme and in Western



◆ The political and administrative division of Latvia at the end of the 12th century (Source: *Latvija. Apdzīvotās vietas, M 1:400 000, SIA „Apgāds Jāņa sēta”.*)

Name

Place of Birth

Birthday





Latgale. Gradually they moved to the North, thereby forming the Latgalian component of Vidzeme. In the second wave, Latgalians came from the East through today's Belarus into today's region of Latgale. They started to settle and cultivate this territory between the 7th and the 9th centuries AD.

## Counties



- ❖ In the course of history, the territory referred to as being inhabited by Latgalians has diminished considerably. The borders of today's Latgale were officially determined by the Latvian constitution in 1922.

- ❖ Since the 2009 administrative reforms in Latvia, the region of Latgale consists of 19 counties (*novadi*) and 2 cities (Daugavpils and Rēzekne) without affiliation to a county. The oldest and biggest town in Latgale is **Daugavpils** (town rights since 1582, more than 100,000 inhabitants in 2009 and thereby the second biggest city in Latvia). The town of **Rēzekne** (35 000 inhabitants) is often labelled as the „Heart of Latgale” because of its geographical location in the centre of the region. In addition to that, Rēzekne is the place where the historical decision was taken to unite Latgale with the other regions of Latvia in 1917. The town of **Ludza** is the oldest inhabited place mentioned in written sources (from 1177).

◆ *The counties of Latgale*



- ❖ Inhabitants of Latgale: **339 783** (2000 census).
- ❖ Total Area: **14 547** km<sup>2</sup> (**22%** of all Latvia).
- ❖ Latgale is very rich in water, and not without reason the region is frequently called „Land of Blue Lakes”. In total, there are 972 lakes, most of which are located in the hilly lands around Dagda.

**LATGALE IS HOME TO:**

- ♦ **the biggest lake in Latvia by area** – Lake Lubāns (80.7 km<sup>2</sup>),
  - ♦ **the biggest lake in Latvia by volume** – Lake Rāzna (405 million m<sup>3</sup>),
  - ♦ **the lake in Latvia richest in islands** – Ežezers (*Ješa ezers*), 35 islands,
  - ♦ **the deepest lake in the Baltic States** – Lake Drīdzis (*Dreidzs*) (63.1 m),
  - ♦ **the lake most often referred to in ancient legends** – Velnezers (*Čortoks*).
- ❖ Latgale is separated by the Latvian „River of Destiny”, the **Daugava**, from Sēlija (*Selonia*) and by rivers **Aiviekste** and **Pededze** from Vidzeme (*Livonia*). The longest rivers on Latgalian territory are the **Dubna** (120 km), the **Rēzekne** (116 km) and the **Malta** (115 km)

❖ The largest part of Latgale belong to the Daugava watershed, the North East of the region to the watershed of the Veļikaja (*Mudava*). In 2007 Rāzna National Park was created around Lake Rāzna with its large natural and biological diversity.



◆ *The Daugava in Likšna (County of Daugavpils)*







❖ Also the topography of Latgale is quite diverse. Latgale stretches from the Eastern Latvian Lowlands with the Lubāna Plain in its middle in the West, to the Eastern Latgalian hills which are the biggest area of uplands in Latvia.

◆ *Lake Adamova in the County of Rēzekne*

#### THERE ARE SEVERAL NOTEWORTHY HEIGHTS IN LATGALE:

- ◆ **Lielais Liepukalns (289.3 m)** – the third highest elevation in Latvia,
- ◆ **Dzerkaļu kalns (286.3 m)** – the highest elevation in Latvia in relation to its surroundings (89 m),
- ◆ **Mākoņkalns (Padebešu kalns) (247 m)** – a hill entwined by legends with the oldest German crusader settlement in Latgale (*Volkenberga*),
- ◆ **Sauleskalns (211 m)** – a hill with a splendid view on the lakes of Latgale (and today valued as a Winter sport centre).



## ◆◆◆ Religion ◆◆◆

Many different religious denominations are home to Latgale. Roman Catholics, Old Believers, Russian Orthodox, Protestants and Jews settled in Latgale until the 18th century.

### ROMAN CATHOLIC

❖ The dominant denomination today is Roman Catholic. In 2009, 102,234 persons of Catholic faith were registered in the diocese of Rēzekne-Aglona as members of the communities and active churchgoers.



◆ *The Basilica of Aglona in the night of August 14/15*

❖ Latgale is also home to the centre of Latvian Catholicism – the Church of Virgin Mary’s Assumption in Aglona. It was built in the 17th century by monks of the Dominican Order. In 1980, the church obtained the status of a basilica by Pope John Paul II. The Basilica of Aglona is one of the most popular destinations of the annual pilgrimage around August 15th – the day of Virgin Mary’s Assumption.

◆ *The Basilica of Aglona*

Catholics





❖ In the 17th century the first Old Believers' communities were founded in Latgale by settlers who escaped from persecution in Russia. Today there is still a large number of Old Believers' churches all over Latgale.

❖ The Church of St. Nikolaj in Rēzekne (erected in 1895, reconstructed in 1906) with its three silver and copper bells is one of the most impressive Old Believers' churches in Latvia. One of the bells has a weight of 4,948 kg and is the biggest bell in the Baltic States (the bell's clapper alone weighs 200kg).



◆ The Church of St. Nikolaj in Rēzekne

Crucifixes

❖ The cultural landscape of Latgale is shaped by crucifixes along the roadsides (*solys krysti*) which portray both Catholic faith and Latgalian identity. They often feature complex patterns with Jesus being frequently shown at the crosses.

❖ According to Latgalian understanding, next to the crosses there is a place for resting for a moment. Here, people would cross themselves, take off their hats, and ask God's help regarding issues of everyday life. Also organised religious activities may take place close to these crucifixes – such as the traditional singing in May (*majovkys*) or in October for the Month of the Rosary.



- ❖ The creation of the crucifixes started to flourish in the time between 1861 and 1904.
- ❖ Crucifixes were common in Latgale until the times of the Soviet occupation. At the end of the 1980s, in the so-called third People's Awakening, a new wave of intense crucifix erection set in, when new crosses with wooden figures of Jesus were erected also at places where they had never existed previously.
- ❖ The development of crucifixes in Latgale can historically be divided into three phases:
  - ◆ Until the 1820s, Jesuit monks preached the Christian faith and educated the people.
  - ◆ Activities by Polish noblemen and Church representatives were common between 1820 and 1840.
  - ◆ An active period of bulding crucifixes and sculptures on the initiative of the people set in after the abolishment of serfdom in 1861.
- ❖ Even if not as common anymore as in previous times, also today crucifixes are being produced and erected. In this way, the inhabitants of Latgale express their wish to maintain their cultural heritage and particular features of spiritual life. One example of this is the project „Solys krysts” („Island cross” – it doesn't refer to islands in the literal sense but to the tradition of calling small parishes in such a way) by the family museum of Skrinda (named after three brothers who lived in the end of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries). It aims at reconstructing crosses in the villages of Pudāni, Vabole, Mukāni and Svētiņi in the parish of Vabole not far from Daugavpils. Until today, 31 crucifixes have been maintained and reconstructed.



◆ A crucifix close to the manor of Arendole in the County of Vārkava



## ◆◆ Visual Images ◆◆

### National Costumes

❖ Traditional Latgalian clothing has two main types: Northern Latgalian and Southern Latgalian costumes. Both also have a lot of elements in common with traditional clothes from Eastern Livonia and Selonia, i.e. the area to the South of the towns of Jēkabpils, Aizkraukle and Daugavpils, which all derive from ancient Latgalian and Selonian culture. The cuts and ornaments



at the same time also show influence from Slavonic peoples. The main differences between Northern and Southern Latgalian costumes are the skirts which are woven in brighter and more contrastive colours in the South, and the manifold red embroidery in the white linen shirts in the North which show symbols related to Belorussian shirt ornaments.

The most archaic and stylistically combined Latgalian costume is the costume of the county of Abrene, a part of Latgale which was incorporated into Russia in 1944.

❖ Very old traditions in Latgale (and of other Baltic tribes) are also the production of wrap covers, of wreaths, of shirt embroideries and puttees.

Traditional costumes are usually covered with white plaids, during summer with a scarf prepared from fine patterned linen. Honourable plaids were pinned together with silver bubble fibulas. Everyday brooches were not always worn, and shirt fasteners were only used with ligatures and favours.

◆ *The Northern Latgalian national costume*  
Photo: Jānis Staris



◆ *The Southern Latgalian national costume*  
Photo: Jānis Staris

Girls used wreaths as head decorations which were embroidered on red cloths with glass ornaments. Married women's faces were covered by head cloths or scarfs.

Typical belts were in bright or cold colours and rich in needles, striped or covered with stumps. Belts could be bound together in different ways – twisted twice in the middle and bound together at the front with a node, or twice entwined around the body and crossed in the middle towards the front with endings hidden behind the winding. Stockings were from wool and embroidered in winter and from linen in summer.

**Wraps** can be seen as the most important female decorative clothes which were worn at all celebrations including funerals, baptisms and weddings. Simple wraps ended in one white fringe layer, whereas more pompous ones were always decorated with embroidered endings and two fringe layers at the ends.

Traditional male clothing was very similar all over Latgale. Usually long or semi-long coats were worn, which were tailored from cloths in different greyish tones. Black velvet edgings and inlets or leather edgings could be used as decorations for the coats. The coats were tied with braided belts or striped borders. Together with long trousers, high or semi-high boots were worn. With festive clothes a black hat with wide edges and a middle high bottom was worn, in summer straw hats.





# ◆◆◆ History ◆◆◆

Around 1500 BC	Baltic tribes settle in today's Latvian territory.
7th–12th century AD	Spread of the settlement of ethnic Baltic groups – the Latgalian – over the territory of contemporary Latgale and Livonia.
9th–12th century	The first Latgalian political units are created in Latgale – the early states of Jersika, Tālava, Koknese and Atzele. Christianity (in its Orthodox form) starts to be spread in Latgale.
Early 13th century –1561 (Livonian era)	As a result of the crusades by Teutonic Knights, the ancient Latvian tribes (including Latgalian) lose their independence and are Christianised in the Roman Catholic faith. The territory inhabited by Latgalian tribes is divided between the Livonian Order and the Archbishop of Riga.
1561–1772 ("Polish times")	In 1561, the previous Livonian territory to the North of the Daugava, i.e. today's Northern Latvia and Southern Estonia, become part of the Lithuanian Grand Duchy as the Duchy of Pardaugava. Since 1569 the territory is part of the common Polish-Lithuanian State, the Rzeczpospolita. At this time, the term Inflanty starts to be used. After the Polish-Swedish War (1600–1629), the territory of today's Vidzeme comes under Swedish rule, whereas today's Latgale remains under Polish rule and the Inflanty Polskie is formed. By this, the administrative and religious separation of Latgale from the other parts of today's Latvia is determined. As a result of the activities of Catholic Orders, Catholicism in Latgale is strengthened. Latgalian starts to be written in its own orthography, thereby separating written Latgalian from the Latvian writing tradition of the other parts of today's Latvia. The Polish-Lithuanian state is tolerant towards minorities including Jews and Russian Old Believers, resulting in an ethnic and religious mix which has its impact until today.
1772–1904 ("Russian times")	As a result of the partitions of Poland, Latgale becomes part of the Tsarist Russian Empire, at first as part of the province of Pleskava, later of the newly created province of Polocka, and from 1802 as part of the province of Vitebsk. The separation of Latgale from the other areas of Latvian language and culture has cultural, linguistic and demographic consequences which have an impact until the present day. Serfdom is abolished in Latgale in 1861 – more than 40 years later than in the rest of today's Latvia. After Polish anti-tsarist riots, not only the use of Latgalian but also the use of the Latin alphabet is forbidden in the province of Vitebsk between 1865 and 1904, resulting in a strengthening of the linguistic separation from Latvian. Increased immigration of speakers of Russian into Latgale for high-ranking professions increases the societal divide between Latgalian peasants and a now mainly Russian elite. In this spirit, Latgalian keep their traditions and, in spite of Catholicism, see themselves as culturally closer to Latvians than to their Slavonic neighbours.
1904–1917 ("Russian times")	The ban of Latgalian is lifted. What follows is a period of Latgalian national awakening with a rich cultural life. From this a first Latgalian intelligence develops and the first Latgalian periodicals are published. Latgalian take the development of their language into their own hands. Latgalian varieties (at that time usually referred to as „language”) are clearly distinct from other Baltic varieties (i. e. the Latvian language in today's understanding).



1917–1920	Following the Russian February Revolution, the First Latvian Congress in the spirit of the nationalist awakening all over Europe demands autonomy for Latvian territories. Latgalian demand to break away from the province of Vitebsk and to unify Latgale with the other territories inhabited by ethnic Latvians – Latgales Mara in the centre of Rēzekne reminds of that event. After Latvian independence, Latvian troops and local fighters secure the incorporation of Latgale into the new State, after a short occupation by Bolshevik troops. The unification of Latgale with the Latvian State is recognised in the Peace Treaty with the Soviet Union in 1920.
1920–1934 (Times of the first independent Latvian Republic)	Latgale is created as an administrative unit in its historical boundaries including the counties of Daugavpils, Rēzekne, Ludza and Jaunlatgale (New Latgale with Abrene as its centre). Latgalian culture flourishes with a rich variety of periodicals, literature, theatre, music etc. The Latgalian language is used in primary schools as a medium of instruction, other minorities enjoy cultural autonomy. The ethnic composition in Latgale is more diverse than in other parts of Latvia (Russians 27.1% in contrast to 9.0% in all of Latvia, Poles 3.5% vs. 2.6%, Belarusians 2.4% vs. 1.4%), but Latgalian clearly dominate. Latgale is economically weaker than the rest of Latvia, in spite of the land reform which grants peasants their own land.
1934–1940 ("Ulmanis times")	The take-over of the authoritarian Ulmanis regime on May 15, 1934 puts an end to Latgalian cultural autonomy.
1941–1944 (Occupation by Nazi Germany)	During Nazi occupation, the Latgalian language enjoys a short-lived revival. Books, calendars and newspapers are published in Latgalian. In this way, the Nazi occupational forces wish to separate Latgalian identity from the rest of Latvian identity – Latgalian are considered to be not eligible for Germanisation, whereas other Latvians partly are.
1940–1941 and 1944–1991 (Occupation by and incorporation into the Soviet Union)	A large number of mostly Russian-speaking migrants from other parts of the Soviet Union move to Latvia, and also in Latgale, the proportion of Latvians/Latgalian decreases even further. The Eastern part of Jaunlatgale around the town of Abrene is incorporated into Russia. The Latgalian language is forbidden outside private spheres and the Catholic Church. In 1960 a printing ban on Latgalian is imposed. Structures characteristic for totalitarian regimes are formed. Latgalian survives in the written form only in some niches in the Catholic Church (and in exile communities e.g. in Germany or the US); in oral usage, the prestige of Latgalian is trapped in the language conflicts between Latvian and Russian.
Since 1991	Latgale is part of the re-established independent Latvia. At the beginning there is huge enthusiasm for Latgalian cultural activities and the development of the Latgalian language. But already in the second half of the 1990s centralist attitudes by the state against decentralised structures and regional planning are reinforced which also show their impact on Latgalian language and culture. Latgale as a concept today is mostly of importance as a unit of heritage and of culture. In administrative terms, Latgale is a unit of regional planning and development and a constituency in Latvian elections – but the practical impact of that is limited. There is no political decentralisation in Latvia, and there is no clear perception of the boundaries of Latgale. These are rather a matter of changing definitions according to the perceptions of each authority.



# ◆◆◆ Symbols ◆◆◆

Flag

**TODAY'S LATVIAN FLAG IS BASED ON THE ANCIENT FLAG OF THE LETS OR LATGALIANS.**

❖ The Latvian flag is dark red with a horizontal white stripe in the middle. It was created in the 19th century, based on the ancient flag of the Lets or Latgalians as described in the Livonian Rhymed Chronicle which contains stories about Livonia in the 12th and 13th centuries. In this sense, the Latvian flag is one of the oldest flags still in use today. The flag is mentioned for the first time in relation to the feudal book given in 1209 to Visvaldis, King of Jersika.



◆ *The coats of arms of the Inflanty (left) and the Duchy of Pārdaugava (right)*  
Photo: Sergejs Medvedevs

Coat of Arms

❖ In 1566 a coat of arms with a silver gryphon on a red shield with the initials of Grand Duke Sigismund II Augustus was created in the Duchy of Pārdaugava (today's Latgale, Vidzeme and Southern Estonia). This is the origin of the gryphon which appears in today's Latvian coat of arms. As a symbol of Latgale, the gryphon has been used since the 16th century.

❖ The Altmark truce of 1629 can be considered as the moment of birth of the contemporary Latgalian territory. The Inflanty was a part of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth with the administrative centre in Daugavpils and can be seen as the successor of the Duchy of Pārdaugava. With a few changes it also took over its symbols, including the image of the gryphon.

❖ In independent Latvia, many historical symbols of regions and towns were renewed. Thereby, the gryphon was again introduced in Latgale, although the coats of arms of individual towns were used more frequently than those of the regions. The pattern of the ancient Latgalian flag was also used in the symbols of the town of Rēzekne. This reflects that throughout the 20th century Rēzekne took over the symbolic role of the centre of Latgale from Daugavpils which had been the historic administrative centre of Latgale.



❖ In the 21st century the Latgalian flag has been renewed by Māris Rumaks as a symbol of all inhabitants of Latgale. It was used publically for the first time at the sports games organised by the Latvian Ministry of the Interior, where the team of the Latgalian police used this flag as their symbol.

The proportion of the stripes follows the tradition of Latvia, Livonia, Selonia and Rēzekne. The dark blue colour symbolises the national costumes of Abrene, the lakes, cornflowers and the blossoming flax of Latgale.



◆ The flag of Latgale

❖ The early historic state of Latgale was wiped out in the 13th century and until 1917 Latgale was under foreign rule. Bonifacijs Briška has followed the changing anthems of the foreign powers throughout the centuries, and concludes that the anthem of Latgalian Latvians originates in the following folk song:

*Lobs ar lobu sasatyka  
Steidzuos mani aprunuot,  
Ka es moza augumeņa,  
Maņ pošai i bāda beja:  
Soku vuordu, meži skaņ,  
Speru sūli, zeme reib.*

*Good and good met,  
In order to chat about me,  
That I am so short,  
I have myself suffered from that:  
When I say some word, the forests chime,  
When I make a step, the earth rumbles.*

❖ In the most recent national awakening of Latgalians, the song „Skaidruo volūda” („Lucid Language”) has become very popular as a non-official anthem of Latgale (lyrics by the Latgalian poet and publicist Anna Rancāne, music by the Latgalian poet and composer Juoņs Karūdznīks). It is sung frequently at Latgalian cultural, educational and scientific events.

## Anthem



## ◆◆◆ Education ◆◆◆

### History

❖ According to the Latgalian historian Boļeslavs Brežgo, the first primary school in Latgale was founded in Daugavpils in the time between 1625 and 1628. In 1813 it moved to Krāslava and since 1855 it operated in Rēzekne, where it continued its work as the Rēzekne 1st Primary School. The Rēzekne 1st Secondary School can today be considered to stand in its tradition.

❖ The first institution of higher education in Latvia was the Krāslava Seminary (1757–1844) from which more than 250 priests graduated. In the 19th century it created the first texts of Latgalian secular literature and also continued the tradition of religious literature and thereby the cultivation of written Latgalian.

❖ Beginning in 1920, gradually four-year and six-year primary schools were established in Latgale. These officially used Latvian as the language of instruction, but at the time, it was understood by that that they would use the „Latgalian dialect” (i.e. the Latgalian standard language). The „Central dialect” or „Baltic dialect” (i.e. the Latvian standard language) was only taught as a separate subject. In addition to these schools, there were schools with Russian as a language of instruction, with Polish and also Jewish schools which used Yiddish and Hebrew. This policy of language acquisition continued until the coup d'état of 1934.



◆ *The building of the teachers' training college in Daugavpils at the beginning of the 20th century and today  
Photo from the personal archive of Valentīns Lukaševičs*





◆ *The building of the State teachers' training college in Rēzekne in the 1930s and today*

❖ The creation of State teachers' training colleges (in Daugavpils in 1923 and in Rēzekne in 1925) was of fundamental importance for the development of educational policies in Latgale. Until the beginning of World War II, more than 1000 young teachers graduated from these institutions, leading to a heavy enrichment of cultural and societal activities in Latgale.

❖ Both institutions can be considered as starting points for contemporary higher education in Latgale: the teachers' training institution in Daugavpils for Daugavpils University (DU), the college in Rēzekne for Rēzekne University College (Rēzeknes Augstskola, RA).

❖ In the 1930s, Latgalian scientists such as the historian Boļeslavs Brežgo, the physicist Konstantīns Počs, the philosopher and psychologist Konstantīns Raudive or the philosopher and theologian Staņislavs Ladusāns had to study and work in Riga or outside Latvia, whereas in the 21st century institutions in Latgale offer scientific opportunities: DU has been developed as a centre of research in the sciences, whereas RA has gained reputation as a centre of regional studies.

In the academic year 2008/2009 there were 191 institutions of general education in Latgale, whereas the number of primary schools in 1929/1930 had been 711.





## ◆◆◆ Language ◆◆◆

- Voi tu runoj latgaliski?

- *Do you speak Latgalian?*

- Nui, drupeiti. Lobuok muoku runuot angļu mēlē, tū vucejūs školā. Latgalīšu volūdu es īsavuceiju nu tāva i muotis. A tu?

- *Well, a bit. Actually, my English is better, we studied it at school. I have learned Latgalian from my father and mother. And how about you?*

- Es runoju, tik naciš pareizi, maņ datryukst vuordu, partū, ka vucejūs poša, nu gruomotu. Taipoš dūmoju, ka doru daudz klaidu, seņ naasmu runovuse latgaliski.

- *I speak Latgalian, but not so correctly. I don't know enough words, therefore I have studied it by myself, from books. And I think that I make a lot of mistakes, and I have not used Latgalian for quite a time.*

- Nu tod runuosim latgaliski, vys kai sasarunuosim!

- *Well, then let's speak Latgalian, we will understand each other!*

### Historical Overview

❖ This short dialogue might be typical of the situation and practices of Latgalian speakers today. Yet, there were times when speaking Latgalian was by far more usual.

❖ The tradition of today's written Latvian language started in the second half of the 19th century, based on traditions of writing and printing the central Latvian dialects since the 16th century. In Latgale, a separate written language developed since the 18th century for Latvians from that area. It was based on the High Latvian dialects spoken in Latgale. Books were published since that time, at the beginning mostly with religious or popular scientific contents. Therefore, already since the beginning of the 18th century it is correct to speak of two different writing traditions and two written languages: Latvian and Latgalian.



❖ For the development of the Latgalian language, the end of the 19th century was of particular importance, when Latvians from Latgale who lived in Saint Petersburg started to create their own intellectual circles. These were mostly priests who discussed questions of the development and standardisation of their native language (e.g. in the Saint Petersburg Seminary, the publicist, writer and priest Francis Trasuns taught Latgalian to his students). Also the first council on Latgalian standard orthography took place in Saint Petersburg in 1903, where also the first Latgalian grammar was published by the publicist and Latgalian activist Ontons Skrynda in 1908.

❖ The use of the Latgalian language outside the home domain bloomed in the 1920s, mostly in the schools of Latgale, in local administration, at public events, in the media, or at church. For instance, Latgalian children studied in Latgalian in all subjects in the first two grades at school, whereas Latvian was only added from the 3rd grade onwards.

❖ In the 1930s an orthography reform was started under the leadership of Pīters Strods. In 1934, however, these activities came to a sudden end when using Latgalian was forbidden in all administration, in official events, in theatres and lectures.

When the Soviets occupied Latvia in 1940, also book printing was stopped, although it was started again during Nazi occupation from 1941–1944, and it culminated in 1943 when the printing house of the writer and publisher Vladislavs Lōcs published 23 books in one year.



◆ *The 1908 grammar of Latgalian by Ontons Skrynda*



❖ In the post-war period, during the entire era of Soviet occupation, Latgalian was limited to a language of the homes and to the Catholic Church. Books and periodicals in Latgalian could only be published in exile. It was not before the period of Latgalian awakening in the 1990s that also the revitalisation of Latgalian started. Latgalian orthography was a main topic of debate, and the main principles of a new orthography were developed. These principles were also used in the first post-independence Latgalian primer by Juris Cibulš and Lidija Leikuma (1992) and the Latgalian language course text book „Vasals!” (2003).

❖ The orthography reform that had been started in the 1930s by Pīters Strods was in this way taken up and led to an end in 2007, when the new principles of Latgalian orthography were finally officially sanctioned.

The letters <i>a, e, i, y, o, u</i> represent the short vowels <i>a, e, i, y, o, u</i>	<i>art, mežs, tikt, cyts, ols, kubuls</i>
The letters <i>ā, ē, ī, ū</i> represent the long vowels <i>ā, ē, ī, ū</i>	<i>dāls, dzēst, īva, ūga</i>
Both the open and closed versions of the vowels <i>e, ē</i> are represented by <i>e, ē</i>	<i>padebess, svešs, mes, zeme, plēst</i>
The letter <i>y</i> represents the more open version of the vowel <i>i</i>	<i>vysod, zyrgs</i>
Diphthongs are written by combinations of the letters <i>ai, au, ei, ie, iu, yu, ou, ui, uo</i> , the diphthong <i>uo</i> may also be represented by the letter <i>ō</i>	<i>maize, saule, zeile, sierms, niule, lyugt, klouga, puika, suoļs (sōļs)</i>
There is a difference between the written vowels <i>i</i> and <i>y</i> , and the diphthongs <i>iu</i> and <i>yu</i> . At the beginning of a word <i>iu</i> is written	<i>iubuļs, iudiņs, iudris</i>
Behind <i>g, j, k</i> has to be written <i>i</i> or <i>iu</i>	<i>giva, jimt, kimūss; giut, jiura, kiulš</i>
Behind <i>č, r, š, ž</i> has to be written <i>y</i> or <i>yu</i> , except where a soft consonant follows in the next syllable	<i>čyguons, čyvynuot, grybu, ryka, šys, šyvums, Žykars, gryuds, šyut, žyuzuot; čivinēt, gribēt, riceņa, šivieja, židenš</i>



## Phonetic Differences between Latvian and Latgalian

Written Latvian	Written Latgalian	Examples
a	o	dorbs vs. darbs (work), lobs vs. labs (good)
ā	uo	muote vs. māte (mother), muosa vs. māsa (sister)
ē	ie	viejs vs. vējš (wind), skriejies vs. skrējies (runner)
e (open)	a	azars vs. ezers (lake), malns vs. melns (black)
ē (open)	ā	tāvs vs. tēvs (father), vātra vs. vētra (storm)
i	y	vyss vs. viss (all), pyrmais vs. pirmais (first)
ī	ei	dzeīve vs. dzīve (life), treis vs. trīs (three)
ū	iu	iudiņš vs. ūdens (water)
ū	yu	kryums vs. krūms (bush), byut vs. būt (to be)
ie	ī	pīns vs. piens (milk), īt vs. iet (to go)
uo	ū	ūga vs. oga (berry), ūla vs. ola (egg), dūt vs. dot (to give), kūst vs. kost (to bite) (but: skoluot, to instruct)

*(Latvian and Latgalian in contrast; examples taken from Lidija Leikuma's Divejīs latvišu rokstu tradīcejis: kūpeigais i atšķireigais, www.vvk.lv)*



Latgalian	<i>jīs</i>	<i>vysod</i>	<i>mauduotīs</i>	<i>apleik</i>	<i>sukņa</i>	<i>palāda</i>
Lithuanian	<i>jīs</i>	<i>visada</i>	<i>maudytis</i>	<i>aplink</i>	<i>suknia suknelė</i>	<i>pelėda</i>
Latvian	<i>viņš</i>	<i>vienmēr</i>	<i>peldēties</i>	<i>apkārt</i>	<i>kleita</i>	<i>pūce</i>
English	<i>he</i>	<i>always</i>	<i>to swim</i>	<i>around</i>	<i>dress</i>	<i>owl</i>

*Latgalian in between the two biggest modern written Baltic languages, Lithuanian and Latvian: Latgalian has kept many traditional Baltic words where Latvian has taken over loanwords*

❖ Translations from Latvian into Lithuanian or vice versa are nothing new, but in the past few years also more „exotic” translations have taken place, such as from Latgalian to Žemaitian, a regional language used in the West of Lithuania closely related to Lithuanian. An example is the a poetry book „Rūtaļu vydā. Ratelē vēdorelie” published in 2009 in Rēzekn by Ontons Slišāns and Kristina Vaisvalavičienė.

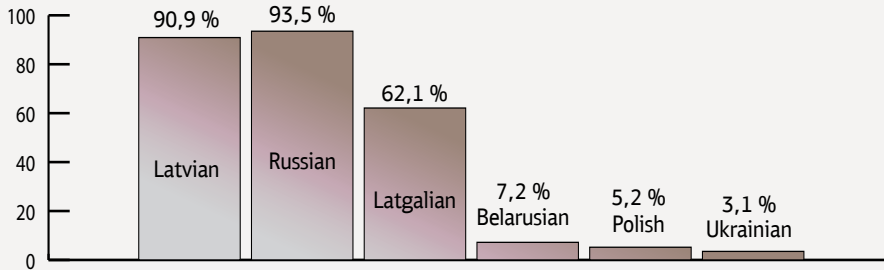
Latgalian	Žemaitian	Latvian	Lithuanian	English
<i>Zeileite žižinoj, Žubeite žubynojoj. Rubuleits rubynojoj. A kas tys, kas kūkūs Dūbumus skrybynojoj? - Dzeņš.</i>	<i>Švīgžda švīgžden, Kikilis kiken, Cīrulis cīren. Vuo kas tas, kas mediūs Duobeles skreben? - Genīs.</i>	<i>Zilīte žužina, Žubīte žubina, Cīrulīt `s cīvina. Bet kas tas, kas kokos Dobumus skribina? - Dzenis.</i>	<i>Žylelė čipčėja, Žvirblelis čikščioja, Kurkė kurkščioja. O kas tai, kas medžiuos Dreves brazduoja ? - Genys.</i>	<i>The titmouse is twittering The finch is chittering The lark is chirping But who is that who into the trees is gnawing hollows? - The woodpecker</i>

❖ Today, Latvian is used as a means of communication all over Latvia, whereas Latgalian is of regional importance. As a written language it is used in media published in Latgale, in literary works and also in the internet. In the oral language of the inhabitants of Latgale, specific regional and local characteristics may be heard.



❖ From 2006 until 2009 researchers at Rēzekne University College carried out a large-scale research project called „Languages in Eastern Latvia”. It included questions relating to the knowledge of Latgalian:

#### WHICH OF THESE LANGUAGES OR DIALECTS DO YOU KNOW?



Numbers of  
Speakers

❖ 39% of the total of 9076 respondents answered that they use Latgalian on an every-day basis with their family, friends or colleagues. With less familiar persons, around 23% of the respondents use Latgalian.

❖ The Latgalian language has an old writing tradition (since the 18th century), and also today it is used for publishing literature (see for more details the section on literature). The new orthography has officially been accepted and it is used on an every-day basis by many inhabitants of Latgale. It contains words which are very similar to Latvian, but also many which are quite different. The same is true for the Latgalian grammar.

Linguists do not distinguish clearly between languages and dialects. The use of these terms depends on the speakers and their attitudes which are more important to this question than linguistic criteria. In Latgale people usually say „I speak Latgalian” or „I speak the Latgalian language”, but they hardly ever say „I speak the High Latvian dialect”.

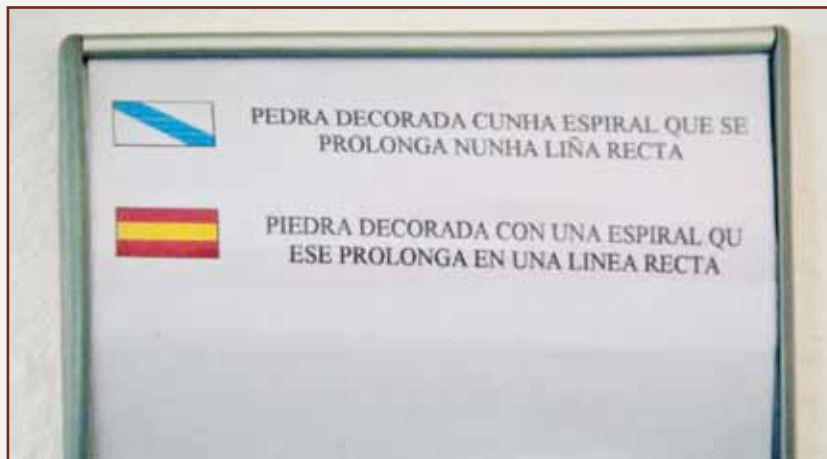




From a linguistic point of view it is an important argument that a language has a written standard and that there are different varieties of the language such as dialects or vernaculars. It is exactly this diversity that makes a full-fledged language.

However, even if Latgalian in every-day life displays the functions of a regional language, it does not enjoy official regional status in Latvia. This stands in sharp contrast to the situations of other smaller languages in Europe which have received official status as regional or minority languages, for example Kashubian in the North of Poland, Frisian in the Netherlands or Welsh or Scottish Gaelic in the UK.

❖ In many countries in Europe, the general attitude to such languages is positive and, in addition to its use in oral communication, it can also be observed in the public sphere, e. g. on signs which are written in both the main language of the country and the regional or minority language. A particularly noteworthy example is Spain, where Spanish is the dominant language only in Madrid and the central parts of Spain, whereas other languages such as Catalan, Basque, Galician or Asturian are frequent in more peripheral regions. From the perspective of many Latvians who



are not used to seeing the Latvian and Latgalian languages together, the sign on the left would raise astonishment. The written difference is minimal – yet, in Galicia in North-Western Spain it is a regular feature of places such as museums that signs feature the same text in both Spanish and Galician.



❖ In Latgale written Latgalian is frequent only in graffiti (with the exception of a few shops, cafés or names of organisations).

◆ *A graffiti in Latgalian in Lubānas iela in Rēzekne*



❖ The linguistic situation in Latvia can also be compared to the example of Norway: In Norway, there are two written languages: Bokmål (book language)

and Nynorsk (New Norwegian). Bokmål, similar to Latvian, is the language of the political and administrative centre of the country, whereas Nynorsk and Latgalian are languages of more peripheral regions. In Norway, all school children learn both written languages, all have to take exams in both languages and also literature in both languages is read. Yet, even if many pupils remain sceptical towards Nynorsk, there are considerable differences in language attitudes and use between Norway and Latvia. Since the 1970s, Norwegians have increasingly used their dialects also when speaking to persons from other parts of the country, and even politicians or artists use them in official contexts – a situation unimaginable in Latvia.

❖ Similar to the way in which States have been assigned official codes (for instance for car registration or internet domains), also languages have codes. According to the ISO 3166 standard, Latvia has the code LV. The expert commission responsible for the ISO codes has assigned the codes **LV** and **LAV** to the Latvian language. Latgalian has since 2010 also had its own international ISO code (**LTG**) and is thereby internationally recognised as a language in its own right.



# ◆◆ A Short Dictionary ◆◆

LATGALIAN	LATVIAN	ENGLISH
<p><b>Sasavasaluošona. Apsavaicuošona</b></p> <p><i>Vasals! Vasala! Vasaly! Vasalys!</i></p> <p><i>Lobs reits!</i></p> <p><i>Loba dīna!</i></p> <p><i>Lobs vokors!</i></p> <p><i>Kai jums te īt?</i></p> <p><i>Ci vysī dzeivi, vasali?</i></p> <p><i>Paļdis par apsavaicuošonu, vysī dzeivi, vasali.</i></p>	<p><b>Sasveicināšanās. Apjautāšanās</b></p> <p><i>Sveiks! Sveika! Čau! Sveiki! Sveicināti! Sveikas!</i></p> <p><i>Labrīt!</i></p> <p><i>Labdien!</i></p> <p><i>Labvakar!</i></p> <p><i>Kā jums te klājas?</i></p> <p><i>Vai visi dzīvi, veseli?</i></p> <p><i>Paldies par apvaicāšanos, visi dzīvi, veseli.</i></p>	<p><b>Greetings</b></p> <p><i>Hello! Hi!</i></p> <p><i>Good morning!</i></p> <p><i>Good day!</i></p> <p><i>Good evening!</i></p> <p><i>How are you?</i></p> <p><i>Are you all fine (healthy)?</i></p> <p><i>Thanks for asking, we are all healthy and fine.</i></p>
<p><b>Sasapazeišona</b></p> <p><i>Kai tovs vuords?</i></p> <p><i>Kai tevi/ Jiusu sauc?</i></p> <p><i>Mani sauc Jezups. Mani (par) Jezupu sauc.</i></p> <p><i>Es asmu Māra.</i></p> <p><i>Cīš(i) pateikami.</i></p>	<p><b>Iepazīšanās</b></p> <p><i>Kāds tavs vārds?</i></p> <p><i>Kā tevi/ Jūs sauc?</i></p> <p><i>Mani sauc Jāzeps. Mani sauc par Jāzepu.</i></p> <p><i>Es esmu Māra.</i></p> <p><i>Ļoti patikami.</i></p>	<p><b>Getting to know someone</b></p> <p><i>What is your name?</i></p> <p><i>What is your name? (What are you called?)</i></p> <p><i>My name is (I am called) Joseph.</i></p> <p><i>I am Māra.</i></p> <p><i>Nice to meet you.</i></p>



### **Atsavasaluošana**

*Jau laiks īt paceli.*

*Jau vēlāi, maņ juoīt.*

*Cik labi, ka sasatykom.*

*Pabyuņ! Pabyunit garuok!*

*Dīvamžā] navaru palikt garuok.*

*Lels paldīs tev/ Jums par breineigū  
vokoru!*

*Palic vasals! Palicit vasali!*

*Dzeivoj vasals! Dzeivojīt vasali!*

*Sveicynoj/ sveicynojīt sovus sātyš  
ļauds/ sietīnikus!*

*Cīš(i) gaideišu tevi/ Jiusu otkon gostūs!*

*Iz (dreizu) sasaredziešonu!*

### **Atvadīšanās**

*Jau laiks iet pro(jā)m.*

*Ir jau vēls, maņ jāiet.*

*Cik labi, ka satikāmies.*

*Paliec! Palieciet ilgāk!*

*Diemžēl nevaru palikt ilgāk.*

*Liels paldies tev/ Jums par brīnišķīgo  
vakaru!*

*Paliec sveiks! Palieciet sveiki!*

*Dzīvo sveiks! Dzīvojiet sveiki!*

*Pasveicini/ pasveiciniet savus mājas  
ļaudis/ mājīniekus!*

*Ļoti gaidīšu tevi/ Jūs atkal ciemos!*

*Uz (drīzu) saredzēšanos!*

### **Saying good-bye**

*Time has been running.*

*It is late, I have to go.*

*How nice to see you.*

*Stay! Stay a bit longer!*

*Unfortunately I can't stay.*

*Thank you very much for the wonderful  
evening!*

*Bye-bye!*

*All the best!*

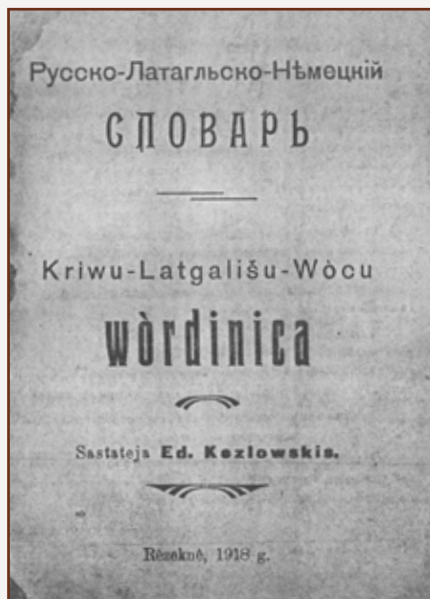
*Greetings to your family!*

*I am looking forward to seeing you  
again!*

*See you soon!*

(Source: Andronovs A., Leikuma L. Latgaliešu-latviešu-krievu sarunvārdnīca. Ačynskys; Reiga, 2008)





◆ The Russian-Latgalian-German dictionary compiled by Ed. Kozlowski in 1918

- Брюква – **grizini** – Schnittkohl (cabbage)  
Брунетъ, брунетка – **malnuksnis, malnuksne** – Brünett (brunette)  
Будущее – **nokumiba, nokutne** – Zukünftiges, Zukunft (future)  
Буква – **burte, liters** – Buchstabe (letter (of the alphabet))  
Котъ – **kačs, kakis** – Kater (tomcat)  
Кошка – **kačine** – Katze (cat)  
Крупа – **osbors, putroms** – Grütze (porridge)  
Крупный – **rups** – grob (rough)  
Обои – **špaleri** – Tapeten (wall-paper)  
Овца – **wuška** – Schaf (sheep)  
Огурецъ – **ogurcis** – Gurke (cucumber)  
Онъ, она, оно – **jis, jej** – er, sie, es (he, she, it)  
Сарай – **pyune** – Scheune, Schuppen (barn)  
Сахаръ – **cukris** – Zucker (sugar)

(Source: Русско-Латагальско-Нѣмецкій СЛОВАРЬ. Kriwu-Latgališu-Wocu WORDINICA. Sastateja Ed. Kozlowski. Rezekne, 1918)

*This is an extract of a Russian–Latgalian–German dictionary published in 1918, using a typical Latgalian orthography of the time which is more influenced by German and Latvian than today, for instance when using the letter w instead of today's v.*



## WHAT DO CAFÉS IN RĒZEKNE OFFER IN LATGALIAN?

„Mōls”	
<b>Ūtri iedīni</b>	
<b>Saimniecys iedīns:</b>	
Divkārteģais karbonāds ar sīru / sīreļu pādeģumtu	5,00 Ls
150	(cyukys gaģis karbonāds, sīrs, šampojons, capri cybuli)
<b>Latgaliģu iedīni:</b>	
Suģynoģums pā zomnikim	3,50 Ls
150/150/150	(vāreģys buģbis, suģynoģis akģibi kģopusti, cyukys gaģis)
Cyukys sģnkauģerģi	4,00 Ls
150/150/150	(cyukys sģnkauģerģi, vāreģys buģbis, suģynoģis akģibi kģopusti)
Bitaputra ar šķvarkom	2,00 Ls
300/40	(ozbors, capri cybuli, veģģģģa gaģis)
Palģģki zģerģi ar šķvarkom	2,30 Ls
250/40	(palģģki zģerģi, capri cybuli, veģģģģa gaģis)
<b>„Mōls”</b>	
<b>Vystys iedģģi:</b>	
Vystys fileģs „Oģģģģģ”	2,80 Ls
150	(vystys fileģs, sģrs)
Vystys rutuleģts	3,30 Ls
150	(vystys fileģs, sģrs, tomati, majģonģģģ)
<b>Cyukys gaģis iedģģi:</b>	
Cyukys gaģis karbonāds	3,00 Ls
150	(Cyukys gaģis karbonāds, tomati, oliģva, sģrs)
Cyukys gaģis rutuleģts „Maestro”	3,50 Ls
150	(cģģģģģģ, sģrs, zģģģģģ gaģis, majģonģģ, dģģģģ)
<b>Zģvu iedģģi:</b>	
Laģģa fileģs	5,50 Ls
200	

◆ The menu of Caf  M ls

### Caf  M ls:

Latgalian – Latvian (English)

iedģģi –  dģģi (dishes)

Suģynoģums – sautģģjums (stew)

Buģbis – kartupeģģi (potatoes)

Cybuli – sģģģģi (onions)

ģķvarkys – grģbas, grģģģģas (kraukģģģģģa gaģģ, cģģģ  dģģģas)  
(pork greaves, cracklings)

Ozbors – mieģģ putraģģi (pearl barley)

◆ Caf  M ls in R zekne, Latgales iela



Delicious Latgalian



Ūlu kuļtini i blīni *Dzīvs svieteļļ*

❖ <u>Kuļtins</u>	1.10
• ar garneļom	1.90
• ar krabu nūjeņom	1.60
• ar sieņom	1.50
• ar sīru i kapciejumim	1.60
• ar sīru	1.50
❖ <u>Bulbu blīni</u>	1.70
❖ <u>Blīni ar kapciejumu i sīru</u>	1.70

◆ The menu of Café Olmāra in Rēzekne, Latgales iela

### Café Olmāra:

Ūlu kuļtini - olu kultenis  
(scrambled eggs)

Blīni - pankūkas  
(pancakes)

Kapciejums - kūpinājums  
(smoked meat)

## Computer Terminology

Computer terminology in Latgalian – Latgalian is surely not only a historical language!

paroļs - *password*  
 pastinīkservers - *mail exchanger*  
 peirāgs - *cookie*  
 puormeit - *(to) change*  
 puorsaukt - *(to) rename*  
 puorsavieriejs - *browser*  
 puorspīdums - *(a) copy*  
 puorspīst - *(to) copy*  
 puorstaipteiklys - *Web (WWW)*

puslopa - *page*  
 pyrmuo rūka - *preference*  
 saita - *link*  
 sātys puslopa - *home page*  
 servers - *server*  
 slāgvuords - *login*  
 syuteit - *(to) send*  
 škārssteiklys - *Internet*  
 šursyuteit - *(to) download*

(Source: <http://latgola.lv/voluda/vuordineicys/dlatgang.shtml>)



# ◆◆◆ Literature ◆◆◆

❖ In the development of Latgalian literature a number of historical, religious and linguistic peculiarities can be observed. Since the publication of the first religious book called „Evangelia toto anno” in 1753, Latgalian literary works by more than 150 authors have been published.

*Dīnu – zemnīks, nakti – rakstnīks* (daytime – peasant, nighttime – poet) – this phrase characterises the situation of Latgalian writing in almost all periods of literature. This quote has been ascribed to the poet Andrīvs Jūrdžs who was the first writer in Latgale in the 19th century who wrote in Latvian varieties also during the ban of Latgalian.

◆ The symbol of Latgalian literature in exile (1950s-80s)



History

❖ The following features are characteristic of Latgalian literature:

◆ Religious literature develops simultaneously to secular writing and it dominates even in the 1920s. The literary scientists Skaidrīte Kalvāne and Janīna Kursīte name the genre of **hagiography** (the study of saints) as the origin of the first Latgalian texts by Polish missionaries in the 17th century.

◆ The most popular publication of the 19th century is „Dzismies Swatas...” („Holy Songs”, 1801) which is published at least 14 times.

◆ Secular literature mostly starts to develop only during the 19th century. At the beginning, these are popular scientific publications such as „Eysa mocība ap audzieyszonu biszu...” (A short instruction on how to breed bees...) from 1832.





- ♦ The role of the „Flying Dutchman” in Latgalian literature has since the publication of „Pawujciejszona” been taken by Puovuls Zeiza – an educated and experienced peasant who can frequently be found in a variety of types in Latgalian folklore, and who has been part of classical folklore until the 1960s.
- ♦ Motives from folklore appear also in the genres of literary fairytales and fables, used by exile Latgalians until the 1970s. The literary fairytale flower cycle „Lauku zīdi” (Country Flowers) by the author with the pseudonym Naaizmērstule from 1934 has remained famous among readers of Latgalian literature since the times of the first Latvian independence.
- ♦ The development of Latgalian literature was fragmented because of at least 3 printing bans: From 1865 until 1904 when Latgale was part of the Russian province of Vitebsk, between 1934 and 1940 in the first Latvian Republic during the times of the authoritarian Ulmanis regime, and from 1960 until 1988 in Soviet Latvia. These developments sometimes led to peculiar situations. For instance, at the end of the 19th century a book was considered to be one of the most dangerous goods which could be smuggled from Vilnius, Saint Petersburg or Helsinki. During the later printing bans many Latgalian authors wrote parallelly in both Latvian and Latgalian, whereas others (both in exile and in Soviet Latvia) switched to Latvian (e.g. Andris Vējāns, Jānis Klīdzējs, Konstantins Raudive, Roberts Mūks, Valdis Krāslavietis, Valdis Zeps).
- ♦ Realism (Alberts Sprūdžs, Jānis Klīdzējs, Antons Rupainis) and romanticism (Aleksandrs Adamāns, Marija Andžāne, Francis Murāns) are the dominating traditions in Latgalian literature, but there are also modernist writers (Augusts Smagars, Marta Skuja, Jezups Leļš).
- ♦ Since the 1990s many genres of Latgalian literature have been revived – for instance romanticism by Antons Kūkojs, positivism by Antons Slišāns, surrealistic searches by Anna Rancāne, poetry by Ingrida Tārauda, or postmodern literary forms by Oskars Seiksts, Valentīns Lukaševičs or Juoņs Ryučāns.



## ◆◆◆ Media ◆◆◆

❖ In the times of the Reawakening since the 1980s, the first appearance of Latgalian in the mass media was in the newspaper „Mōras Zeme“ (Land of Mara) which was published from 1989 until 1994. Henceforth the most important and most widespread publication has been the religious journal „Katōļu Dzeive“ (Catholic Life) which after an interruption of 59 years started to come out again in 1989. Until the present day, it publishes articles both in Latvian and in Latgalian. In addition, the insert „Mōras Zeme“ in the daily paper „Rēzeknes Vēstis“ (Rēzekne Herald) consistently publishes texts of various types in Latgalian, using the old orthography.

❖ Between the years 1991 and 2000, the TV company „Latgales televīzijas sabiedrība“ (Latgalian TV Company) not only showed programmes on regional news, it also produced the cultural cycle „Olūti“ (Springs) and other programmes in Latgalian, many of which were rebroadcast on Latvian national TV. It also started the tradition of the Latgalian music festival (1994–2000). The Latgalian regional TV (LRT, founded in 1996), however, has mostly switched from Latgalian to Latvian. Its programmes report of local political and cultural issues and show interviews with individuals of regional importance.

The tradition to broadcast news programmes on different subjects in Latgalian is currently taken up again by a regional TV broadcaster in Dagda in the South-East of Latgale.

◆ *An example of the production of the programme “Olūti” in 1994*

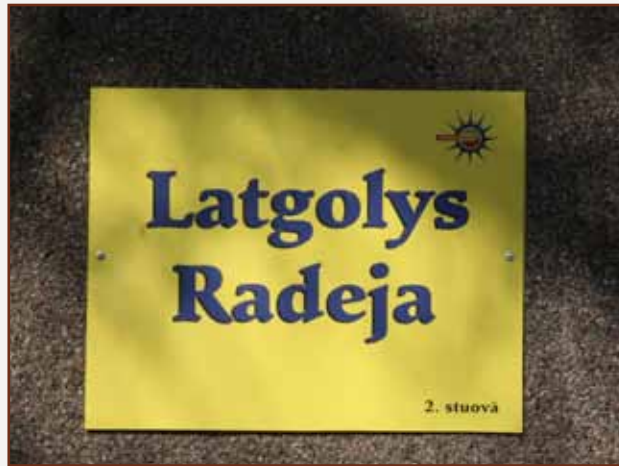


Written Press

TV



## Radio Latgale



❖ It was with big expectations that the regional radio station „Latgolys radeja” (Radio Latgale) was created in 2006. Today it has narrowed the range of its programmes and slightly lost popularity. Yet, for many musicians this is the only possibility to broadcast their songs and melodies in Latgalian. *Latgolys radeja* has today a strong focus on the spread of Christian values, thereby creating a rather unusual mix of secular and religious broadcasts.

◆ Sign of Radio Latgale in Rēzekne, Brāļu Skrindu iela

## Internet

❖ Also in Latgale, most written media as well as „Latgolys radeja” are available on the internet. In addition, there are several independent web sites relating to issues of Latgale and the Latgalian language. The most important of these is [www.lakuga.lv](http://www.lakuga.lv) connected to the *Latgalīšu Kultūrys Gazeta* (Latgalian Cultural Gazette). In 2011 it changed its appearance, but its contents have remained the same, dealing mostly with cultural events and related fields. *LaKuGa* is also partly available as a monthly insert in the newspaper „Latgales Laiks” (Latgale Times). Important for spreading news and the creation of societal debates is also the Latgalian Students’ Centre and its web site <http://lgsc.lv/>. On a more individual level, there are several Latgalian blogs, for instance <http://saprge.wordpress.com/> or <http://raibiis.wordpress.com/>.

The thematically broadest internet sites in Latgalian are *Zīme\latgolys zaļais ceļvedis* (<http://www.zalais-ceļvedis.org>) (Green guide of Northern Latgale) and the Library of Ludza’s data base on cultural history (<http://www.ludzasbibliu.lv>).



## ◆◆◆ Music ◆◆◆

❖ In the 1990s, musicians started to create pop and Schlager style music in Latgalian, with some of the most famous singers/groups being Aija Rimša, „Latgales dāmu pops” and „Laimas muzykanti”.

Since the turn of the millennium, these activities have constantly been expanded to various music styles. Today, the following tendencies of Latgalian music are worth mentioning:

- ◆ New arrangements of Latgalian folk songs in different styles by groups such as „Laimas muzykanti” (Musicians of Laima). Their album „Gonam gona” (Enough for herdsmen) received the annual award of Latvian music and is considered to be one of the best contemporary folk music albums in Latvia. The duo „Inga un Normunds” recorded folk songs in Schlager style on their 2002 album „Toļi dzeivoj” (Living far), similarly as the group „Latgales dāmu pops” (Latgalian Ladies’ Pop) on their 2004 album „Ar celulozi pret celulītu” (With cellulose against cellulitis). Other groups such as „Cielaviņa”, „Borowa MC” or „Bez PVN” have re-arranged folk songs in different ways. One of the most famous examples is the song „Vyskaistuokajai meitinei” (To the most beautiful girl) which re-interprets the old folk song theme „Nadūd, Dīvs, i veitulam” (Lord, don’t allow the willows). In 2005, it was the most popular song in the “Muzikālās bankas” (Musical bank) by the radio stations SWH and Latvijas Radio 2.

- ◆ As in all of Latvia, also in Latgale there are popular Schlager groups. The group „Baltie lāči” (White Bears) won the 2007/08 Schlager competition with their version of the unofficial Latgalian hymn „Skaidruo volūda” (Lucid Language). In 2009, the popular Schlager group Patrioti.lg published their debut album „Daugaveņa”.

◆ Music group Borowa MC  
Photo: Sergejs Medvedevs



Genres

Schlager





◆ Music group Bez PVN  
Photo: V.Strume (Target Studio)

The title song of the album reached the second place in the 2008/09 Latvian Schlager competition and at the Latvian annual awards it was short-listed for the best Schlager album. The most productive group in this style has been „Latgales dāmu pops” with 4 albums until 2011. Other Latgalian musicians have also published albums in Latvian in order to reach a broader audience.

◆ In the spectrum of music in Latgale, there are also several rock and pop groups of high quality. The group „Borowa MC” from the area of Rēzekne has very successfully published three albums in the guitar rap style. For their first album „Trepis iz nakuŗīni” (Stairs to Nowhere, 2005), Borowa MC received three awards at the annual Latvian Music ceremony: for the best debut, the best hip hop album, and the best hip hop song. These successes have not only paved the way for many concerts, this album also received gold status in Latvia (i.e. more than 5000 copies sold). In 2008 the third album „Ui, lobs” (Oh, good) came out, from which the song „Iededzies par Latviju” (Burn for Latvia) became the title song of the project „Nākamie 90” (Next 90, created at the occasion of the 90th anniversary of Latvian independence).

◆ But there are also several other rock groups which have been successful all over Latvia. The group „Bez PVN” (Without VAT) from Kārsava is one of the most famous Latgalian rock groups. Their first album „Pirms vārda” (Before the word, 2007) was nominated as the best debut album in Latvia. The group „Laimas muzykanti” has become one of the most famous ethnorock groups in Latvia; their 2007 album „Orkla bolss” (Voice of plough) was a big success. The rock group „Dabasu durvys” (Doors of Heaven) from Daugavpils published in 2008 the album „Lepetņiks” (Butterfly) which was celebrated at the ceremony of the Latgalian Cultural Awards „Boņuks” in 2009.

◆ A milestone in the development and promotion of music in Latgalian was the release of the first compilation of Latgalian songs of different styles in 2007: „Latgolys radejys izlase” (Radio Latgale Compilation) provides an adequate overview of contemporary Latgalian music.

(See also the list of released CDs on p. 48)



## ◆◆◆ Tourism and Handicraft ◆◆◆

❖ In today's Latgale, many traditional economic practices have survived until the present day, for instance in sheep-breeding, bee-keeping, grain cultivation or linen production. At the same time, alternatives in many spheres of socio-economic activity are being developed, for instance in tourism, gastronomy and other services.

❖ Tourist information centres in Latgale have invented a number of thematic tours, e. g. „Church towers reflected in the lakes of Latgale”, „The Centre of Latgale”, „Legends of the German Crusaders in Latgale”, cf. <http://turisms.latgale.lv>. These tours offer a variety of topics in order to meet different tastes, including museums, handicraft work-shops, objects in nature and of cultural or historic relevance, but also bath houses (*saunas*) or possibilities for horse-riding.

❖ The most frequently visited objects in Latgale in 2009 were the Nature park „Daugavas loki” (Daugava sinuosity), the basilica of Aglona, the Daugavpils fortress, the ethnographic museum „Andrupenes lauku sēta” (Andrupene country farm), the Historical Centre in Ludza, the Bread Museum in Aglona, the Doll Museum in Preiļi and several potteries (<http://www.latgaletourism.lv>).

◆ The work-shop  
by Aivars Ušpelis  
in the parish of Malta  
(county of Rēzekne)



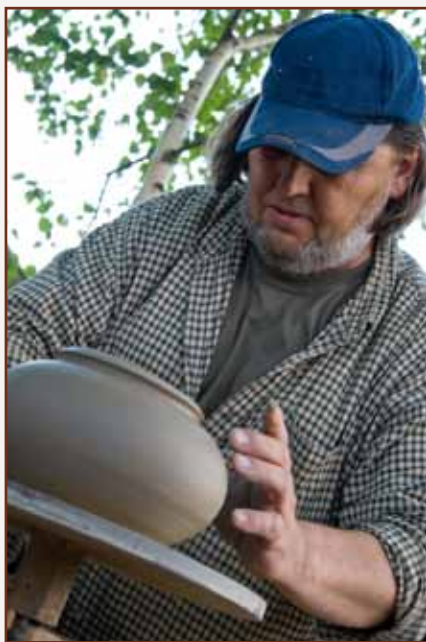
Tours and Places  
of Interest





❖ Working with clay has a long tradition in Latgale. Archaeological evidence shows that the ancient Latgalian economy was characterised by clay processing already in neolithic times. Old place-names testify of the use of pottery in old times and the terminology used in this field, e.g. the villages of *Pūdeni* (from *pūds*, pot) and *Svilpova* (from *svilpe*, whistle), and the house *Pūdynova* (also from *pūds*).

❖ The flourishing of modern ceramics in Latgale can be traced back to the times of the first Latvian Republic when Latgalian pottery received prizes at several exhibitions throughout Europe. Famous artisans were e.g. Polikarps Vilcāns, Andrejs Paulāns, Polikarps Čerņavskis and the artisan families of the Babri, Kaļvas, Peipāni, Ušpeļi, Vilcāni and Riuči in which frequently three generations worked together. In contrast to the printing ban on the Latgalian language, Latgalian ceramics also flourished in Soviet times. Thanks to the initiative of the art historian Jānis Pujāts, Latgalian ceramics were even successfully displayed at the all-Soviet exhibitions.



❖ Today, Latgalian ceramics continue to be a significant trademark of the region. Outstanding pottery works are popular and have received prizes at exhibitions, art festivals and song festivals in Latgale and other parts of Latvia, but also in the neighbouring countries or, for instance, Spain, Portugal, Norway or France.

❖ Latgalian potteries produce both ancient-style black ceramics which use traditional forms and proportions, as well as colourful glazed ceramics. Many artisan families safe-guard and develop their traditions individually (e.g. the Locāni, Dumbrovski or Ušpeļi families), whereas others are part of larger ceramic cooperatives. The oldest of them in Latgale are the Folk Handicraft Work-shop by Andrejs Paulāns, the „Pūdnīku skūla” (School of Pottery, <http://www.manss.lv/pudnikuskula.html>, registered in 1990), which consists of nine Latgalian artisans (among others

◆ *The potter Evalds Vasiļevskis*





E. Vasilevskis, S. Viļums, A. Ušpelis and I. Vecelis), and the Folk Handicraft Work-shop „Latgale” in Daugavpils (L. Zeiļa, J. Saikovskis, I. Šauša, V. Zabinako and others).

❖ All potters in Latgale have their own styles, thereby maintaining a special personal handwriting in Latgalian handicraft.

### TRADITIONAL HOUSEHOLD DISHES AND THEIR LATGALIAN NAMES

„**Vāraunieks**” – a household dish originally used mainly during the preparation of meals, later also for keeping jam, fat and honey. From this type of dish many other dish forms have been derived, but also toys for children have been developed.



**Ļaks** – a jar used for keeping oil.



## MINIATURE SCULPTURES

### Vase with decor



### A whistle



### Latgalian candleholder

The Latgalian poet and journalist Anna Rancāne writes on candleholders: „Latgalian candleholders are like world trees on whose branches fire birds grow, they are like small churches of clay, which with their spires unite Earth and Heaven while the candles pray to the Lord.”



❖ In both private houses and churches in Latgale, expressive woodcarvings can regularly be seen. In this way, old folk traditions with regard to handicraft objects are being preserved until the present day. One example of such beautiful woodcarvings is the Orthodox church of Jānis Kristītājs Brodaiža in the parish of Ludza. Generally, however, historical windows and marginal decorations are much less frequent today because of the availability of modern building materials and technologies and high costs of maintenance. In this way, the power of the living material – wood – is lost.

Yet, the high number of craftsmen working with wood in Latgale remains a sign of the importance of woodcarvings until the present day. The works are important for the maintenance of individual family traditions, but also to generate income and as gifts. Latgale features also a high number of places where everybody can acquire the main skills of woodworking (for instance in the Craft School of Latgale or the Vocational schools in Balvi or Makašāni).

The wooden pieces of work such as furniture, dishes, windows, sculptures and design objects show that all artisans have their own specific aesthetic expressions and traditions.



◆ A fragment of a door of the manor in the parish of Lendži (county of Rēzekne)



❖ **Wooden figurative compositions and portraits** (of politicians, artists and other celebrities) by Antons Rancāns (Rēzekne region), decorative objects and crucifixes which can be found in the parishes of Latgale.



◆ The town sign of the town of Viesīte  
Photo: Solvita Pošeiko



◆ The wooden sculptures „Latvian teacher” (above) and „Daughter” (below) by Antons Rancāns  
Photo: Gundega Rancāne



❖ The house sign of Aigars and Ivars Rūrāns is an inalienable part of the visual image of the town of Viesīte and a significant landmark.



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1. Bez PVN „Pyrms vuorda” (2007)
2. Borowa MC „Trepis iz nakurīni” (2005)
3. Borowa MC „Plastilina pasaule (2007)
4. Borowa MC „Ui, lobs!” (2008)
5. Cielaviņa „Esmu Ludzai pierakstīts” (2005)
6. Dabasu Durovys „Lepetņiks” (2008)
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Rēzekne 2011