

Opinions Among Exiles on the Nature of Restored Independent Republic of Latvia

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The majority of the Second World War refugees from Latvia desired to return to a free Latvia and devoted much of their efforts to promote the renewal of Latvian state independence. This goal was fundamental to their common identity. Correspondingly, there was a considerable public debate about how the restoration could be effected and what the future renewed state would be like in terms of political, economic and social system. The future state was envisioned either as a sovereign nation-state or as a part of some kind of democratic union or federation. Sovereign nation-state was by far the most popular goal and the advocates of this form agreed on at least two common principles: state must be democratic and based on 1922 Constitution with minor revisions. Advocates of alternative approaches were inspired by the ideas of European integration popular at the time and saw Latvian freedom as attainable by participation in some form of federation that could encompass either Baltic states, Central Europe or even the whole of Europe.

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