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## EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT TRENDS IN THE BALTIC COUNTRIES AND STATISTICAL REGIONS OF LATVIA, 1998–2011

**Einārs Ulnicāns**

Scientific Institute for Regional Studies. Rezekne Higher Education Institution

Address: 90 Atbrīvošanas Ave, Rēzekne, LV-4601, Latvia

E-mail: [ulnicans@navigator.lv](mailto:ulnicans@navigator.lv)

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**Abstract.** The aim of the paper is to analyse the number and proportion of employees, unemployment rates and their territorial trends in Latvia, and to compare them with those in Estonia and Lithuania. The paper analyses the number of employees at the main job, its proportion in the private sector, and unemployment rates in the Baltic countries and statistical regions of Latvia. In 2000–2007, employment and its proportion in the private sector was on the increase. In 2008, an upward trend in Estonia and Lithuania started to decrease, but in Latvia number of employees and its proportion in the private sector already had dropped. In 2009, the number of employees continued to decline. The unemployment rate grew from 1998 to 2000 and from III quarter 2008 to I quarter 2010. From 2001 to II quarter 2008, during an economic boom, it decreased to a minimum. A faster economic growth means a higher proportion of employees in the private sector; however, during the economic crisis, it creates more instability in the labour market than in the public sector, especially at the beginning. As the crisis deepens, unemployment in the private sector begins to stabilize; however, it increases in the public sector.

**Keywords:** employees at the main job, proportion of employees in the private sector, unemployment rate, Baltic countries, statistical regions of Latvia.

### 1. Employment and unemployment research directions, selected indicators and criteria

Employment and unemployment in the analysis has two directions: 1) these indicators in six statistical regions of Latvia or five regions in employment accounting, 2) aggregates in the Baltic countries – Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The analysis of employment is based on the number of workers occupied at the main job or jobs – employees at the main job. These are the people having actual jobs because the data are based on a business survey, i.e. reports of active commercial companies and budgetary institutions. [5] Consequently, the following indicators characterize employment more directly than the number of persons employed according to the Labour Force Survey (LFS). The latter indicator is based on population responses and also implies a certain number of people who work only temporarily, are employed on a casual basis, etc.

Employment can be researched according to various criteria. In recent years, in Latvia, as well as in other Baltic countries, there have been changes in employment by sector – public and private. [5] Since the development of private business is a prerequisite to a normally functioning market economy and the country's economic growth, the author analyses the proportion of employees and its changes directly in the private sector.

In studying employment trends, the author used data from the main institutional online statistical databases available in all the Baltic countries. In Estonia, it is the database of a government agency Statistics Estonia, in Latvia – the database of the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, in Lithuania – the database of the Lithuanian Department of Statistics (Statistics Lithuania). The chosen research time period is from 2000 to 2009, or abbreviated versions of this period. In this period, employment had initially entered into a specific, development and sustainable growth phase, but then experienced a reduction after the economic situation changes. During the preparation of the paper, full data for 2010 were available only for Estonia.

In the analysis of unemployment, data from the main statistical institutions of all the Baltic countries, based on the data on the unemployment rate of the economically active (or simply active) population aged 15–74, were also used. These data are taken from the LFS. In fact, it also suggests the proportion of the unemployed in the labour force (i.e. active population). [7] However, it is a more accurate unemployment indicator than the registered unemployment rate because it takes into account both the officially registered and the unregistered unemployed. In any case, these are the people who are not employed and actively looking for a job. The registered unemployment rate is the number of the registered unemployed per 100 economically active population aged 15–74 (or 15–retirement age) in the country and its territorial units. [13] In Latvia, the unemployed are officially registered and listed in the State Employment Agency of Latvia (SEA). This institution also periodically publishes the registered unemployment rate.

In unemployment research, there are three types of data for two selected time periods: 1) annual data by country from 1998 to 2010; 2) quarterly data by country from 2007 to 2011 (1st quarter); 3) monthly data on five Latvian regions – from January 2007 to March 2011, the end of each month. The main reasons for this choice are as follows: 1) directly comparative data from all three countries are available from 1998; 2) taking the last 15-year period, year 2007 was the last of the economically good years, after which followed – and continues – the major economic crisis. The author used descriptive and statistical analysis methods. Statistical analysis includes a simple time series analysis, relative and average estimates, ranking, tables and graphs. The description of trends in the tables is based on empirical observation.

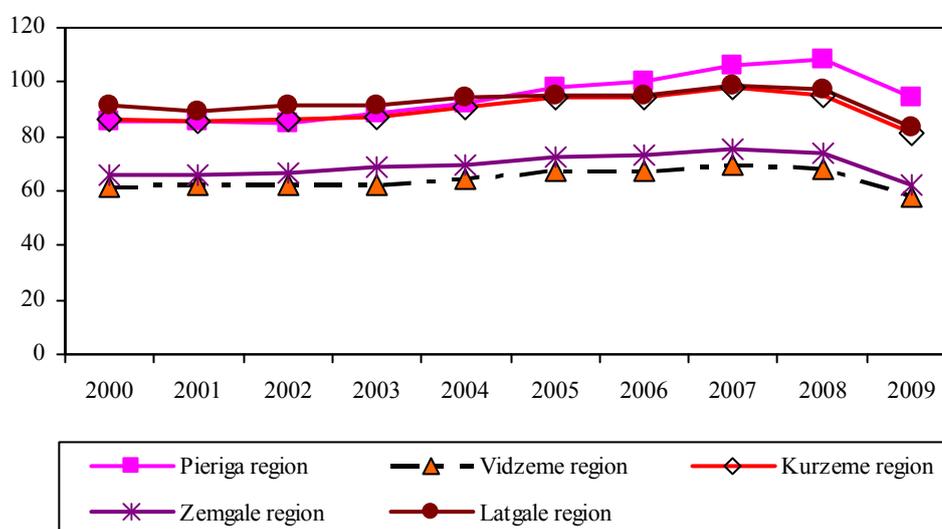
## 2. Employment trends

Trends in the number of the persons employed in the Baltic countries in the second half of the 90s of the 20th century can be described as unstable. It is also subject to cyclic economic fluctuations. However, from 2000, this figure had been increasing with a constant trend up to the year 2008, when the first signs of an economic crisis appeared. The period from 2000 to 2008 may be considered as a period of economic growth in all three countries; consequently, this inevitably led to a rise in the number of the persons employed, as well as in the number of occupied posts. This means that both the number of the persons employed (according to the LFS), as well as the number of employees at the main job (according to active commercial companies' and budgetary institutions' reports), increased. The Baltic countries have had similar increment rates (Table 1) in the number of employees at the main job – they may be considered as sufficiently dynamic. Similarly, the rise in the number of employees is regarded as very gradual and steady, which is also confirmed by very high linear correlation coefficients ( $r$ ) of time series. It should be admitted that the employment rate (which is not included in the table) did not differ significantly between countries as well. Minor differences were emerging in 2008 when the number of employees in Latvia began to decline, and it certainly was the beginning of dramatic economic changes. In Estonia and Lithuania, a downward trend in this index was observed only from 2009. Nevertheless, the decline was impressive – right down to the level of 2003–2004 (in Latvia, too). The indicators of the number of the persons employed, according to the LFS, began to decrease in 2008 and in 2009 were steadily declining. The general trend in indices has also changed – the changes from 2000 to 2009 were not linear anymore but in the form of the highest degree polynomials. The coefficients of determination of polynomials ( $R^2$ ) in Latvia and Lithuania were similar because trends in the number of employees were alike – a decrease in 2001, followed by an upward trend from 2002 to 2007 (in Latvia and Lithuania – to 2008), right after which the number started to fall again in 2009. Respectively, it is a typical third-degree polynomial. In Estonia, the number of employees continued to increase up to 2003; then, the situation began to deteriorate in 2004, and from 2005 to 2008 an upward trend was observed. Finally, in 2009, a decrease was observed. Consequently, a marked fourth-degree polynomial trend can be noticed: two periods of upward and two periods of downward trends can be observed.

**Table 1.** Number of employees at the main job in the Baltic countries and its trends, 2000–2009  
[2, 4, 5, 6 and author's calculations based on these data]

Indicators		Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania
Employees at the main job, annual average, thsd population*	2000	520.7	711.3	1072.3
	2007	596.8	857.2	1291.8
	2008	605.9	843.0	1301.6
	2009	547.3	720.1	1154.5
Calculation of indicators	Increase, %, 2000–2008	16.4	18.5	21.4
	Increase, %, 2007–2008	1.5	-1.7	0.8
	Average increase, %, 2000–2008	1.9	2.1	2.5
	Increase, %, 2008–2009	-9.7	-14.6	-11.3
	Linear trend correlation coefficient, 2000–2008	0.9455	0.9601	0.9752
	Third-degree polynomial coefficient of determination, 2000–2009	0.8151	0.9436	0.9221
	Fourth-degree polynomial coefficient of determination, 2000–2009	0.9661	0.9741	0.9476

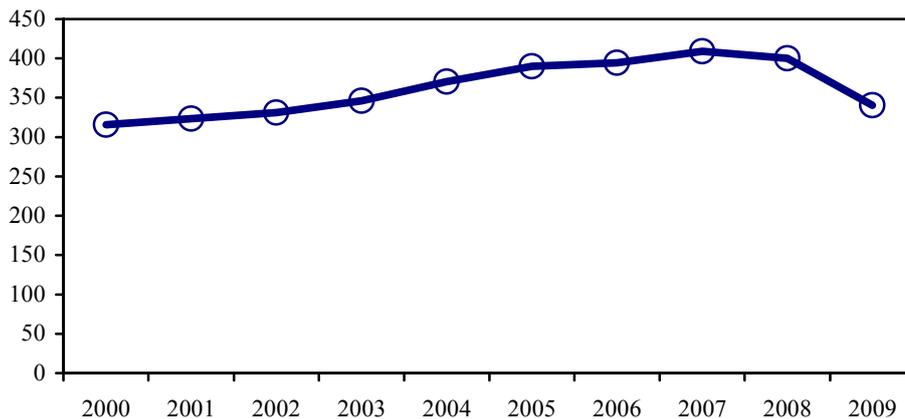
\* In Lithuania, in 2006–2009, at the main and secondary job.

**Figure 1.** Employees at the main job by region of Latvia (excluding Riga region), thsd population, 2000–2009  
[4, 5 and author's illustration]

The number of employees in the statistical regions of Latvia had been subject to a continuous upward trend up to the year 2007 and a fall – from the year 2008 (figures 1, 2). Riga region, which includes the capital of Latvia, is reflected in the figure separately because the number of employees in that region exceeds the performance of other regions significantly – it is almost as high as in other regions taken together. This trend was certainly indicative of an upturn in the economic situation until 2007 and its decline from 2008, especially in 2009. The exception was Pierīga region, where the number of employees in 2008 continued to grow; however, in 2009, it faced an insignificant decline in comparison with other regions. Pierīga region includes the administrative territorial unit surrounding Riga, in all directions. Together with Riga region, this region is considered to be one of the most dynamic regions in terms of employment development in Latvia.

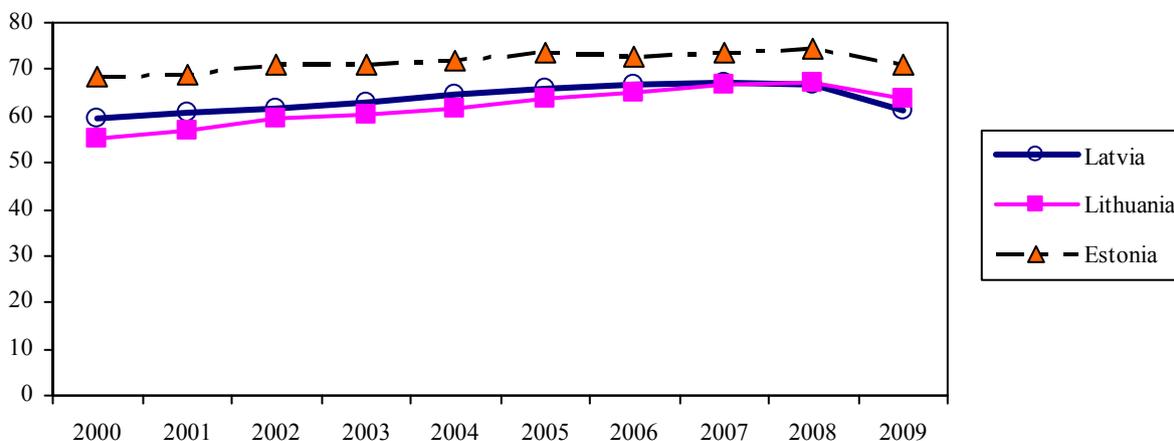
Therefore, a more dynamic economic development in Latvia is concentrated around the capital. The increase in the average number of employees in the time period from 2000 to 2008 in Riga and Riga region exceeded the indices of other regions, and, respectively, was by 2.8 and 3.0% higher. The absolute index of employees in Pierīga region in 2000 was only the fourth amongst six regions, while in 2005 it was already the second, lagging behind only Riga region. The slowest growth in the average number of employees during nine years was observed in Latgale region, where it grew by 0.8%. It is a region in the east of Latvia with lower economic growth rates. At the same time, before 2004, in Latgale, there was the second largest absolute number of occupied posts after Riga region; from 2005, it was the third largest.

This is to a great extent due to the fact that the population of Latgale is slightly higher than that of other rural regions. Moreover, it should be taken into account that several territorial units, which historically belong to Vidzeme or Zemgale (in central-northern and southern regions of Latvia), are included in the statistical Pierīga region. An upward trend in the average number of employees in Vidzeme, Zemgale and Kurzeme (western region of Latvia) fluctuated from 1.2 to 1.4%. In 2009, the number of working population in all the regions fell rapidly, ranging from 12.5% (Pierīga region) to 15.4% (Zemgale region). As a result of such a decrease, the smallest number of employees throughout the whole period of the analysis was reached in a year's time. The exceptions were Pierīga region, where this index in 2009 was at the level of the year 2004, as well as Rīga, where this index stayed at the same level as it was in 2003. The decline continued in the first quarter of 2010, and after that the number of employees began to grow slowly but steadily.



**Figure 2.** Employees at the main job in Riga region, Latvia, thsd population, 2000–2009 [4, 5 and author's illustration]

The proportion of employees in the private sector varied from country to country. In Estonia, it was much higher than in Latvia and Lithuania – by 7–12 percentage points, depending on the year (Figure 3), – which could be indicative of more favourable conditions for economic development and business support in this country. The growth of the proportion in the private sector means economic growth, while its size – the labour market performance. Of course, employment in the private sector tends not to be 100%. The public sector includes many nationally vital and essential workplaces for the society which cannot be ensured solely by private entrepreneurs (and, in some cases, cannot be private-sector expertise). However, it may also be due to unnecessary administrative, bureaucratic structures, the reduction in which is also an effective public administrative and development issue.



**Figure 3.** Proportion of employees in the private sector in the Baltic countries, %, 2000–2009 [2, 4, 5, 12 and author's illustration]

The proportion of employees in the private sector in Estonia was high, with small but stable growth rates (Table 2). In Latvia, the increase in the proportion had been stable until 2007, the same as the number of employees, and again, unlike other Baltic countries, began to decline already in 2008. According to the labour market indices, the signs of economic recession are considered to have first appeared in Latvia. In Lithuania, the proportion of the private sector in 2000 had been relatively low; however, thereafter (by 2008), it saw a sharp increase. As a result, in Lithuania, this figure pulled ahead of Latvia. Together with the deepening of the economic crisis, the proportion of employees in the private sector was also declining. It is remarkable that the absolute decrease in the proportion in all Baltic countries in 2009 was identical. Furthermore, a linear trend in this index (2000–2008) was replaced by a polynomial one (2000–2009). It should be pointed out that even in this case Latvia and Lithuania have noticeable third-degree polynomial trends, while in order to describe Estonia's trend the highest degree polynomial is required – it means that there were more upward than downward trend periods. In poor economic conditions, an employee is not protected from the job loss – either in the private or in the public sector. However, larger workforce reductions often occur in private institutions.

**Table 2.** Proportion of employees in the private sector in the Baltic countries and its trends, 2000–2009  
[2, 3, 4, 5, 12 and author's calculations based on these data]

Indicators		Estonia	Latvia	Lithuania
Proportion of employees in the private sector	2000	68.3	59.6	55.2
	2008	74.4	66.7	67.1
	2009	71.1	63.4	63.8
Calculation of indicators	Increase, percentage points, 2000–2008	6.1	7.1	11.9
	Increase, percentage points, 2008–2009	-3.3	-3.3	-3.3
	Rank, 2000	1	2	3
	Rank, 2008	1	3	2
	Rank, 2009	1	3	2

The proportion of employees in all statistical regions of Latvia, as well as in Latvia in general, had been steadily increasing up to the year 2007 and began to decline in 2008 (Figure 4). Only in Riga and Pieriga region, it was consistently above the national average rate. The highest proportion had been reached before the recession in Riga region – 72.1%. The biggest proportion growth in the time period from 2000 to 2008 was observed in Zemgale and Vidzeme regions – by 8.7 and 7.7%, the lowest – in Riga region (about 5.9%) (similar to Estonia – a high proportion of slower but stable growth). The lowest proportion of the private sector was in Latgale region, where the highest figure – 53.9% – was observed in 2007. Only beginning from 2004, the majority of employees in Latgale were in the private sector. In the economically less developed region, a relatively high share of workplaces is concentrated in state and self-government institutions and businesses, and fewer opportunities for employment appear in private businesses. In some municipal districts (novads) of Latgale, state and self-government structures have always been the main employers. As a result of the economic slowdown in Latgale in 2009, the highest proportion of employers again was in the public sector (50.4%). The total specific weight of employment in the private sector in all regions in 2009 returned to the level of 2004.

All in all, it can be concluded that the number of employees in 2000–2007 in all Baltic countries had been continuously increasing. In 2008, the upward trend began to decrease, although the number of working population in Latvia had already dropped. The economic recession intensified in 2009; consequently, the number of employees continued to decline, and a widespread employment crisis erupted. Similar trends – dynamic and compared with countries – reflect the proportion of employees in the private sector. This percentage varies between countries: in Estonia, it is much higher. In Lithuania, in turn, the share of the private sector in 2000–2008 was subject to a relatively rapid growth. There is an interconnection: the private sector employment proportion is higher in areas with a higher employment rate and the level of economic development in general. The economic crisis could have had repercussions for employment both in the public and in the private sectors. However, it would have affected the persons employed in the private sector more often and more rapidly.

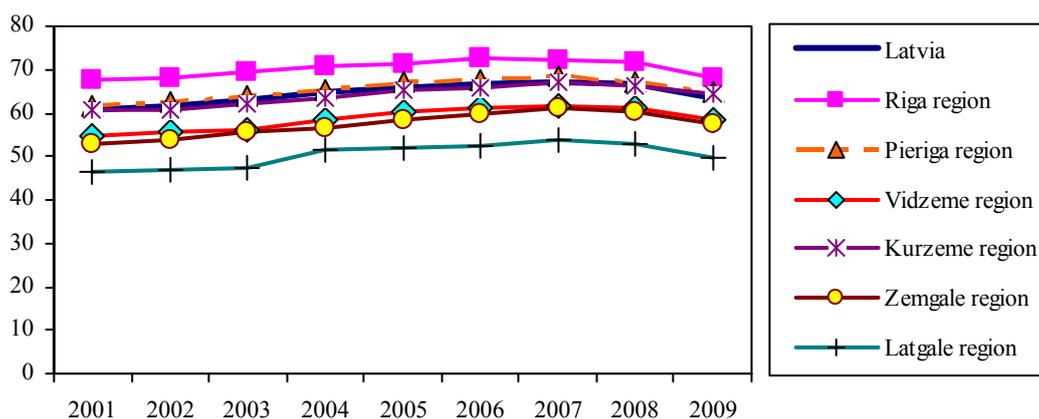
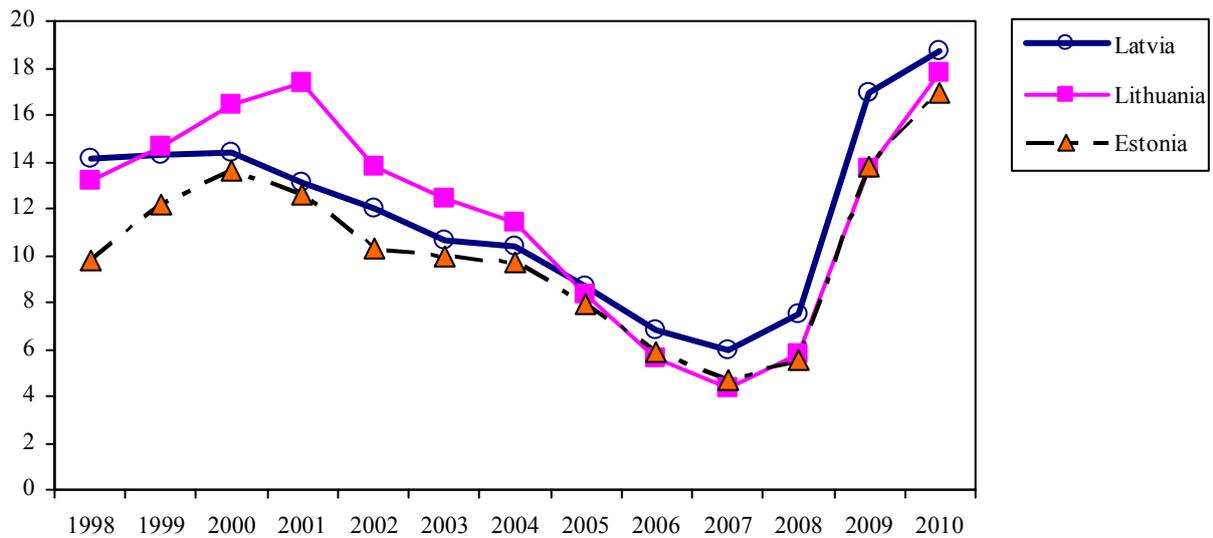


Figure 4. Proportion of employees in the private sector by region of Latvia, %, 2001–2009 [4, 5 and author's illustration]

### 3. Trends in the unemployment rate

There are no marked underlying trends in the unemployment rate (coefficient) or the percentage (proportion) of the unemployed among the economically active population in the Baltic countries within the time period from 1998 to 2010 (Figure 5). The unemployment rate was affected by two periods of economic crisis (1998–2000 (in Lithuania – to 2001) and 2008–2010) and the economic boom in 2001–2007. Even though, for instance, in Lithuania in 2001 there were relatively high unemployment rates, the overall development of employment trends in all three countries was similar. However, the pace of the development in the three countries differed. Since 2002, during the economic boom, Lithuania was able to reduce the unemployment coefficient at a very rapid pace. As a result, since 2005, Lithuania had the second lowest, or even the lowest, unemployment rate among the Baltic countries (Table 3). Overall, the lowest rate throughout almost all years has been in Estonia. In Latvia, the decline of unemployment was less steep, and the unemployment rate there for several years had been the highest among the Baltic countries; even during the economically more favourable years it was considered to be low. The development of unemployment from 1998 to 2010 in all three countries can be characterized with the help of third-degree polynomial curves. The coefficients of determination  $R^2$  indicate that the most notable trend was observed in Lithuania ( $R^2 = 0.9275$ ). However, the coefficients of Latvia and Estonia were also high (0.8655 and 0.8770 respectively). The differences in numerical development emerged only in nuances. For instance, during the first period when the unemployment rate increased (1998–2000), the differences among the countries were more distinctive than in the following years. In 1998, the difference between the highest and the lowest rate was 4.3 percentage points, while in 2001 it was as high as 4.8 percentage points. From 2001 to 2007, together with the decrease in the unemployment rate, the differences among the countries became less obvious. In 2005, the difference between the highest and the lowest unemployment rate was only 0.8 percentage points. There was a new upward trend in this difference in 2009, when it was 3.1 percentage points; however, in 2010, it went down again and was 1.8 percentage points.

The lowest unemployment rate was generally observed in 2007 (4.3% – in Lithuania, 4.7% – in Estonia, and 6.0% – in Latvia) (Figure 5), when in the Baltic countries it began to approach the level of some of the developed Western countries (e.g. the Netherlands) and could almost assert that the size of economically active and employed population was almost the same. However, the year 2008 is the year when the “overheating” signs were first observed in the economy. Accordingly, these signs showed that full employment within the market economy cannot exist, as well as that the economy is cyclic in nature. Therefore, it is more than convincingly revealed by a substantial increase in 2009. A very sharp increase in unemployment has hit all three countries. As it can be inferred from Table 3, which contains data for the time period from 2007 to 2010, the unemployment rate in Estonia increased 3.6 times, in Latvia – 3.1 times, in Lithuania – 4.1 times. The unemployment coefficient in all three countries in 2010 was the highest throughout the period studied. Consequently, very high unemployment and serious employment problems were present in all three countries.

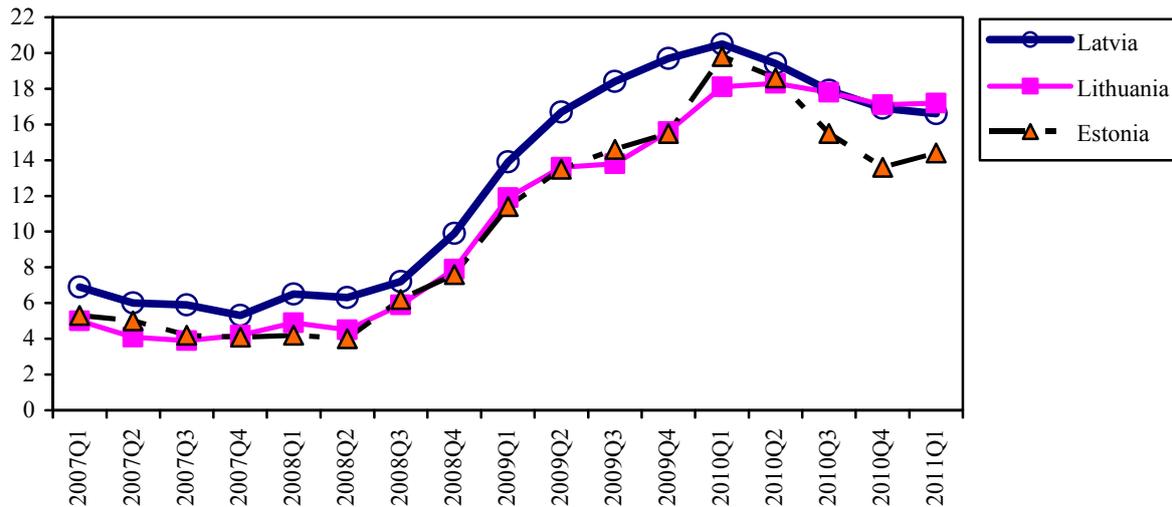


**Figure 5.** Unemployment rate (of the active population aged 15–74) in the Baltic countries, %, 1998–2010 [1, 9, 10 and author’s illustration]

**Table 3.** Changes in the unemployment rate (of the active population aged 15–74) in the Baltic countries, 1998–2010 [1, 9, 10 and author’s calculations based on these data]

State	Rank (1 = the lowest unemployment rate etc.)							Unemployment rate increase (decrease), %	
	1998	1999–2004	2005	2006–2007	2008	2009	2010	2000–2007	2007–2010
Estonia	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	- 65.4	259.6
Latvia	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	- 58.3	211.7
Lithuania	2	3	2	1	2	1	2	- 73.8	314.0

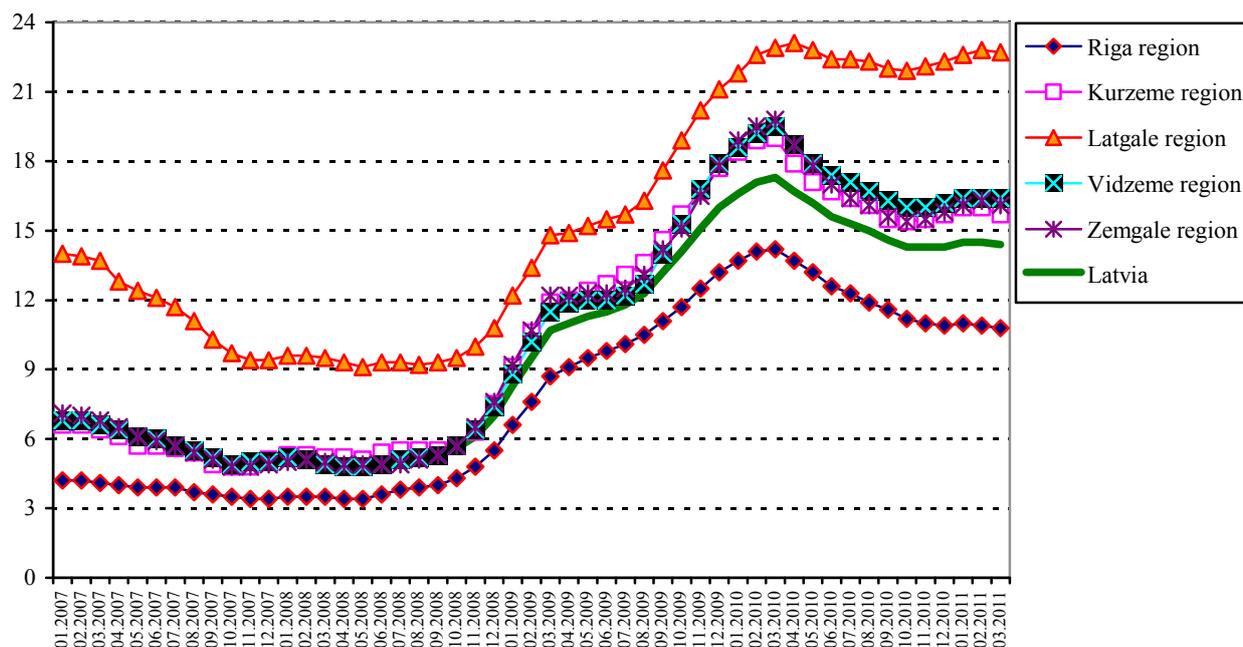
Economic stabilization from the point of view of the unemployment rate and the beginning of the recession may well be observed by analysing quarterly unemployment figures by country (Figure 6). In 2007, unemployment continued to decline constantly, reaching the lowest level in the Baltic countries since their transition to market economy (in Lithuania, in III quarter, 3.9%). In I and II quarters 2008, the unemployment rate was still low; however, starting with III quarter, it started to rise again. This period can be considered as the end of a favourable economic situation (in Latvia, it is figuratively called “bold years”) and the beginning of the crisis. In 2009, the unemployment in all countries was constantly and dramatically rising: in Estonia, the unemployment rate during the year increased by 36.0, in Latvia – by 41.7, in Lithuania – by 31.1%. The growth rate is impressive and is seen as a maximum for the country in order to maintain a stable and secure social and domestic political situation. In early 2010, the unemployment rate continued growing. However, unlike 2009, it started to fall in II quarter – especially in Estonia (while in Latvia and Lithuania – at a much more moderate pace). Analysing the unemployment figures of four quarters in recent years, other trends can also be observed. For instance, in III quarter, the unemployment rate was always the lowest in Lithuania (except 2010), while in the fourth quarter – in Estonia. In III and IV quarter 2010, the unemployment rate saw the sharpest decrease in Estonia, while in Lithuania this process was more moderate. During the first months of the year 2011, the unemployment rate went up slightly, except Latvia. As a result, for the first time since 2004, Latvia became the second among the Baltic countries in terms of unemployment indices. Without any special analysis, it is obvious that there were no marked seasonal trends in unemployment rates in any of the countries.



**Figure 6.** Unemployment rate (of the active population aged 15–74) in the Baltic countries, %, 2007–2011 (quarterly data) [7, 8, 11 and author's illustration]

The economic problems of 2009 also influenced the unemployment rate in the regions of Latvia. Changes in the registered unemployment rate (SEA registered unemployed: active population) over the past three years in all regions were similar (Figure 7). Namely, in the course of the year 2007, a constant decline persisted, conditioning the lowest unemployment rates in the history of the restored Republic of Latvia. In 2008, the unemployment rate was stable and low, although during the last quarter a gradual increase resumed. In 2009, the trend was unequivocal – a constant and rapid increase in unemployment. The growth rates varied by quarter – a sharp increase in I quarter, at the end of III quarter and in IV quarter and more moderate growth rates in II quarter and at the beginning of III quarter. In I quarter 2009, the unemployment rate generally exceeded the initial level of 2007 again, while in IV quarter it already returned to the average level of the 90s of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In 2010, the unemployment rate continued to rise in all regions, reaching a peak in March (in Latgale – in April). However, then it stabilized and began to gradually decrease. At the end of the year, unemployment increased slightly, except Riga region. At the beginning of 2011, the unemployment rate was either higher or remained the same for many months. It basically means that the situation is viewed as intense and very complicated. However, it has been improving.

The first wave of growth in unemployment in I quarter 2009 was mainly due to the dismissal of employees in the private sector. Staff cutbacks also began in the public sector, although the biggest wave of redundancies there was mainly observed in III and IV quarters, which led to an increase in unemployment in general. The rise in unemployment can also cause public support programmes for the unemployed to appear. For instance, in the last months of 2009, the SEA began to implement a programme within the framework of which an unemployed person may work for a certain period of time – namely, such a person has a temporary employment with 100 lats (about EUR 142) per month scholarship, which must be registered in an agency. As a result, a new rise in the registration of the unemployed has been observed in Latvia, primarily because of this program. Very often people who were hitherto out of work register, though they had not been registered in the SEA (part – no longer). This, in turn, means that the registered unemployment rate in the country, although it saw a new increase, remains closer to the real, actual situation.



**Figure 7.** Registered unemployment rate (of the active population) by region of Latvia, %, 2007–2011(monthly data)  
[13 and author's illustration]

**Table 4.** Registered unemployment rate by region of Latvia and its changes, 2007–2010  
[13 and author's calculations based on these data]

Region	Registered unemployment rate, % (December)				Rank (1 = the lowest unemployment rate etc.) (December)				Unemployment rate, increase, %, December 2007– December 2009	Unemployment rate, increase, %, March 2010– October 2010
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2007	2008	2009	2010		
Riga region	3.4	5.5	13.2	10.9	1	1	1	1	288.2	-21.1
Kurzeme region	5.1	7.5	17.7	15.7	4	3	2	2	247.1	-18.9
Latgale region	9.4	10.8	21.1	22.3	5	5	5	5	124.5	-4.4
Vidzeme region	5.0	7.4	17.9	16.2	3	2	4	4	258.0	-17.9
Zemgale region	4.9	7.6	17.8	15.8	2	4	3	3	263.3	-22.2
Whole country	4.9	7.0	16.0	14.3	X	X	X	X	226.5	-17.3

In the same way, similarly to many other indicators, the unemployment rate is the best (i.e. the lowest) in Riga region, the worst (the highest) – in Latgale (Table 4). In other regions, unemployment is at a very similar level, and regional positions (ranks) are constantly changing over time. The SEA, unlike the Central Statistical Bureau of Latvia, does not divide Pierīga region – its territorial units this time are refer to Vidzeme and Zemgale. Unemployment rates between regions in recent years have a bit increased. From 2009, a new statistical trend was observed: Riga is now the only region where the unemployment rate is stable below the average rate in the country. Heretofore, in Kurzeme, Zemgale and Vidzeme regions, unemployment rates were very close to the average in the country, although now they are constantly above it. Unemployment in Latgale, although it had been constantly the highest in Latvia during 2008–2009, experienced mathematically smallest increase, but in 10 months of 2010 – the smallest decrease. October was chosen as a reference point because the unemployment rate was declining steadily until that time. From November to December, it increased slightly again, except Riga region.

#### 4. Conclusions

In conclusion, it should be stated that the unemployment rate in the Baltic countries grew from 1998 to 2000, in Lithuania – to 2001. From 2001 to II quarter 2008, an economic boom was observed; as a result, at the end of this period, unemployment decreased to a minimum. From III quarter 2008, the economic downturn began; it intensified in 2009, and the unemployment rate was rising dramatically. An even higher increase in its growth rate is not acceptable. The unemployment rate is generally the lowest in Estonia; the second place in the last 5 years has been occupied by Lithuania. In 2009, the problem of unemployment seriously affected all three countries. Evaluating changes in the registered unemployment rate in Latvia, one can conclude that in the first half of 2009 unemployment rose mainly due to the wave of mass redundancies in the private sector, while in the second half – due to the same processes in the public sector. The rise in the unemployment rate may also cause some unemployment support measures, such as temporary employment for the registered unemployed, to appear. Unemployment rates are different in the regions of Latvia, but recently there has been a reduction in regional disparities, especially during the recession. It must be admitted that higher unemployment rates are observed in economically less developed regions; however, the unemployment growth rate is often faster in the areas with a higher level of economic development. A higher economic growth rate generally means a higher level of employment in the private sector; however, during the economic crisis, the private sector creates more instability in the labour market than the public one, especially at the beginning of the crisis. As the crisis deepens, unemployment in the private sector begins to stabilize; however, at the same time, it increases in the public sector. The employment situation continued to deteriorate in the Baltic countries and Latvian regions until March 2010. Subsequently, a gradual but stable improvement was noticed, and this particular situation is still in progress. Nevertheless, in general, the situation remains complicated.

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**UŽIMTUMO IR NEDARBO KITIMO TENDENCIJOS BALTIJOS ŠALYSE IR STATISTINIULOSE LATVIJOS REGIONULOSE 1998–2011 M.****Einārs Ulnicāns**

**Santrauka.** Straipsnio tikslas yra išanalizuoti Latvijos darbuotojų skaičių, darbuotojų struktūrą, bei nedarbo lygio teritorinės plėtros tendencijas, palyginti kitimo tendencijas su Estijos ir Lietuvos duomenimis. Straipsnyje analizuojamas darbuotojų skaičius pagrindiniame darbe, jų dalis privačiame sektoriuje, taip pat aktyviųjų žmonių nedarbo lygis Baltijos šalyse ir statistiniuose Latvijos regionuose. Gyventojų užimtumas ir jo dalis privačiame sektoriuje didėjo 2000–2007 metų laikotarpyje. 2008 metais užimtumo didėjimo tendencija ėmė mažėti, tačiau Latvijoje krito žemyn. Darbuotojų skaičius ir toliau mažėjo 2009 metais. Nedarbas augo nuo 1998 iki 2000 metų ir nuo III ketvirčio 2008 metų iki I ketvirčio 2010 metų. Ekonominio pakilimo metų, nuo 2001 iki II ketvirčio 2008 metų, nedarbas sumažėjo iki minimalaus lygio. Didesnis ekonomikos augimas reiškia didesnę darbuotojų dalį privačiame sektoriuje, tačiau ekonominės krizės metu, ypač jos pradžioje, sukuriama daugiau nestabilumo privačioje darbo rinkoje nei viešajame sektoriuje. Gilėjant krizei, nedarbas pradeda stabilizuotis privačiame sektoriuje, tačiau didėja viešajame sektoriuje.

**Reikšminiai žodžiai:** darbuotojai pagrindiniame darbe, darbuotojų dalis privačiame sektoriuje, nedarbo lygis, Baltijos šalys, statistiniai Latvijos regionai.