

LANGUAGE EDUCATION
POLICY PROFILE

COUNTRY REPORT
ESTONIA

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PART I. OVERVIEW: LANGUAGES IN ESTONIA

1. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.1. General information about Estonia and the Estonian language

Estonia is a country in Europe bordered to the west and north by the Baltic Sea, including the Gulf of Finland to the north, and to the East by Lake Peipus. Estonia shares its land border to the south with Latvia and to the north-east and south-east with the Russian Federation. Across the Baltic Sea (the Gulf of Finland) Estonia's neighbour to the north is Finland and to the west Sweden.



Map 1. Estonia and neighbour states

The area of Estonia is 45227.63 km² and its capital is Tallinn. The population of Estonia is 1 340 600 (as at 2008) and population density is 29.7 persons per square kilometre. Estonia is a parliamentary republic which was founded on 24 February 1918. Estonia regained its independence on 20 August 1991.

Estonia has been a member of the United Nations since 17 September 1991, the Council of Europe since 14 May 1993, the European Union since 1 May 2004 and NATO since 27 March 2004.

The country is divided into 15 counties:¹ Harju, Hiiu, Ida-Viru, Jõgeva, Järva, Lääne, Lääne-Viru, Põlva, Pärnu, Rapla, Saare, Tartu, Valga, Viljandi and Võru Counties.



Map 2. Estonian counties

¹Counties are stage 1 administrative units and rural municipalities and towns are stage 2 administrative units.

Estonian is a Finno-Ugric language. It belongs to the group of the Baltic-Finnic languages in the Finno-Ugric branch of the Uralic language family. The closest languages to Estonian are Votian and Livonian, which are practically extinct. A closely related language to Estonian is Finnish² while a less related language is Hungarian³. The number of people worldwide who speak Estonian as their mother tongue at present is 1 082 000: 922 000 in Estonia and 160 000 elsewhere, mainly in Sweden, Finland, Germany, the USA, Canada and Russia.⁴ According to the census of 2000 Estonian is spoken as a second language in Estonia by 167 804 residents.

1.2. Overview of the Estonian population since the 20th century

1.2.1. The first period of independence of the Republic of Estonia (1918–1940)

According to the census of 1922 the number of people living in the Republic of Estonia was 1 107 000; by the time of the 1934 census that number was 1 126 000, of whom 88.1% were Estonians. The total number of nationalities represented in Estonia was 51, but in addition to Estonians the number of ethnic groups represented by more than 1000 people was just seven: Russians (92 656), Germans (16 346), Swedes (7641), Latvians (5435), Jews (4434), Poles (1608) and Finns (1088). The principle of the equality of nations applies in Estonia. National minorities have throughout the centuries lived in historically established regions: the Russians have mainly lived in Petserimaa (Pskov – in the south-east of Estonia), Narva and in the villages on Lake Peipus; the Swedes on islands in Western Estonia (Vormsi, Pakri and Ruhnu) and on the peninsulas of Western Estonia; the Latvians in the border regions of South-Estonia, including Valga and Mõisaküla; and the Jews and the Germans mainly in towns and cities, with half of all Jews and one third of all Germans in Tallinn.

1.2.2. World War II

The Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact (signed on 23 August 1939) divided Eastern Europe into spheres of influence and left the Republic of Estonia in the power of the Soviet Union. After the signing of the pact Adolf Hitler invited the Baltic Germans living in the Baltic States to relocate to Germany. The organised departure of the Baltic Germans from Estonia began. After the occupation and annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union (1940) repression struck all ethnic groups. German occupation followed (1941–1944)⁵, during which Estonian Jews and Roma people were killed and Estonian Swedes left the country. In 1944 a large number of Estonians fled to the West to escape the approaching Soviet occupation. The number of people living in Estonia in 1940 was around 1 054 000; by December 1941 this had fallen to 949 000; and by the beginning of 1945 to 854 000. Estonia not only lost its independence, but also around 200 000 of its people – one fifth of its population – during World War II.

²Finnish belongs to the northern group of the Baltic Finnic languages. It is spoken by 5 232 728 people in Finland, Canada, Estonia, Norway, Russia, Sweden and the USA. For more information see http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=fin.

³Hungarian belongs to the group of Finno-Ugric languages and is spoken by 13 611 600 people in Hungary, Romania, Australia, Austria, Canada, Israel, Serbia, Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine and the USA. For more information see http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=hun.

⁴http://www.estonica.org/est/lugu.html?kateg=6&alam=100&menyy_id=1080

⁵See White Paper: Losses inflicted on the Estonian Nation by Occupation Regimes 1940-1991 (2005); reports of the Estonian State Commission on Examination of the Policies of Repression. Soviet Occupation 1940–1941, German Occupation 1941–1944 (2005) and Estonia 1940–1945. Reports of the Estonian International Commission for the Investigation of Crimes Against Humanity (2006).

1.2.3. Soviet era (1944–1991)

Immediately after the war (in 1945) the proportion of Estonians in the total population peaked at 97.3%. This was due to war losses among all ethnic groups, deportations, escapes and the changed made to the national border. After the war the area of Estonia decreased in Russia's favour by 2000 km². When the war ended, the Soviet Union launched large scale colonisation of Estonia. A major area of industry was built in the north-east of Estonia which required a lot of workers. From 1944 to 1990 it was not possible for Estonia to carry out its own migration policy. The major change in the make-up of Estonia's population is connected to the large-scale organised introduction of Russian-speaking people from other regions, mainly Russia, but also Ukraine, Belarus, Central Asia and Transcaucasia. During these years a total of 1.4 million people who had been born outside of Estonia entered and left the country

Year	Estonians	Russians	Germans	Swedes	Jews	Other
1934	88,1	8,2	1,5	0,7	0,4	1,1
1959	74,6	20,1	0,1	---	0,5	4,7
1970	68,2	24,7	0,6	---	0,4	6,1
1979	64,7	27,9	0,3	---	0,3	6,8
1989	61,5	30,3	0,2	---	0,3	7,7
2000	67,9	25,6	0,1	---	0,1	6,4

Table 1. Nationalities in Estonia based on census data (%)⁶

Based on the census of 1989 – the last to be conducted during the era of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic – the number of nationalities represented in Estonia was 121. The biggest groups were Estonians (963 300); Russians (474 800); Ukrainians (48 273) and Belarusians (27 700). The smallest groups were Romanians (88); Kyrgyz people (81), Avars and Gagauzes (69) and Buryats (53).

1.2.4. Period of restored independence (from 20 August 1991)

According to the census of 2000 the number of nationalities represented in Estonia was 142, of which 22 were represented by fewer than 1000 people, 36 by fewer than 100 people and 72 by fewer than 10 people. Estonians formed in the majority in most counties, municipalities and towns, except in Ida-Viru County (where Estonians formed only 20% of the population) also some towns and municipalities in Harjumaa (see Annex 1).

nationality	1989		2000	
	number	%	number	%
Estonians	963 281	61,5	930 219	67,9
Russians	474 834	30,3	351 178	25,6
Ukrainians	48 271	3,1	29 012	2,1
Belarusians	27 711	1,8	17 241	1,3
Finns	16 622	1,1	11 837	0,9
Tatars	4 058	0,2	2 582	0,2
Latvians	3 135	0,2	2 330	0,2
Poles	3 008	0,2	2 193	0,2
Jews	4 613	0,3	2 145	0,1
Lithuanians	2 568	0,2	2 116	0,1
Germans	3 466	0,2	1 870	0,1
other	14 088	0,9	9 410	0,7
unknown	7	0,0	7 919	0,6
total	1 565 662	100,0	1 370 052	100,0

Table 2. Comparison of population groups in 1989 and 2000.

⁶The censuses that were carried out in the Republic of Estonia until the end of World War II (1945) were conducted in the pre-war territory of Estonia. After the war the area of Estonia decreased in Russia's favour by approximately 2000 km².

2. LANGUAGES IN ESTONIAN SOCIETY

2.1. Historical overview of the status of the Estonian language and its spheres of use

2.1.1. Before World War I

Prior to World War I Estonia had formed part of the Russian empire for two centuries. Nevertheless, the language of public administration until 1880 was German, and only then was it replaced by Russian. In education, culture and economy the language most used was German, as the Baltic German minority formed the social elite of Estonia at the time.⁷ For a long period Estonian had low status. During the period of national awakening of Estonians from 1860 to 1890 the use of Estonian increased primarily in culture and education, but status as an official language was still to be achieved. This only occurred in 1918 when the Republic of Estonia was established.

2.1.2. The first period of independence of the Republic of Estonia (1918–1940)

The first constitution of the Republic of Estonia (1920) enacted Estonian as the country's official language in law. The Language Act, which was passed in 1934, stipulated the use of Estonian as the language of public administration in both state and local government bodies, and it also governed the use of minority languages in cultural self-governing agencies and local governments in regions in which the majority of the population was formed by national minorities. In this period (during the 1930s) Estonian developed in almost every domain, including higher education and science. This was based on the intensive study of Estonian which had begun at the end of the 19th century and on the development of dictionaries of Estonian based on these studies. There were also almost 100 terminology committees working in the 1920s and 1930s which developed terminology for many spheres of life.

2.1.3. The Soviet era (1940–1941, 1944–1991)

Standard language planning and terminology development continued during the Soviet period, albeit in the case of the latter to a considerably more limited extent. During this period Russian dominated in many branches of the economy, especially spheres of social life and the work arrangement of organisations which were subordinate to a centralised Russian-speaking management – aviation, the maritime sector, the energy sector, industry and so on. The role of Russian was enormous in other domains as well, such as state government, foreign policy, diplomacy, military matters, science and technology. The Soviet nationals who settled in Estonia and did not speak Estonian had no need to learn the language. This resulted in a situation where Estonians had to use Russian in order to communicate with officials and doctors in some regions of the country. At the end of the Soviet period, in 1989, the Language Act of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic was passed, legalising the use of Estonian as the official language of the country. Estonian-language requirements were developed and imposed as an obligatory part of qualification requirements. A 1–4-year period was established during which agencies and companies had to make the transition from Russian to Estonian as the language of public administration; employees who could not speak Estonian to the extent required to complete their tasks or duties had to learn the language and pass an exam. These requirements were difficult to conform to. The Language Act of 1989 became invalid in 1995 when a new language act entered force.

⁷The territory of Estonia was governed by the Landesstaat from the start of the 18th century.

2.2. Status of languages in newly independent Estonia (since 20 August 1991)

2.2.1. The legal status of Estonian

Pursuant to the preamble of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia (1992) the state shall guarantee the preservation of the Estonian nation, language and culture through the ages. Section 6 of the constitution stipulates that the official language of Estonia is Estonian.⁸ The state must ensure the following: everyone's right to receive instruction in Estonian (§37(4)); everyone's right to address state agencies, local governments and their officials in Estonian and to receive responses in Estonian (§51(1)); and that the official language of state agencies and local governments is Estonian (§52(1)). The provisions governing language use in the Constitution are specified in the Language Act (1995).⁹ The law provides the areas in which the use of Estonian is obligatory; the conditions and extent of the use of the languages of national minorities in state agencies and local governments; and the use of languages of national minorities in culturally autonomous bodies of national minorities.

Applicants for citizenship and public servants and employees professionally communicating with people in Estonia must comply with the requirements of Estonian language proficiency. The Citizenship Act stipulates the requirements for proficiency in Estonian needed in the applicant's everyday life by sub-skills. Since 2000 the Estonian language examination for citizenship applicants has been combined with the Estonian language placement exam. Applicants must achieve at least level B1 in the Estonian exam as described in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* drafted on the initiative of the Council of Europe. According to the Aliens Act, applicants for a long-term residence permit are required to have knowledge of Estonian to at least level B1 and to prove this knowledge in an exam. The exam is not compulsory for foreigners younger than 15 years of age and those older than 65. Pursuant to the Language Act, public servants, workers and self-employed people must meet the requirements of Estonian proficiency established for their position at level A, B or C of the Council of Europe.¹⁰ The fulfilment of these requirements is monitored by the Language Inspectorate.

Estonian is an *official language of the European Union* (EU). Preparations to join the EU lent important impetus to the development of Estonian terminology: many regulations and directives were translated.¹¹ These translations involved the development of Estonian legal language, but also the terminology of various specialities (accounting, customs, data protection, agriculture, transport, environmental protection, energy, education, fishery and more). The development of Estonian terminology continues.

2.2.2. Legal status of Estonian sign language

Pursuant to the Language Act (§1(3)) the *Estonian sign language*¹² has official status in Estonia: Estonian sign language is an independent language and a form of Estonian; the state shall (based

⁸In addition to the concept of an official language, the constitution also employs the concept of the official language of state agencies and local governments. The constitution does not define this concept, but based on section 52 of the Constitution and sections 3, 8 and 11 of the Language Act it can be inferred that it denotes the language in which the public authority communicates with people and prepares documents.

⁹The Language Act of 1995 has now (15.08.2008) been amended 17 times for various reasons: 16 times by law and once by a decision of the Supreme Court.

¹⁰Regulation no.105 of the Government of the Republic of 26.06.2008 "Requirements regarding proficiency in and use of Estonian by public servants, workers and self-employed persons".

¹¹About 20 000 regulations (77 000 pages) and 1500 directives (88 000 pages) have been translated.

¹²The amendment in question entered force on 01.03.2007.

on subsection 4) enhance the use and development of Estonian, Estonian sign language and Estonian signed language.¹³

2.2.3. Varieties of Estonian

Estonian legislation does not include a concept of *regional language*. Nevertheless, this topic has been discussed on several occasions, most recently in 2004 when, based on an order issued by the Government of the Republic, a committee of specialists¹⁴ was established with the task of determining the legal status of the South Estonian language (Võru, which has traditionally been considered a dialect of Estonian). Unfortunately the committee was not able to achieve consensus. Estonian legislation (the Language Act and the Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004) defines dialects and the language varieties that arise from them as *special regional varieties of Estonian*.

The language policy of the newly independent Estonia has been somewhat controversial regarding the issue of special regional varieties of Estonian. The special varieties of the Estonian language and multi-identity have been favoured as a cultural value, one of the sources for the development of standard Estonian and a medium of local Estonian identity. The state grants financial support to the activities of the Võru Institute and the Estonian Bureau of Lesser Used Languages¹⁵ and it administers such national programmes as “South Estonian language and culture (2005–2009)” and “Setomaa national culture programme (2006–2009)”¹⁶. Special regional varieties have been taught in general education schools (especially in the south of Estonia) and high schools and on summer courses; readers have been published and media publications produced in regional varieties, as well as special issues of magazines; radio and TV programmes have received support; support has also been granted for the writing and directing of plays in regional varieties, the publication of fiction and the organisation of poetry and home dialect days; and the Place Names Act has stipulated the use of the regional varieties of place names. However, attempts to promote regional varieties, especially those designed to attribute the status of regional language to some varieties, have been rejected. Dismissive attitudes have been justified by the relatively limited possibilities in terms of both human resources and finances¹⁷ and sometimes even by the possible threat of separatism.

The Implementation of the Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (2006) highlights the problems in this area: legislation does not stipulate the use of regional varieties of Estonian in local public administration. There are also problems teaching regional varieties of the language

¹³The number of people using sign language in Estonia is approximately 2000 and these people may be considered the core of the deaf community in Estonia. The community of people using sign language in Estonia in addition to sign-language deaf people also includes their children who are not deaf, but whose mother tongue it often is and also some of those who are hard of hearing (the term “deaf” is used in a linguistic-cultural meaning and not in an audiological meaning). Thus the concept includes users of sign language of varying hearing status. The total number of regular users of sign language in Estonia is about 45 000 (Laiapea, Miljan, Toom, Sutrop 2002).

¹⁴Order of the Government of the Republic no. 27-k of 15.01.2004; the chairman of the committee was Minister of Culture Urmas Paet.

¹⁵The Võro Institute was established by the Government of the Republic of Estonia in 1995. It belongs into the area of government of the Ministry of Culture, its activities are financed from the state budget and additional finances are applied for from various foundations and programmes. See <http://www.wi.ee/>. The non-profit organisation Estonian Bureau of Lesser Used Languages (EstBLUL) was established in 2004. EstBLUL belongs to the trans-European organisation European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL). The members of EstBLUL include both the organisations of language communities (Yiddish, Roma language, Swedish, German, Finnish, Tatar and Russian; Setu and Võru language) as well as legal persons, see <http://www.estblul.ee/EST/index.shtml>.

¹⁶See the Cultural heritage programmes of the Ministry of Culture at <http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x214>.

¹⁷For example, it has been stressed that Estonia would not be able to finance two languages sharing standard language status.

since the national curriculum does not promote it sufficiently, and there is no way to grant additional qualifications to teachers of regional varieties.

2.2.4. Legal status of foreign languages, including languages of national minorities

The Language Act (§2(1)) stipulates that any language other than Estonian and Estonian sign language is a *foreign language* and also that a *language of a national minority* is a foreign language which Estonian citizens who belong to a national minority have historically used as their mother tongue in Estonia (§2(2)).

Russian is the foreign language with the largest number of speakers in Estonia. As a mother tongue/ first language it is used by 95% of the (non-Estonian) representatives of the various nationalities represented in Estonia, including the small historical Russian minority (see chapter 2.2.5). The possibilities to use Russian and the extent to which it is actually used in everyday spheres are much wider than any other foreign language. In the national educational system Russian is an official language of instruction in addition to Estonian in both general education and vocational schools (see Chapter 3), among others.

2.2.5. The right to use national minority languages

Definition of national minority. The National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act (1993, §1) provides a modern definition of a national minority – national minorities are citizens of Estonia (ethnic groups consisting of Estonian citizens) who reside on the territory of Estonia; who maintain longstanding, firm and lasting ties with Estonia; who are distinct from Estonians on the basis of their ethnic, cultural, religious, or linguistic characteristics; and who are motivated by a concern to preserve their cultural traditions, religion or language, which constitute the basis of their common identity.

The people who form national minorities have the right to establish and support national cultural and educational establishments and religious congregations. The Law on Cultural Autonomy (§2(2)) stipulates that national minority cultural autonomy may be established by persons belonging to German, Russian, Swedish and Jewish minorities and persons belonging to national minorities with 3000 or more representatives. The law also refers to “historically established national minorities” of whom only the Russian minority remains. The Russian ethnic group consists of two different groups which differ demographically and in social behaviour: one is the historically established Russian minority, whose numbers are estimated to be around 37 500;¹⁸ the other is those Russians who were relocated to Estonia after World War II and whose numbers were more than 300 000 according to the 2000 census.

The prerequisite for the establishment of a culturally autonomous body is the existence of a nationality list. The first national minority in the newly independent Estonia to confirm their nationality list with the Ministry of Culture in June 2001 were the Ingerian Finns. In 2006 the Government of the Republic approved the membership of the general committee for the elections of a cultural council of the Swedish national minority.

¹⁸Katus, Puur, Sakkeus (2000:54).

¹⁹The national programme Integration in Estonian Society 2000–2007 and the continuation programme Estonian Integration Plan 2008–2013 support activities through which the national minorities living in Estonia have the chance to become involved in their mother tongue and culture. The Integration Foundation supports the activities described in the state plan by means of project competitions, and it also finances the activities of the cultural societies of national minorities. As the majority of the national minorities living in Estonia use Russian as their mother tongue or first language and are not able to speak their national language, the cultural societies are mostly involved in introducing the culture and following cultural traditions: there have been few language courses designed for adults.

The main outlets for the cultural interests of national minorities and ethnic minorities are national culture societies and art groups in the form of non-profit organisations. The majority of these societies are concentrated in seven unions and associations of national culture societies (see Annex 4). There are also national culture societies who operate outside of associations and unions.¹⁹

The constitution (§51(2)) stipulates that in localities in which at least half of the permanent residents belong to a national minority everyone has the right to receive responses from state agencies, local governments and their officials in the language of the national minority and the localities, and where the language of the majority of the residents is not Estonian, local governments may, to the extent and pursuant to procedure provided by law, use the language of the majority of the permanent residents of the locality as an internal working language. This provision is specified by the Local Government Organisation Act (§41(3)), pursuant to which the use of foreign languages in local governments, including languages of national minorities, shall be provided for in the Language Act. This leads to a restriction whereby authorisation issued under the Language Act (§11) on the proposal of a local government council to use the language of the national minority constituting the majority of the permanent residents of the local government as the internal working language of the local government is only valid until the expiry of the term of office of the local government council. To date, no local governments have been authorised by the Government of the Republic to use the language of a national minority as their internal working language. The city governments of Narva and Sillamäe have twice addressed the government with this wish, but since belonging to a national minority is connected to citizenship and the proportion of Estonian citizens in these towns is less than 50%, the government has put off dealing with the request.

Ethnic groups are not concentrated in different local governments: their numbers in some are quite small. The proportion of people who speak their national language as their mother tongue in the case of ethnic groups other than Estonians and Russians is less than 50%. Thus the number of people who speak a language other than Estonian or Russian is so small in every local government that there is no real need or chance to use a language other than Estonian or Russian as the internal working language. Moreover, the government has not received applications from national minorities with few members regarding the use another language as the language of public administration.

2.3. Language proficiency and spheres of use in newly independent Estonia

2.3.1. Mother tongue (first language) proficiency of the Estonian population based on census data

According to the census of 2000 the number of national minorities represented in Estonia is 142 (see Chapter 1.2.4). The number of languages spoken as a mother tongue is 109: many representatives of ethnic groups are no longer able to speak their mother tongue. The switch in language which has taken place in ethnic groups becomes evident in the differences in the number of speakers of minority languages and the people belonging to that national minority group. The following languages represented in Estonia are used as first languages (mother tongues):

- Estonian – 921 817 people (67.3%),
- Russian – 406 755 people (29.7%),
- Ukrainian – 12 299 people (0.9%),
- Belarusian – 5197 people (0.4%),
- Finnish – 4932 people (0.3%),
- Latvian – 1389 people (0.1%),

- › Lithuanian – 1198 people (0.09%),
- › Other languages – 7276 people (0.5%).
- › Mother tongue unknown – 9189 people (0.7%).

When this data is compared with population data (table 2) it becomes evident that in all ethnic groups (including Estonian) the number of people who speak their national language as their mother tongue or first language is smaller than the total number of people who belong to the ethnic group. The only exception is Russian, the number of speakers of which is larger than the number and proportion of Russians as an ethnic group. 97% of Estonian residents speak Estonian or Russian as their mother tongue or first language. The speakers of the remaining 107 languages constitute 3% of the population. The majority of people who do not speak their national language had already lost this ability and begun using Russian before coming to Estonia. The Swedes and Finns are an exception, as the majority of them speak Estonian language as their first language. As the proportion of people using their national language as their mother tongue is very small in the case of other nationalities (not Estonians and Russians), a multitude of national languages is not evident in Estonian society.

2.3.2. Foreign language proficiency of the Estonian population

2.3.2.1. Based on census data

Foreign language proficiency was first documented during the census of 1934. In those carried out during the Soviet period (except the 1959 census) individuals were asked to nominate one language spoken by the nations of the Soviet Union which they were able to speak fluently. During the 2000 census people could report proficiency in several languages, and the criteria for proficiency were lower. Foreign languages are any languages which are not the person's mother tongue, including the national language if it is not the person's mother tongue. The possible answers given were the following: "Estonian", "Russian", "English", "German", "French", "Finnish", "Swedish", "Latvian", "own ethnic language", "other language(s)" and "cannot say". Answering the question about foreign language proficiency was optional and 14.2% of residents did not respond to the question. The question was asked of all residents, including young children. The proportion of unanswered questions (unknown answers) was large among children younger than 15 years of age, but also among older people, i.e. in the case of many people who could not speak any foreign languages the answer "none" had not been given. It became evident that 68.2% of Estonians can speak Russian, 35.2% English, 16.6% Finnish and 14.9% German. Among Russians 44.5% could speak Estonian, 17.4% English, 5.4% German and 1.6% Finnish.

2.3.2.2. Based on the data of the study *Estonian Lifeworld in the beginning of the 21st century (2004)*

One year before Estonia joined the European Union (2003), foreign language proficiency and use and the attitudes of Estonian residents were studied based on ethnic and age groups. The people surveyed had to evaluate their language proficiency. Based on the study, language proficiency is good in Estonia: 94% of residents claimed that they were able to use Estonian or Russian as a foreign language at least passively, while 69% claimed to understand English and 53% Finnish to some extent. It should be taken into account that people's self-assessment is often better than their actual skills.

According to the study, 14% of the residents of Estonia are monolingual – i.e. they only speak their mother tongue or first language. In addition to their mother tongue 34% of residents claimed proficiency in one foreign language: Estonians could mostly speak Russian and Russians Estonian;

but at the same time a group which could only speak English was forming (13%). 30% of the population of Estonia could speak two foreign languages: mostly Estonian or Russian and English. 22% could speak three or more foreign languages: most often Estonian or Russian, English and Finnish, but also German, French or Swedish. According to the survey about half of the population (52%) is multilingual. The correlation between knowledge and use of foreign languages and age is high: older people are usually monolingual or can speak only one foreign language, while younger age groups, including people aged 20–29 and 30–44, can speak two or more foreign languages. Knowledge of mother tongue alone (monolingualism) primarily applied to Russian citizens and stateless people; about 90% of Estonian citizens could speak at least one foreign language, and often two or even more.

2.3.2.3. Eurobarometer 2005

One question in *Europeans and Languages* (2005) – a Eurobarometer study conducted by the European Commission – asked about the foreign languages people knew (in addition to their mother tongue) well enough to communicate in that language. Estonia was ranked 9th by its results: 87% of the people surveyed felt that they could speak at least one foreign language well enough in addition to their mother tongue or first language.

2.3.3. Spheres of use of languages

The situation of Estonian is described on the one hand by the increasing role of *English* in society and its increasing impact on Estonian. The influence of English is evident in law and administration, economy, business and banking,²⁰ information and advertising. It has been the dominant and influential language in information technology from the very beginning. Even entertainment is becoming increasingly English-language in nature.

The press is predominantly Estonian-based,²¹ but Russian-language media is also supported by the state (for example the Russian language news programme *Aktuaalne Kaamera* broadcast on the national TV channel (ETV) of the Estonian national broadcaster²², the national Russian-language Radio 4²³ and newspapers and magazines. National TV channel 2 (ETV2) also intends to broadcast multilingual programmes²⁴). The state budget also supports, for example, the activities of

²⁰The language of banking shares common ground with several other specialised languages, for example those of information technology, law, advertising and the press. Language use in this domain is, amongst other things, influenced by the fact that Estonian banks are tied to foreign shareholders or have expanded their activities into neighbouring countries. Therefore some communication must be arranged in another language, usually English. Since communication with foreign holders usually affects bank managers (with management and supervisory boards usually working in English), in the case of subsidiary banks operating in other countries there are also employees who have to use e.g. English or Russian to a relatively greater degree in addition to Estonian. Estonian banks have two working languages – Estonian and English. In Estonia the working language is Estonian, but English is used when communicating with the parent company or as an international working language. The local websites of the banks are in three languages: Estonian, Russian and English (Raadik 2002).

²¹Only a small proportion of the press is directly national entities or entities in public-law. Of the programmes broadcast by Estonian TV channels, own production is mainly in Estonian, and procured programmes are translated. The majority of foreign language films and TV series are subtitled; there is relatively little dubbing. For example, all of the films and TV series for adults broadcast on ETV are subtitled, while documentaries are both subtitled and dubbed, and children's films are dubbed (Kasik 2002). ETV has also had bilingual TV programmes (for example in Estonian and Russian) in which some presenters use Estonian and others Russian, and some Estonian-language programmes where Russian subtitles are used and vice versa. The abundant use of subtitles encourages viewers to read them while listening to the original text, thus aiding their learning of foreign languages. ETV has also broadcast programmes which use regional varieties of Estonian, and news programmes have been broadcast in sign language or been signed in Estonian.

²²<http://www.err.ee/>

²³Radio 4 broadcasts mainly Russian-language programmes on a 24-hour basis, including programmes for Armenian, Ukrainian, Belarusian and Jewish people.

²⁴There have been state supported programmes in other languages as well, for example in German, Finnish, Ukrainian and Belarusian.

the Russian Theatre²⁵ and the Russian Museum in Estonia.

The private sector, for example business, banking and advertising, uses Russian alongside Estonian.²⁶

Estonian has the status of an official language and it should be possible to use it in every sphere of life and in throughout Estonia. The actual situation is somewhat different. There are regions in Estonia in which the inhabitants are monolingual (Russian) who have no knowledge or insufficient knowledge of Estonian.

The development of Estonia over the last ten years has been aimed at openness; but in the context of globalisation and the emergence of the information society, the position of Estonian has weakened. At present Estonian is used in almost every sphere of life, but there are signs of a loss of dominance in some spheres (in which other languages have overtaken). The use of English is widening in science²⁷ and higher education. Verbal communication in scientific circles in Estonia mostly takes place in English (with the exception of international scientific conferences); written communication is mainly divided into two: scientific articles are in English and general discussions and media presentations are in Estonian; in the virtual context the medium of communication is Estonian.²⁸ The problem is that scientific publications in Estonian are not given their due in the assessment of academic work.

2.4. Development of Estonian and its environment and institutions and organisations involved

2.4.1. The development of Estonian and its environment: strategies and programmes

Several strategies have been adopted and many national programmes have been launched for the development of Estonian and its environment:

- *The Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (2004–2010)* approved by the Government of the Republic on 05.08.2004 – the most comprehensive document targeted at the development of the official language, based on the studies discussed as the official annexes to the document (see Annex 2).
- *National Integration Plan 2008–2013* approved by the Government of the Republic on 10.04.2008 – places greater emphasis on increasing contact between different nationalities and on supporting the development of national identity.
- *Estonian Higher Education Strategy 2006–2015* which aims to ensure the continuity and development of Estonian-language higher education in the European open educational context.

²⁵ <http://www.veneteater.ee/>

²⁶ In regions where the majority of the population speaks Russian and in spheres of the economy which are targeted at the Russian market or are active in transit, Russian has an important role. As a large proportion of Estonia's financial companies are partly or fully foreign owned, the language of communication or business besides Estonian is either English or the language of the respective country, for example Russian, Finnish, Swedish and in a few cases German (Suppi 2003).

²⁷ More than 20 Estonian-language and more than 15 English-language pre-reviewed science magazines are published in Estonia. Of all of the international pre-reviewed scientific publications which were published by the scientific staff of the University of Tartu between 2000 and 2007, around 65% were written in English and 25% in Estonian. The percentage of publications in Russian is 4.5% and in German around 3%. The proportion of other languages is less than 1%, wherein the share of Finnish, French, Italian and Spanish is more than 0.1%.

²⁸ Kern 2003.

- The national programme *Estonian Language and National Memory (2004–2008)* which supports the development and study of Estonian and studies of national memory and identity.
- *National Programme for Estonian Language Technology (2006–2010)* whose main objectives are language-technological applications (including automatic speech recognition, speech synthesis, grammar check systems, machine translation programmes, information search programmes, reviewing and summarising programmes, interactive language instruction programmes et al), the development of language resources (including various corpuses, a standard system of electronic dictionaries et al) and software development.
- The programme *Supporting Estonian-language terminology (2008–2012)* is necessary for the development of Estonian terminology in all of the spheres of use of the standard language. The sub-domains of the programme are the publishing of terminological study materials and the appointment of terminological scholarships; the launching of terminology studies in institutions of higher education; the supporting of specific terminology dictionary projects; the creation of a common virtual environment for terminological dictionaries; and the arrangement of international cooperation.
- The programme *The Preparing and Publishing of Estonian-Language Textbooks for Institutions of Higher Education (2008–2012)* whose main objective is to promote the continuity and development of Estonian-language higher education. The fields of the programme are the exact sciences; chemistry and molecular biology; the technical sciences; medical science; geo- and biosciences; the agricultural sciences; the social sciences; and the humanities. The intention is to publish 50 main textbooks for different fields over a five-year period.
- The national programme *Southern-Estonian Language and Culture 2005–2009* which is divided into four larger fields: modern culture; the press; school education; and scientific studies. The objective of the programme is to preserve the linguistic and cultural characteristics of southern Estonia.
- The national programme *Setumaa Cultural Programme 2006–2009* whose objectives are to preserve the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the region and to value Setumaa as a living environment. The topics discussed in the programme are divided into six fields: folk culture; genuine culture; language and education; scientific research; media and reputation; and the community.
- The cultural programme *Cultural environment of Kihnu 2008–2010* whose main objective is to preserve the cultural and linguistic characteristics of the islands of Kihnu and Manija and to value both islands as living environments.
- The cultural programme *Folk Culture Environment of Islands 2008–2010* whose main objective is to value and revive the way of life, customs and traditions, skills and linguistic distinctiveness characteristic of Estonia's islands. The themes discussed in the programme are divided into four fields: folk culture and the community; original creations based on folk culture; language and education; and scientific work and development activities.²⁹
- The state supports *PR activities which value Estonian*. With the help of PR tools attempts are made to promote public appreciation of Estonian, especially among young people: the national F. J. Wiedemann Language Award; an award known as the Language Deed of the Year; and others. Preparations have begun for the launch of a national programme for valuing Estonian.

²⁹ See the Cultural heritage programmes of the Ministry of Culture at <http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x214>.

- *Foreign Language Strategy of Estonia 2015* (operational programme being prepared). The main objective of this strategy is to promote the learning of foreign languages among Estonia's population. Important aspects of the strategy are applying the principles and common reference levels of language proficiency developed by the Council of Europe, as presented in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching and assessment* in Estonia; studying language learning, use and motivation; carrying out applied studies regarding foreign language acquisition and instruction; and supporting the sustainability of language instruction and the diversity of choices at all levels of education, as well as life-long language learning.

2.4.2. Institutions and organisations involved in the development of Estonian and its environment

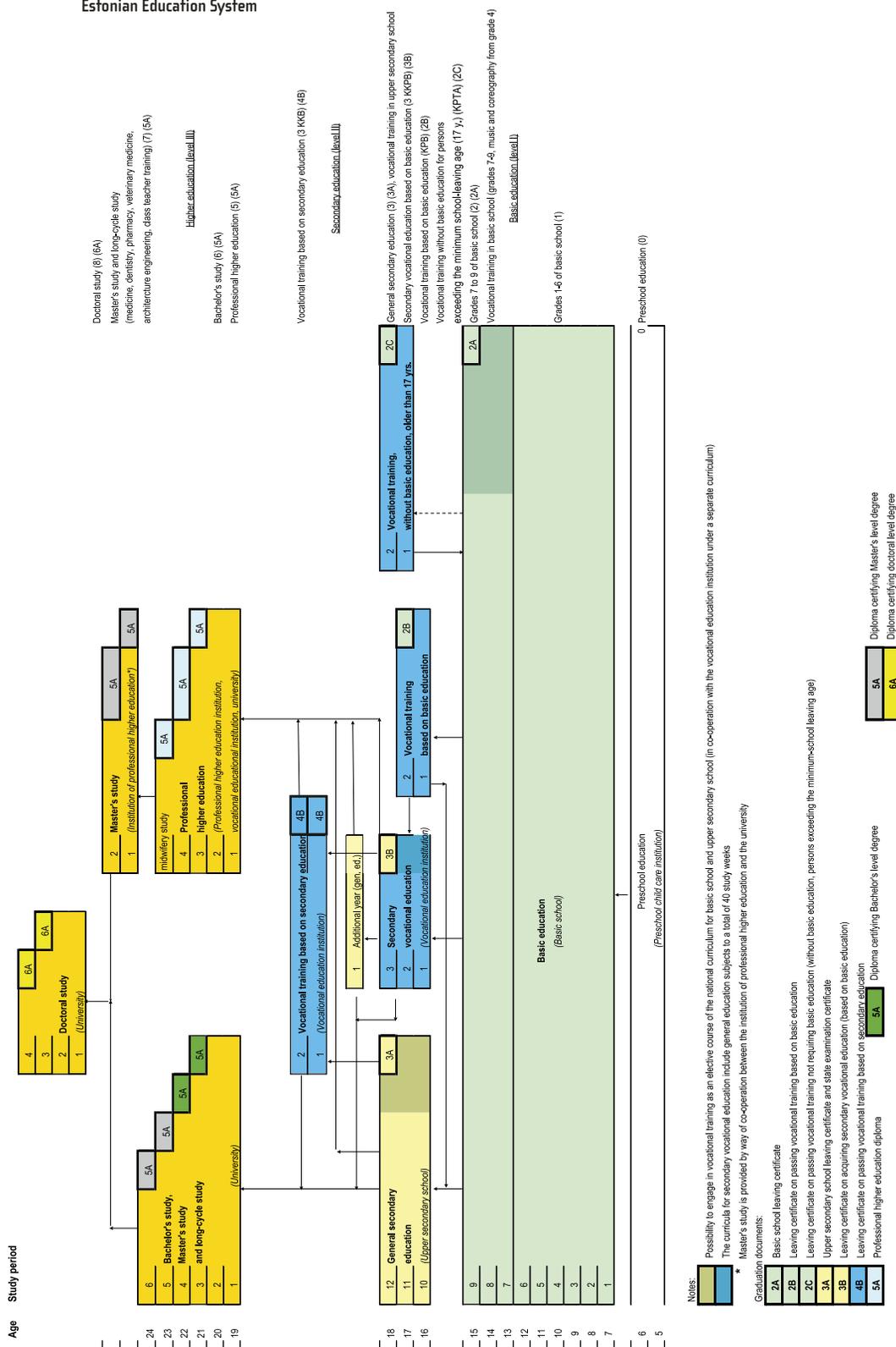
Pursuant to the laws of the Government of the Republic, language policy is the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Research. As the language sphere is connected to almost every other sphere of life, other ministries also have contact with it to a lesser or greater extent. The institutions and organisations involved in the development of Estonian and its linguistic environment, including the development and implementation of language learning policy, include the Estonian Language Council; the Language Inspectorate; the University of Tartu; Tallinn University; the Institute of the Estonian Language; the Legislative Drafting and Legal Language Division of the Ministry of Justice; the Estonian Terminology Centre; the Estonian Language Foundation; the Estonian Terminology Society; the State Examinations and Qualifications Centre; the Võru Institute; the Integration Foundation; the Estonian Mother Tongue Society; the Estonian Mother Tongue Teachers' Society; and the Association of the Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language (see Annex 3).

Problems include the fact that language policy is not always coherent (or co-ordinated), and it is not always supported by studies before decisions are made.

3. LANGUAGES IN THE ESTONIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

3.1. Overview of education system

Estonian Education System



The organisation and principles of the education system are set out in the *Republic of Estonia Education Act*. According to its objectives, education is divided into *general education*, *vocational education* and *hobby education*. The different levels of education are pre-school education; basic education (the first level of education); secondary education (the second level of education); and higher education (the third level of education). Data concerning the Estonian education system is collected in the web-based state register EHIS – the Estonian Education Information System (<http://www.ehis.ee/>). The register contains information about educational institutions, students, teachers, study programmes and education licences as well as documents attesting education.

An educational institution may be owned by the state, a local government (municipal ownership) or a private person (or persons).

Children shall attend school if they will have turned 7 by 1 October of the year in question. Student shall attend school until such a time as they have acquired basic education or reached 17 years of age. Students acquire basic education between grades 1 and 9. In grades 7 to 9 the students also have the possibility to receive professional introductory training in a field that interests them. If the basic school level is not completed and a student is at least 17 years old, they may enter vocational training (studying for between 0.5 and 2.5 years, with only professional skills acquired) without the basic education requirement and/or continue acquiring basic education in an upper secondary school for adults.

Following the acquisition of basic education students have four different study options: 1) upper secondary school, at which students acquire general secondary education (length of study: 3 years); 2) upper secondary school with vocational training (professional introductory training), at which general secondary education and some professional skills are acquired (length of study: 3 years); 3) vocational education institution, at which secondary vocational education is acquired (length of study: at least 3 years); and 4) vocational education institution, at which professional skills are acquired (length of study: 1–3 years).

Following the acquisition of secondary education students have three different study options: 1) vocational education institution, for the acquisition of vocational education (length of study: 0.5–3 years) or professional higher education (length of study: 3–4.5 years); 2) institution of professional higher education or university college, for the acquisition of professional higher education (length of study: 3–4.5 years); and 3) university, for the acquisition of academic higher education (length of study: Bachelor's degree 3 years; Master's degree 2 years, Doctorate 3–4 years).

In level studies, working people have the chance to acquire basic or general secondary education through evening courses or distance learning or as an external student. They also have the chance to acquire vocational education or secondary vocational education through part-time studies or to acquire higher education through part-time studies or as an external student. While working they can take part in professional courses for adults organised by a wide variety of private schools, vocational education institutions, institutions of professional higher education, professional and professional associations and informal education courses in folk high schools and training and cultural centres providing informal education. The acquisition of general secondary education and secondary vocational education is free of charge; the acquisition of higher education through part-time studies usually incurs fees.

3.2. Basis of organisation of studies

In pre-school child care institutions, basic schools and upper secondary schools the organisation of studies is based on national framework curricula: *framework curriculum for pre-school education, the national curriculum of basic schools and upper secondary schools, the simplified national curriculum for basic schools (supplementary learning curriculum)* or the *national curriculum for students with moderate and severe learning disabilities*. Vocational education institutions are also making the transition to national curricula. National curricula determine the objectives of study and education, organisational principles, teaching domains and obligatory subjects.

To graduate from basic and upper secondary schools students must take exams. At the end of basic school students must take three final exams: Estonian language (as a mother tongue or second language), mathematics and one exam of each student's choice (including foreign language exams). The final exams at the end of basic school are the same for everyone. The exams are prepared by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre but are marked by the schools themselves. To graduate from upper secondary school students must pass at least five exams, three of which are state exams. All students must pass an exam in Estonian (as a mother tongue or second language); the other exams can be chosen from a list of subjects which may include foreign languages. The state examinations are the same for everyone and are prepared by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre. The marking of exam papers is done by the assessment committees convened by the Centre. State examinations evaluate the knowledge obtained within the framework of the national curriculum. As an exception, a foreign language exam may be taken even if the language skills have been obtained outside of school. The Estonian state exam for German is equivalent to the German *Deutsche Sprachdiplom* exam. The state exams taken in upper secondary school form the basis for entering institutions of higher education.

3.2.1. Pre-school education

In pre-school child care institutions the organisation of activities is based on the *Framework Curriculum for Pre-School Education*. The framework curriculum determines the objectives of schooling and education; its content, volume and schedule; the principles for the assessment of children's development; the estimated results of the children's development in the course of the curriculum; and the principles, content and volume of Estonian language instruction in a child care institution or group in which schooling and education is organised in some other language.

3.2.2. General education

In every school in which the pupils have the possibility to acquire basic and secondary education (regardless of its form of ownership), the organisation of studies is subject to the National Curriculum of Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools. The national curriculum consists of a general part which determines the basis of the curriculum, the educational objectives of the school and the principles of the curriculum; it also describes the general competences which students need to acquire by the end of the educational level and which are specified by stages of study. The general part of the national curriculum stipulates the compulsory subjects, the minimum number of compulsory subjects by stages of study and the permitted weekly study load by grades. The general part includes the basis for evaluating study results and the design principles of the curriculum. It also presents the list of foreign languages taught as first and second foreign languages: *English, German, French and Russian*. General education schools in Estonia use teaching resources approved by the Ministry of Education and Research, the list of which is confirmed by the Minister of Education and Research with a regulation.

The subject syllabuses of all compulsory subjects are presented as annexes to the national curriculum. The subject syllabuses determine the general objectives of learning a subject, its connections with other subjects, general learning objectives and the descriptions of educational activities by stages of study. The subject syllabuses present the learning objectives by subject; the content of studies, including the covering of topics which continue throughout the curriculum; integration possibilities with other subjects; and study results in skills and knowledge by stages of study. In Estonia four stages of study are distinguished: *Stage 1 (Grades 1–3)*, *Stage 2 (Grades 4–6)*, *Stage 3 (Grades 7–9)* and *Upper Secondary School (Grades 10–12)*. Study results are presented more specifically by levels of education: at the end of basic school and upper secondary school. Regarding the language of instruction of the school, skills in language and literature are differentiated between. In basic school, language and literature are taught in an integrated way, but in upper secondary school as separate subjects. In the choice of elective subjects the schools are free to choose; often foreign languages are taught as elective subjects. The syllabuses of elective subjects are prepared by schools themselves. Schools in private ownership which do not use Estonian as the language of instruction also have the right to choose another language as the language of instruction at the upper secondary school level; in this case the teaching of Estonian as a second language is compulsory.

3.2.3. Vocational education

Pursuant to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act (§10), instruction in schools shall be carried out according to the vocational education standard and the school curricula prepared on the basis of the national curricula for vocations or professions. A school may provide vocational training for students of basic and upper secondary school according to a curriculum of vocational training for basic and upper secondary schools which the school shall prepare on the basis of the national curricula for vocations or professions. This allows students to acquire primary vocational, professional and occupational knowledge and skills within the framework of elective subjects prescribed on the basis of the national curricula for basic and upper secondary schools, the simplified national curriculum for basic schools or the national curriculum for students with moderate and severe learning disabilities. Vocational education is undergoing a transition to national curricula prepared on a speciality basis and which determine the competences that the student must acquire, including knowledge of Estonian and foreign languages. The study volume necessary for the acquisition of skills and knowledge is decided by the educational institution.

3.2.4. Higher education

At the higher education level the preparation of curricula is the jurisdiction of educational institutions. Curricula are prepared in accordance with the Standard of Higher Education, which sets out fields of study and specialisations; the purposes of study and total volume of study; the general and specific requirements for curricula, including the requirements set for studies and final papers or final examinations; and the general and specific requirements set for the educational institution in terms of teaching staff, including requirements regarding scientific, pedagogic and professional qualifications of the teaching staff carrying out instruction based on the curriculum. The curriculum of an institution of professional higher education is approved by the minister whose jurisdiction covers the institution of professional higher education in question. The curriculum of an institution of professional higher education for national defence is approved by the Minister of Education and Research. The curricula of universities are approved by the council of the university.

3.3. Status of languages in the educational system: Languages of instruction and languages to be learnt

In the Estonian educational system the national regulations allow for extensive freedom in the choice of language of instruction. Basically any language may be used as the language of instruction. The choice of language is delegated to the owner of the educational institution or to the educational establishment. Pursuant to the Republic of Estonia Education Act (§4) everyone, wherever they are in Estonia, shall have the opportunity to acquire education in Estonian. In educational institutions and study groups using another language of instruction or a working language other than Estonian, the teaching of Estonian shall be guaranteed based on the procedure and conditions specified in legislation concerning the respective level of education.

Estonian is a compulsory subject for everyone from pre-school education through to graduation from secondary school. In schools with Estonian as the language of instruction, Estonian is learnt as the mother tongue or language of instruction from Grade 1 until the end of upper secondary school. In schools with another language as the language of instruction, Estonian is learnt from Grade 1 until the end of upper secondary school, but as the second language. The national curriculum also includes the syllabus for Russian as the mother tongue/language of instruction of the school and Russian literature and prescribes the number of compulsory lessons by stages of study. Compulsory study of foreign languages begins in basic school. Every student shall be guaranteed the chance to learn at least two foreign languages. The choices of foreign language A (first foreign language) and foreign language B (second foreign language) are defined in the national curriculum. Studies of foreign language A start during the first stage of study (by grade 3 at the latest) and of foreign language B during the second stage of study (by grade 6 at the latest). In a school which does not use Estonian as the language of instruction, foreign language A is Estonian, with compulsory studies beginning in grade 1.

3.3.1. Pre-school education

Pursuant to the Pre-School Child Care Institutions Act (§8), schooling and education in a child care institution (children up to 7 years of age) shall be conducted in Estonian. Schooling and education may be conducted in another language on the basis of a decision of the local government council. In 2007 the languages of schooling and education in Estonian child care institutions were *Estonian, Russian and English*, with only one language being used in each group. The child care institutions using Russian are mostly located in the towns and regions in which the proportion of people using Russian is more than 40% (Ida-Viru and Harju Counties, including Tallinn). The child care institutions using Estonian account for 79.4% of all such institutions, Russian 12.1%, mixed Estonian/Russian 8.3% and English 0.2%.

According to the Pre-School Child Care Institutions Act, Estonian language instruction begins in nursery school both for children whose mother tongue is Estonian and for those whose mother tongue is another language. In a child care institution or group where schooling and education is not conducted in Estonian, Estonian language instruction is compulsory to the extent prescribed in the framework curriculum for pre-school education (20 minutes at least twice a week for children between the ages of 3 and 7).

Working language	Number and proportion of children (%)					
	2005		2006		2007	
Estonian	37 348	70.58	38 297	70.16	38 944	69.38
Russian	15 546	29.38	16 263	29.79	17 164	30.57
English	19	0.04	22	0.05	22	0.05

Statistics Estonia. Pre-school child care institutions, 1 January 2007.

Table 3. Number of children in pre-school child care institutions by working language 2005– 2007.

Many nursery school groups (in 24 nursery schools) with Russian as the working language are part of the language immersion programme. Such groups use Estonian as the working language. The teachers in such groups receive special training enabling them to support the children's development in Estonian proficiency and to advise parents.

3.3.2. Basic education

Pursuant to the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act (§9), *any* language may be the language of instruction in basic schools. The language of instruction is defined in the Act (§9(2)) as the language in which at least 60% of the teaching on the curriculum is conducted. The school's owner chooses the language of instruction based on the needs of the region and the available resources: teachers, teaching aids and so on. The possible languages of instruction in basic schools are Estonian, Russian, English and Finnish. In 81% of general education schools the language of instruction is Estonian. In 14% it is Russian, while in 4% of schools there are sections with both Estonian and Russian. The rest of the schools (1%) use English or Finnish as the language of instruction.

Language of instruction of schools	2002/2003	2003/2004	2004/2005	2005/2006	2006/2007
Estonian	414	415	409	404	405
Russian	85	80	79	75	71
Estonian/ Russian	20	20	19	21	21
English			1	2	2
Estonian/ English			1	1	1
Estonian/ Finnish				1	1
Total	519	515	509	504	501

Table 4. Number of schools by language of instruction 2002–2007.

Pursuant to the act (§9(3)), in a school or class where instruction is not given in Estonian, Estonian language instruction is compulsory starting from the first year. More than one-third of schools (30) which use Russian as the language instruction have joined language immersion programmes. These programmes involve 10% of students in basic schools with Russian as the language of instruction. There are two types of immersion – early and late immersion. The early language immersion programme (used in 14 schools) means that in grade 1 the language of instruction is Estonian, in grade 2 pupils start learning Russian, in grade 3 the pupils learn their first foreign language and from grade 4 some subjects are taught in Estonian and some in Russian. In the case of late immersion (used in 20 schools), which begins in grade 6, four subjects are studied in Estonian (besides Estonian language itself as a subject). In grades 7 and 8 the language of instruction is Estonian, although studies of Russian language and literature continue, and by grade 9 the proportion of Russian and Estonian as the languages of instruction is more or less equal (50:50).

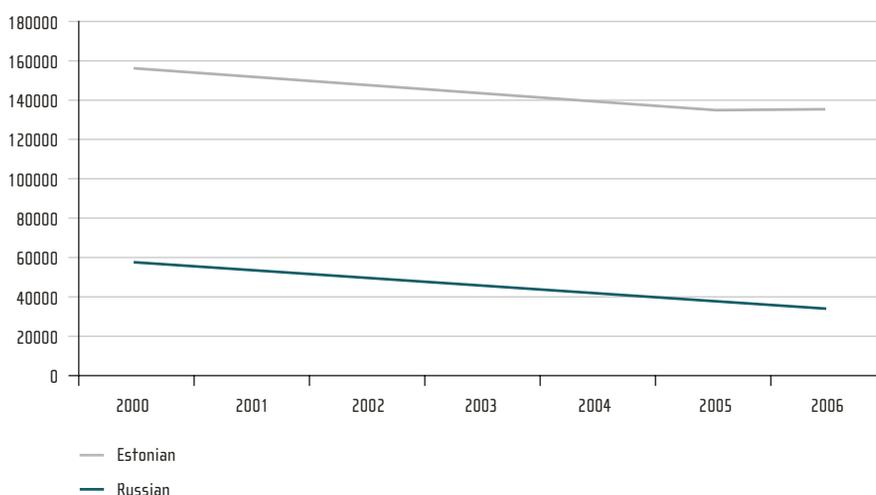


Figure 1. Number of students in general education schools with Estonian/Russian as language of instruction 2000–2007. Estonian Education Information System 2007.

In co-operation with the state and relevant local government, schools shall offer students acquiring basic education and whose mother tongue is not the language of instruction the chance to learn their mother tongue and to learn about their national culture with the objective of preserving their national identity. The right to form a language group arises when at least 10 parents of the same nationality submit a written request. During the 2007/2008 academic year mother tongues and cultures were studied as an elective subject as part of the school curriculum by Ukrainians (1 group), Lithuanians (1 group) and Italians (1 group); there were 77 students studying in Estonian schools who had learnt and studied in Estonia for less than three years and whose home language differed from the language of instruction; and the total number of students whose mother tongue was different from that of the language of instruction was 5300. The majority of such pupils were pupils with Russian as their mother tongue or home language in schools and classes in which instruction was given in Estonian.

3.3.3. Secondary education

Pursuant to the Act, the language of instruction during the upper secondary school stage (grades 10 to 12) shall be Estonian, but at this stage in municipal schools and in specific classes of municipal schools any language may be the language of instruction. Permission for instruction in another language is granted by the Government of the Republic on the basis of an application by a local government council. A corresponding proposal shall be made to the local government council by the board of trustees of an upper secondary school based on the development plan of the school. In private schools the decision regarding the language of instruction is made by the school's owner. In the period 2007–2012, upper secondary schools which currently give instruction in Russian will convert to language instruction in Estonian (with at least 60% of instruction being in Estonian). This basically means that at the upper secondary school level subjects are also taught in languages other than Estonian.

At least two foreign languages are compulsory. Pursuant to the national curriculum, studies of the first foreign language begin in grade 3 at the latest and of the second foreign language in grade 6 at the latest. In state and municipal schools in which instruction is not given in Estonian the studies of foreign languages begin in Grade 6 at the latest. The first and second foreign language must be chosen from among English, German, French and Russian. In addition to the compulsory foreign language, foreign languages may be learnt in both basic and upper secondary schools

as elective subjects. The list of foreign languages taught as elective subjects is unlimited and includes Finnish, Swedish, Japanese, Latvian and others. In several schools foreign languages are taught to a larger extent than prescribed as the compulsory volume in the national curriculum. In addition to traditional foreign language learning, some schools also teach certain subjects (usually literature and geography) at the basic and upper secondary school level in English. These subjects are predominantly taught by language teachers and not by specialists of the specific subject. In foreign language subject studies the languages of instruction are *English, German, French* and *Hebrew*. Based on an international agreement some subjects are taught in *German* in two schools in Estonia. After graduating the students receive documents certifying that their secondary education is approved in Germany.

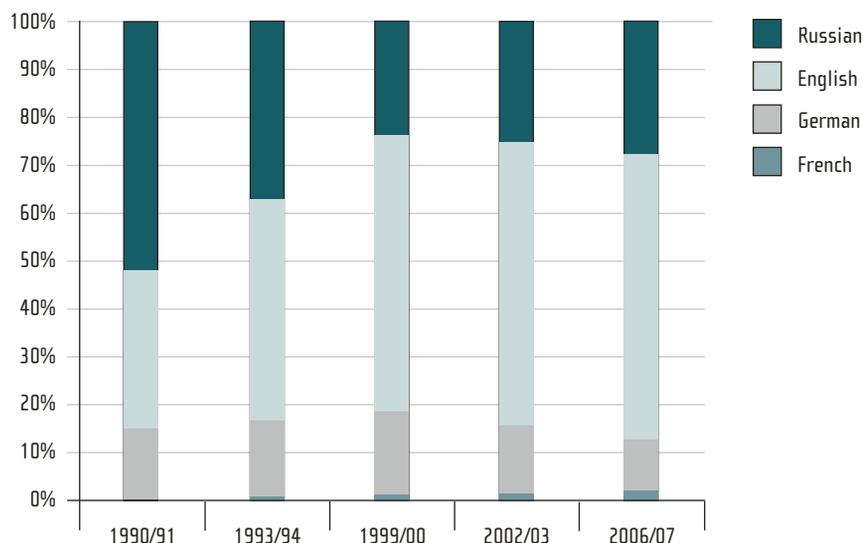


Figure 2. Proportion of students studying Russian, English, German and French in general education schools 1990–2007.

3.3.4. Vocational education

During the 2007/2008 academic year there were 47 vocational education institutions in Estonia, of which 32 were state, 3 municipal and 12 private institutions.³⁰ Pursuant to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act (§18), the language of instruction at vocational educational institutions is Estonian, but other languages of instruction may also be used. The use of other languages is authorised by the Minister of Education and Research. At present it is possible to acquire vocational education in Estonian and Russian. During the 2007/2008 academic year the number of vocational education institutions with Russian as the language of instruction was 7 i.e. 15% of the total number of vocational education institutions, of which one was a state/municipal institution and six were private education institutions. The number of vocational education institutions with both Estonian and Russian as languages of instruction represented 32% of the total number of institutions, of which 12 were state or municipal education institutions and two were private education institutions. The number of state and municipal vocational education institutions with Estonian as the language of instruction was 21 and the number of such private institutions was 4.

³⁰Estonian National Observatory, EHIS.

School year	Estonian as language of instruction	Russian as language of instruction
2005/06	67.7	32.3
2006/07	69.1	30.9
2007/08	72	28

Ministry of Education and Research Main statistical indicators in vocational education, 2007.

Table 5. Proportion of students by language of instruction in vocational education in the 2005/2006 and 2007/08 academic years.

Pursuant to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act (§13), the curricula of vocational education institutions are prepared on the basis of the requirements specified in the vocational education standard and the corresponding national curriculum. Also pursuant to the act (§22), the study of Estonian is compulsory at the secondary education level in vocational education institutions in which the language of instruction is a language other than Estonian: in order to graduate from such schools graduates who acquire secondary vocational education must pass the state examination in Estonian. The volume of study and organisation of studies are defined in the school curriculum. The study of foreign languages is defined in the school curriculum based on the professional standard and the requirements prescribed in national curricula.

Foreign language	Language of instruction		Total number of learners	Proportion of learners
	Estonian	Russian		
Estonian as second language	379	8 322	8 701	31.8%
Russian as foreign language	12 639	1	12 640	46.1%
English	15 128	6 774	21 902	80%
German	3 626	1 205	4 831	17.6%
Finnish	2 973	578	3 551	13%
French	1 141	333	1 474	5.4%
Norwegian	0	8	8	0.02%
Swedish	16	---	16	0.05%
English for specific purposes	---	577	577	2.1%
German for specific purposes	---	60	60	0.2%

Estonian Education Information System 2007.

Table 6. Foreign languages learnt in vocational education in the 2006/07 academic year.

3.3.5. Higher education

Pursuant to the Universities Act (§22(8)) and Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act (§17), the language of instruction at universities is *Estonian*; the use of other languages is decided by the council of the educational institution or by the Minister of Education and Research. However, these acts do not define the concept of *the language of instruction*. The exception are foreign philology subjects, in which the language of instruction is the target language (for example in the case of English philology other subjects apart from English are also taught in English). During the 2007/2008 academic year it was possible to study in Estonian, Russian or English at the academic level in Estonia. Usually the language of instruction is Estonian (table 7), but in 2007 it was possible to study in groups using Russian as the language of instruction in 16 institutions of higher education out of 35 i.e. almost half. Russian is the most common language of instruction in private

institutions of professional higher education: 8 schools out of a total of 11. In the eight state institutions of professional higher education the language of instruction is Estonian, although Russian language groups have been opened in one such school.

Level of education / language of instruction	Estonian as language of instruction	English as language of instruction	Russian as language of instruction
Bachelor's degree	89.6	2.6	7.8
Master's degree	96.8	2.4	0.8
Doctorate	98.6	1	0.4

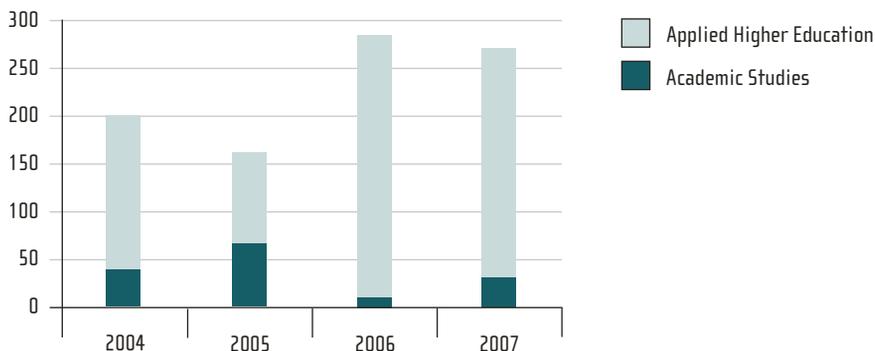
Estonian Education Information System 2007.

Table 7. Proportion of students at the academic level by levels of education and by languages of instruction in the 2007/08 academic year.

At the academic level the proportion of Bachelor's or diploma study students studying *English* as a main subject is 46.6%; those studying *Russian* 18.2%; *Estonian as second or foreign language* 12.5%; *German* 11.2%; *French* 3.7%; and Italian, Spanish, Finnish, Swedish, Turkish and other languages. The data presented includes students who study these languages either as main subjects or as electives or optional subjects. Foreign languages are taught both as a specialty subject to students of foreign philology and as a general and professional language

Pursuant to the Universities Act and the Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act, students who are not proficient enough in Estonian to study in Estonian shall have the possibility to study Estonian in depth (see Figure 3). In such case their nominal period of studies shall be extended by up to one academic year.

In the curricula of the specialities (except the humanities) taught in Estonia's public law universities, foreign languages have been reduced to optional subjects. Thus it is possible to advance to Doctoral studies with a foreign language proficiency acquired in upper secondary school, although both the Universities Act and the Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act specify the foreign language proficiency requirements of the graduates (at the level of Bachelor's, Master's and Doctoral studies).



Number of students involved in in-depth study of official language.

Figure 3. Number of students involved in in-depth study of official language in Estonian institutions of higher education 2004–2007.

3.4. Language training

3.4.1. Estonian language training in general education schools in which the language of instruction is Estonian

The teaching of Estonian in general education schools which use Estonian as the language of instruction is one of the key areas of *The Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (2004–2010)*. Both the strategy itself and the monitoring report of its implementation highlight the need to improve the Estonian language proficiency of graduates of general education schools.

3.4.1.1. Curriculum

The teaching of Estonian, as with the teaching of all other subjects, is based on the National Curriculum of Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools. Estonian is taught from grades 1 to 12: from grades 1 to 9 together with literature and from grades 9 to 12 as a separate subject. By stages of study the number of Estonian lessons per week is as follows: Stage 1 (grades 1–3): 19 (i.e. the total number of Estonian lessons per week during Stage 1 is 19); Stage 2 (grades 4–6): 15; Stage 3 (grades 7–9, Estonian language and literature): 12; and in upper secondary school: 6. In basic school the teaching of Estonian includes orthology, composition and literature, which are targeted at the development of oral and written speech (listening, speaking, reading and writing). In upper secondary school the Estonian language syllabus is divided into 35-hour courses and contains 6 compulsory courses: writing and speaking (2–3 courses), structure of the Estonian language (1–2) and orthology (2 courses). The objectives of the teaching of Estonian in upper secondary school are for students to acquire proficiency in standard Estonian, to understand the system and characteristics of the Estonian language, to develop creative and critical thinking and to develop oral and written expression.

3.4.1.2. Inspection system and results of Estonian language studies

In order to measure proficiency in Estonian the following methods are used: standard-determining tests at the end of grade 3 and grade 6; the basic school final examination at the end of grade 9; and the upper secondary school state examination in Estonian (composition) at the end of grade 12 (or thereafter). The standard-determining tests and basic school final examination papers are prepared by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre based on the objectives of the national curriculum and required learning results. The final examinations at the end of basic school are taken by all graduates. The examination assesses knowledge of the structure of the language and reading and writing skills. Language proficiency at school is assessed using a 5-point system.

Year	Average mark
2005	3.88
2006	3.67
2007	3.62

Table 8. Average marks of basic school final examinations in Estonian 2005–2007.

The Estonian language state examination, which takes place in the form of a six-hour composition, is taken by all upper secondary school graduates. The composition must be at least 600 words long. The composition is assessed using a 100-point system. The content of the composition accounts for 45% of the mark, orthography 35%, lexis and style 15% and structure 5%. The assessment of coded compositions is arranged by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre on a national basis.

Year	Average result
2005	54.4
2006	55.7
2007	56.5
2008	57.7

Table 9. Upper secondary school state examination (composition) results in Estonian by average scores in 2005–2008.

The format of the state exam in Estonian has been the subject of dispute for a long time. The arguments against the current format include its inability to encompass the whole syllabus and thus its limited effect on the language learning process; the importance of knowledge outside the language; the subjectivity of evaluation; and the fact that the examination is better suited to girls than to boys. The main argument of those in favour of the format is that a composition is the best way to evaluate the students' proficiency in linguistic expression in a meaningful and comprehensive manner.

3.4.1.3. Motivation of students to learn Estonian

The problem here is the undervaluing of the status of Estonian – primarily due to the influence of English and English-language mass culture – and the low popularity of Estonian as a subject. These tendencies are reflected in a study led by Professor Martin Ehala.³¹ The summary of the study notes that it is difficult to guarantee the viable development of Estonian (Estonian-language culture) in the 21st century – the linguistic and political situation, the limitations arising from globalisation and economic factors all have to be taken into account. It is not possible to solve this by simply making political decisions. Science-based management is needed and this requires the assessment of the linguistic environment and process modelling skills.

On the other hand, examples can be given of the high esteem placed on the native language. Students have joined the *One Kroon to the Estonian Language* campaign which currently unites children from almost 50 different general education schools. With the support of the Ministry of Education and Research and the Estonian Mother Tongue Society the Estonian Youth Language Organisation was founded at the end of 2007. The objectives of the organisation are to motivate young people to use Estonian, to value it as a subject, to foster Estonian-language creative activities and to organise themed events. The students take part in Estonian language Olympiads and Estonian language courses at the Gifted and Talented Development Centre of the University of Tartu.

3.4.2. Estonian language training as a second language in non-Estonian general education schools

3.4.2.1. Curriculum

The subject syllabus of the national curriculum³² was prepared in order to teach Estonian in schools with Russian or another language as the language of instruction. By stages of study the weekly number of lessons of Estonian as a second language is as follows: Stage 1 (grades 1–3): 6 lessons; Stage 2 (grades 4–6): 12; Stage 3 (grades 7–9): 12; and in upper secondary school (grades 10–12): 9. The teaching of Estonian in basic school aims to have the following results: students

³¹Grade 10 and 12 students from 1964 (of which 1887 had Estonian as their mother tongue) were randomly interviewed in Tallinn, Tartu and all counties in Estonia (Ehala, Niglas 2004).

³²Regulation no. 56 of the Government of the Republic of 25.01.2002 *The National Curriculum of Basic School and Upper Secondary School*, Annex 7.

have achieved a level of proficiency which enables them to communicate in Estonian in different situations and to improve their language skills independently; students have acquired the essential orthography rules and apply these in speech and writing; students acknowledge the need for familiarity with the cultural environment of Estonia; students are interested in Estonian culture; and students have developed a sensitivity to non-verbal aspects of communication and the ability to express their opinions and the opinions of the group. The teaching of Estonian in upper secondary schools aims to have the following results: students have achieved a level of language proficiency which enables them to manage independently and confidently in the language environment, to continue their studies in an Estonian-language educational institution and to start working in an Estonian-language environment; and students feel comfortable as part of Estonian cultural and social life and consider themselves to be full members of Estonian society. When learning Estonian students should not only acquire language proficiency but also obtain knowledge about Estonian culture and the Estonian state and connect to the life and cultural environment around them. In upper secondary school the syllabus for language is divided into 9 compulsory 35-hour courses. The subject syllabus defines which language knowledge students must acquire. The study results at the end of stages 1 and 2 are defined in a general manner; at the end of stage 3 and upper secondary school the results are defined specifically by sub-skills, but it is not specified which Council of Europe language proficiency level the student must achieve.

3.4.2.2. Inspection system and results of training in Estonian as a second language

The level of proficiency in Estonian of a student who acquires basic and upper secondary education in a language other than Estonian is assessed during the final exam in Estonian as a second language at the end of basic school and in the state examination in Estonian as a second language at the end of upper secondary school. These examinations are compulsory for all students. It is also possible to take the examination in Estonian as a second language in the case of those basic school students who study in a school with Estonian as the language of instruction but whose mother tongue is not Estonian. Students who take the examination in Estonian as a second language at the end of basic school may ask for it to be combined with the Council of Europe B1 level examination in Estonian as a second language.³³ If the result is more than 60 points, the student is awarded the language proficiency certificate for level B1. The compulsory examination in Estonian as a second language taken at the end of upper secondary school is combined with the exam for language proficiency level B2.³⁴ The score necessary for this level is at least 60. Based on examination results, the level of language proficiency achieved by students by the end of basic and upper secondary school is relatively stable. There are still significant differences between regions, but also between students who have acquired general secondary education and secondary vocational education. Studies and examination results show that better results and higher levels of language proficiency based on students' own assessment are characteristic of students learning in regions in which the surrounding language environment is predominantly Estonian (South-Estonia and Central-Estonia) or bilingual (Tallinn).³⁵ The results of studies have shown that students who study some subjects in basic school in Estonian or who study in language immersion classes tend to acquire greater proficiency in Estonian than those who study Estonian using traditional language learning methods in schools with Russian as the language of instruction.³⁶

³³The B1 level examination has been able to be taken since 01.07.2008, before which it was possible to take a *basic level* examination.

³⁴The B2 level examination has been able to be taken since 01.07.2008, before which it was possible to take an *intermediate level* examination.

³⁵Report on "Monitoring of Integration 2005" study; state examination statistics of the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre.

³⁶Asser 2003; Asser and others 2005.

Year	Average result
2005	68.21
2006	66.8
2007	62.7

National Examinations and Qualifications Centre. State examinations and standard-determining tests. Statistics.

Table 10. Examination results of Estonian as a second language as average scores for basic school graduates 2005–2007

Year	Average result
2005	73.48
2006	73.11
2007	73.7
2008	67.1

National Examinations and Qualifications Centre. State examinations and standard-determining tests. Statistics.

Table 11. Examination results for Estonian as a second language as average scores for upper secondary school graduates 2005–2008

Year	Average result
2005	38.5
2006	43.1
2007	40.7
2008	35.9

National Examinations and Qualifications Centre. State examinations and standard-determining tests. Statistics.

Table 12. Examination results of Estonian as a second language as average scores for secondary vocational school graduates 2005–2008

3.4.3. Russian language training in general education schools with Russian as the language of instruction

3.4.3.1. Curriculum

In basic schools in which the language of instruction is Russian and in upper secondary schools in which the language of instruction is now Russian and the school is undergoing a transition to 60% Estonian-language instruction, Russian language and literature are taught under the same conditions as Estonian language and literature are taught in Estonian-language schools. The instruction of Russian begins in grade 1 and continues through basic school until the end of upper secondary school. In grades 1 to 6 language and literature are learnt in an integrated way as part of the subject "Russian", while in grades 7 to 9 the subject is called "Russian language and literature", and in upper secondary school there are two different subjects: "Russian language" and "Russian literature". The course in Estonian literature is taught in Estonian (one course). The minimum number of compulsory subjects is divided between stages of study as follows: stage 1: 19 lessons; stage 2: 15 lessons; and stage 3: 12 lessons. At the upper secondary school level students have three courses of Russian and nine courses of literature. This is different from the division of lessons in Estonian-language schools where students have six courses in both language and literature. In basic schools the objective of these studies is to acquire the language in a way which will enable genuine and free communication in all spheres of life. The objective of subject instruction is for students to acquire the necessary detailed and reliable knowledge of the language and communication; students acquire the basic skills which ensure competence in standard language

norms both in speech and writing; based on the acquired knowledge they give meaning to their own language use and knowingly improves their language competence (grammatical structure of speech, improvement of means of expression and purposeful work towards acquisition of standard Russian language norms); and they have a respectful and creative attitude towards Russian as a national value of Russians and as the most important part of intellectual culture. The objective of instruction in Russian is for students to systematise and deepen their linguistic knowledge, they understand the role of language as a means of communication and expression of thought in the social and cultural life of society; they have an idea of the functional style of language; they learn to view their language use critically; they develop their individual manner of expression; and they try to improve their skills through all types of linguistic activity.

3.4.3.2. Inspection system and results of teaching of Russian as mother tongue/language of instruction

The students at Russian-language schools can take their exam in Russian language and literature by taking the exam prepared by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre based on uniform materials at the end of basic school; and the state examination at the end of upper secondary school. Similar to the respective examination in Estonian, the exam taken at the end of basic school is a sub-skills examination which measures knowledge of the structure of language and the skills of functional reading and writing. At the end of upper secondary school the exam takes the form of a composition (of at least 600 words, with a time limit of 6 hours). The Russian language and literature exam has been an elective at basic school since 2007 and will be an elective exam in upper secondary school from 2010. Previously, students at Russian-language schools did not have the choice of an elective exam at the end of basic school – they had to take an exam in Estonian as a second language, in Russian and in mathematics. At the end of upper secondary school, graduates of Russian-language schools also have to take two compulsory exams: Estonian as a second language and Russian. The assessment of exam results is the same as per students graduating from Estonian-language schools.

Year	Average result
2005	49.0
2006	56.7
2007	58.1
2008	56.9

Table 13. Upper secondary school students' results in state Russian language examination presented as average scores 2005–2008

3.4.4. Foreign language training in general education schools

3.4.4.1. Curriculum

The syllabus of the national curriculum³⁷ has been prepared with English, French, German and Russian language teaching/learning in mind. By stages of study the number of weekly compulsory foreign language lessons is as follows: Stage 1 (grades 1–3): language A – 3 lessons; Stage 2 (grades 4–6): language A – 9, language B – 3; Stage 3 (grades 7–9): language A – 9, language B – 9; upper secondary school (grades 10–12): language A – 6, language B – 6. Many schools teach foreign languages to a much larger extent at the cost of elective subjects, especially at the upper secondary school level.

³⁷Regulation no. 56 of the Government of the Republic of 25.01.2002 The National Curriculum of Basic School and Upper Secondary School, Annex 8.

The objective of foreign language teaching is to provide students with language proficiency which enables them to cope independently in an authentic language environment; to get to know people speaking different languages and their culture; and to help them understand and accept differences by comparing their own language with another language. By the end of basic school students should have a level of proficiency in language A which enables them to communicate in everyday situations and to read and understand original foreign language texts suitable for their age (level B1, Council of Europe). By the end of upper secondary school students should have a level of proficiency in at least one foreign language which is necessary for private and professional communication (level B2, Council of Europe). Proficiency in the second foreign language should be close to the level of the first foreign language.

In upper secondary school students can choose a third foreign language (foreign language C), but in many schools (especially Russian-language schools and schools where foreign language A is German or French) instruction begins as early as basic school. Taking into account the options open to it, the school decides which languages to teach as foreign languages A, B or C, but the majority of schools choose English as the first foreign language. The most common second foreign language is Russian. The teaching of foreign languages may be integrated with the teaching of other subjects, taking into account the nature of the school. A foreign language may be used for part of lesson, the whole lesson, part of a subject course or the whole course. When preparing the foreign language syllabus teachers take into account the knowledge that students will acquire about the country and culture through other subjects and complements other subject courses with the language lesson resources.

3.4.4.2. Inspection system and results of foreign language learning

The final examination at the end of basic school and the state examination at the end of upper secondary school give an indication of the results of foreign language learning in general education schools. But since both examinations are elective, the results do not give a comprehensive overview of students' language proficiency. Students choose to take the exam for very different reasons, but generally because of their good results in the subject. The majority of students graduating from upper secondary school most probably choose the state examination because of the fact that most institutions of higher education list the exam result as a prerequisite for admission. At the end of basic school students may choose to take the final exam in foreign language A or B learnt at school. At the end of upper secondary school students may also choose a foreign language learnt informally i.e. other than the foreign languages (A and B) learnt at school.

Foreign language	2005	2006	2007
English	63.3	61.9	59.6
French	69.5	58.8	75
German	75	63.7	61.9
Russian	75	61.7	63.6

National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, statistics, basic school final examination statistics.

Table 14. Basic school graduates' foreign language examination results as average scores 2005–2007

Foreign language	2005		2006		2007		2008	
	Number of examinees	Average						
English	9415	71.9	9590	64.4	9696	68.8	9293	67.6
French	80	74.5	57	75.2	36	77.5	58	77.2
German	1053	71.4	906	70.4	808	70.5	566	74.2
Russian	485	78.2	508	80.7	471	75.4	435	73.9

Table 15. Upper secondary school graduates' foreign language examination results as average scores 2005–2007

The most common final or state exam is *English* and this is probably not only due to the fact that it is studied the most in general education schools, but also because proficiency in English compared to other foreign languages is considered the most useful. *French* is taught as foreign language A and B in only a few schools and thus the exam in French is chosen by very few students (in basic schools usually fewer than 10 students and in upper secondary schools fewer than 100 students). The number of *Russian* exam takers is low due to the fact that it is usually not acknowledged as a foreign language by institutions of higher education. The constant decrease in the number of students taking the foreign language exam in German is a cause for concern. Traditionally German has played an important role in Estonia, but recent years have shown that it has lost a lot of ground to English.

3.4.4.3. Motivation to study foreign languages among students

Foreign languages are popular among students: they usually have more lessons in foreign languages A and B than the national curriculum prescribes and they often study a third or fourth foreign language in addition to the two compulsory foreign languages. The fact that the number of people who want to study foreign languages at universities (especially English philology) remains high also indicates the popularity of foreign languages.

In order to make the learning of foreign languages even more popular and to motivate more proficient students Olympiads are organised for upper secondary school students. Annual Olympiads take place for English, German, Finnish and Russian. Olympiads are organised by Tallinn University and the University of Tartu (and in the case of Finnish in co-operation with the Finnish Institute) and the number of participants is increasing every year. Many counties organise preliminary Olympiads. There are also county-level and national public speaking competitions in English.

3.5. Language teachers

The teacher qualification requirements in Estonia are determined by the regulation of the Minister of Education *Qualification Requirements for Teachers* (26.08.2002, no. 65, Appendix to the State Gazette 2002, 96, 1486). The training of teachers is governed by the government regulation *The Framework Requirements for Teacher Training* (22.11.2000, no. 381, State Gazette I 2000, 87, 575). Pursuant to the latter teacher training is organised at the higher education level (§3(1)). In Estonia teachers are trained at two public universities: Tallinn University and the University of Tartu.

During Soviet times upper secondary school teachers were trained on the basis of a 5-year integrated curriculum. The graduates were awarded the teacher's qualification for the respective subject. In 1991 the 4 + 1 system was adopted by the University of Tartu: 4-year Bachelor-level studies followed by a 1-year post-graduate course in teacher education. This meant that the acquisition of a teacher's qualification became voluntary and the number of students taking the post-graduate course was considerably smaller than the number of students graduating from Bachelor-level stu-

dies. Tallinn Pedagogical University continued training teachers using an integrated programme. Since the 2002/2003 academic year both universities have been training upper secondary school level teachers using 3+2 curricula: after completing the Bachelor-level curriculum students have the chance to continue their studies at the Master's level, specialising in the teaching of the given language. If students want to teach a subject at the basic school level, they must have minored in the subject at the Bachelor's level. During the Soviet era primary school teachers generally received their education and vocational skills in pedagogical schools which provided vocational secondary education. In early 1991 the Tartu Teacher Training College became an institution of professional higher education and in 2001 it began to be managed by the University of Tartu. As a result, it now also provides Master-level training. Class teachers are trained under integrated Bachelor's and Master's studies curricula not only at the School of Teacher Education (University of Tartu), but also at Narva College (in Russian) (University of Tartu) and Haapsalu College (Tallinn University).

The general requirements of teacher training also define the components of teacher training, which are: 1) general education; 2) subject studies; and 3) pedagogical, psychological and subject-based didactic studies and practical training (§5). The latter must amount to at least 40 credit points (60 ECTS points in the *European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System*) in the teacher training curriculum and must include at least a 10-week period of practical training (§8{3}). Whereas during the Soviet era a teacher training institution also awarded graduates their teacher's qualification, since the start of the 1990s they have not had this right, and there was a period when teacher's qualifications were not awarded at all. In 2005 the teachers' professional standard was approved and the right to award professional qualifications was given to the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre.

3.5.1. Teachers of Estonian as a mother tongue

During the 2007/2008 academic year there were 1532 teachers of Estonian language and literature in Estonian schools (1424 in basic schools and 432 in upper secondary schools): the number of filled positions was higher as some of the teachers had a larger work load than the standard provides. The majority of teachers taught both Estonian and literature. Estonian was also taught by class teachers working in Stage 1.

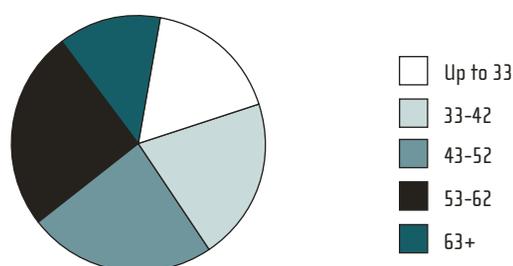


Figure 4. Age range of teachers of Estonian.

Based on qualifications, teachers of Estonian language and literature are divided as follows:

- > Higher education: 1399
- > Vocational secondary education 96
- > Secondary education 30
- > Vocational education (non-vocational): 6
- > Unknown: 1

Teachers of Estonian language and literature are trained at the University of Tartu and Tallinn University. Until autumn 2006 the University of Tartu admitted Estonian philologists who had completed a 4-year study programme into a 1-year teacher training programme. The number of students awarded the qualification of teacher of Estonian language and literature was 12 in 2004, 4 in 2005, 4 in 2006 and 5 in 2007. From 2004 the 2-year programme for teachers of Estonian language and literature (Master's programme) has been open to students who have completed a 3-year study programme for Estonian philologists. The number of students who have entered the programme is as follows: 1 in 2004, 13 in 2005, 4 in 2006 and 18 in 2007; the curriculum was completed by 4 students in 2007 and has been completed by 2 students in 2008. The University of Tartu also trains class teachers whose tasks include the teaching of Estonian in the first two stages of study.

The number of graduates of Tallinn University who have been awarded the qualification of teacher of Estonian language and literature is as follows: 13 in 2005 (of which 7 were Master's degrees and 6 post-Bachelors), 12 in 2006 (henceforth only post-Master's degree graduates), 6 in 2007 and 1 in 2008. It is evident that the number of students graduating from universities as teachers of Estonian is not sufficient to cover the positions of retiring teachers.

In order to gather, systematise and disseminate materials about the methodology of Estonian language and literature, and to prepare and publish methodological materials, the Mother Tongue Didactics Centre was established as part of Tallinn University with the support of the Ministry of Education and Research.

Some Estonian language and literature teachers formed an organisation called the Estonian Mother Tongue Society in 1989. The society's objective is to comprehensibly develop the teaching of Estonian. There are two sides to the society's role in the context of Estonian language learning: it has accomplished much in organising in-service training, publishing methodological materials and arranging free-time activities for teachers, but at the same time it is too small (with fewer than 200 teachers out of a total of around 1500, many of them not active members) to claim to represent the interests and opinions of all Estonian language teachers. The Estonian Youth Language Organisation, established at the end of 2007, is also associated with the society.

3.5.2. Teachers of Estonian in non-Estonian schools

Estonian as a second language is taught in general education schools in Estonia by 439 teachers.

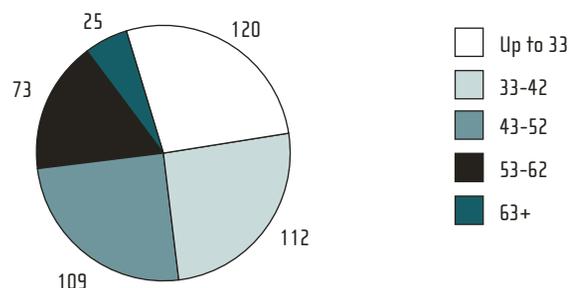


Figure 5. Age range of teachers of Estonian as a foreign language (second language) in Russian-language general education schools during the 2007/2008 academic year

In Russian-language schools 97% of Estonian teachers have pedagogical education, and 92.9% have specialist pedagogical education.

Teachers of Estonian as a second language are trained at Tallinn University's Institute of Estonian Language and Culture³⁸ and at the University of Tartu's Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics³⁹ and its Narva College⁴⁰.

The training of teachers of Estonian as a foreign language began in 1982 when a new speciality was created in the chair of Estonian language and culture of Tallinn University – Estonian as a foreign language. The aim was to train Estonian teachers for schools with Russian as the language of instruction. The University of Tartu only began training such teachers in 1989.

The objective of the curriculum is to provide competence in the following: 1) working as a teacher of Estonian language and literature in stages 2 and 3 and at the upper secondary school level in non-Estonian schools; 2) teaching Estonian as a foreign language; and 3) continuing studies at the Doctoral level.

From 2000–2007 46 people acquired the qualification of teacher of Estonian as a second language at the University of Tartu. Analysis shows that not all of these people have continued on to the teacher training programme. At Tallinn University the number of people who were awarded the qualification of teacher of Estonian as a second language between spring 2005 and autumn 2008 was 27.

Some teachers of Estonian as a second language have joined a non-profit organisation called the Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language. The association provides training and counselling regarding the methodology of teaching Estonian as a second language and prepares and distributes printed matter and materials for its members. The association operates in Kohtla-Järve, Tallinn and Tartu. In 2008 the association took on a new challenge – to create a network of teachers of Estonian as a second language for nursery schools. The association also wishes to improve and co-ordinate co-operation between teachers of Estonian as a second language working in vocational education institutions.

3.5.3. Teachers of Russian as mother tongue and teachers in schools not using Estonian as a language of instruction

The number of teachers of Russian language and literature in Russian-language basic and upper secondary schools and in schools which have Russian-language sections is 342. 99.7% of teachers of Russian language and literature in Russian-language schools have pedagogical training, of whom 95.6% have specialist pedagogical training.

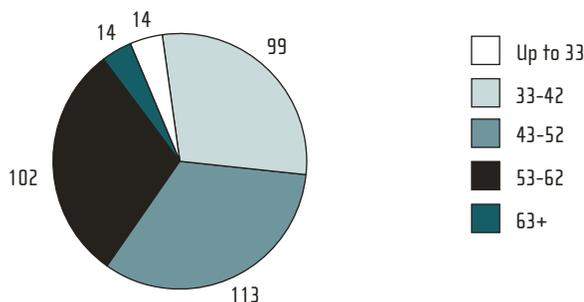


Figure 6. Age range of teachers of Russian language and literature in Russian-language schools in 2007/2008.

³⁸<http://www.tlu.ee/>

³⁹www.ut.ee

⁴⁰<http://narva.ut.ee/>

Teachers for Russian-language schools train at the Narva College of the University of Tartu and for Russian-language nursery schools at Tallinn Pedagogical College and the Narva College of the University of Tartu. The University of Tartu and Tallinn University also train teachers of Russian language and literature for Russian-language schools. Russian language and literature are taught in these schools in the same amount as Estonian language and literature is taught in Estonian-language schools. Teacher training is provided in Estonian. Although pursuant to the teachers' professional standard all teachers must be proficient in at least two foreign languages, the language proficiency level may not be sufficient for teaching in a foreign language. Class teachers are trained for Russian-language schools especially (the percentage of students in such schools amounts to 16% of the total number of students in general education schools), including teachers whose additional speciality is Estonian as a second language or English, and teachers are also trained for pre-school child care institutions. It is also possible to study to become a language immersion teacher, which basically means that the vocation of a class teacher is acquired.

3.5.4. Foreign language teachers

During the 2007/2008 academic year the total number of foreign language teachers in general education schools in Estonia was 3166, of whom 1851 were teachers of English, 792 of Russian, 463 of German and 60 of French.

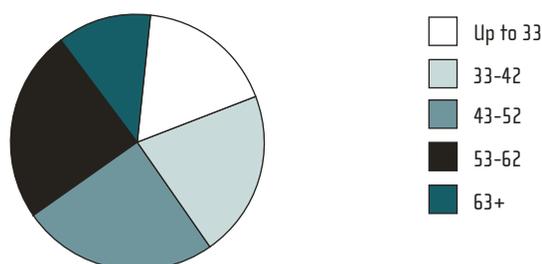


Figure 7. Age range of teachers of foreign languages (English, Russian, German and French) in general education schools during the 2007/2008 academic year.

91.4% of teachers of English, 95.5% of Russian, 94.8% of German and 71.7% of French as a foreign language had higher pedagogical education. In general education schools 85.8% of teachers of English, 85.6% of Russian, 90.5% of German and 63.3% of French as a foreign language had specialist pedagogical education.

Foreign language teachers are taught at both of the universities which train teachers: the University of Tartu (Institute of Germanic, Romance and Slavonic Languages, Faculty of Education, including School of Teacher Education and Narva College) and Tallinn University (Institute of Germanic/Romance Languages and Cultures, Institute of Slavonic Languages and Cultures, Institute of Educational Sciences and Haapsalu College).

Foreign language teachers are trained separately for basic school (first two stages of study), basic school (stages 1–3, with the emphasis on stage 3) and upper secondary school. The general assumption is that a higher stage teacher may also teach at a lower stage, but not vice versa. The majority of teachers trained for the upper secondary school stage do, in fact, teach in basic school, especially in stage 3. It is less common for upper secondary school teachers to teach in primary school. At the same time, primary or basic school teachers teach at the higher stage as well, because there are not enough teachers for this stage.

The University of Tartu's School of Teacher Education and Narva College offer the possibility to obtain training as a teacher of English or German for Stages 1 and 2 of study. Tallinn University's Haapsalu College prepares students for teaching English at basic school.

The situation is most complicated regarding the training of foreign language teachers for stage 3. On the one hand, it is assumed that the teachers teaching at this stage have been trained to teach at the upper secondary school level; on the other, it is possible to receive this training as an additional speciality, by minoring in it or during in-service training. There are also curricula for teaching several subjects in basic school. These also enable teachers to receive training to become a teacher of one or two foreign languages. The main problem in training foreign language teachers is the fact that they are usually trained to teach only one foreign language and thus there is no integration in teaching different languages at school. Another problem is that there are no specific requirements regarding the proficiency and knowledge of teachers of different stages of study, including the proficiency in the language to be taught, and thus it is difficult to decide which skills teachers who want to teach at some other stage of study need to improve.

3.5.4.1. Curricula

Based on the websites of universities, the following curricula are used to train foreign language teachers.

University of Tartu:

During Master's studies (prerequisite: Bachelor's Degree in the respective language or passing a prerequisite subject in the volume of at least 32 credit points):

- teacher of English (Institute of Germanic, Romance and Slavonic Languages);
- teacher of French (Institute of Germanic, Romance and Slavonic Languages);
- teacher of German (Institute of Germanic, Romance and Slavonic Languages);
- teacher of several subjects (Faculty of Education), requires a Bachelor's Degree in educational sciences (humanities) and at least 30 credit points of studies in the subject which the student wishes to teach; the possible choices include teacher of English in basic school, teacher of Russian as a second language in basic school, teacher of German in basic school and teacher of French in basic school.
- teacher of humanities in Russian-language basic school (Narva College); options include: English in basic school, English in upper secondary school and Russian as a foreign language in basic school.

Teachers of Russian as a foreign language are trained within the framework of the curricula for teachers of Russian language and literature (Institute of Germanic, Romance and Slavonic Languages) which includes the subject *Methodology for teaching Russian language as a foreign language II* (2 credit points).

It is possible to train to become a teacher of Finnish as an additional speciality (12 credit points), for example within the framework of the curriculum for teachers of Estonian language and literature.

Integrated Bachelor's and Master's studies curricula:

- class teacher (School of Teacher Education), includes additional specialities – teacher of English at stage 1 and 2 of studies (30 credit points) and teacher of German at stage 1 and 2 of studies (30 credit points).

- › class teacher in Russian-language schools (Narva College), includes an additional speciality - teacher of English (grades 1–6).

Tallinn University:

- › teacher of English (Institute of Germanic/Romance Languages and Cultures);
- › teacher of French (Institute of Germanic/Romance Languages and Cultures);
- › teacher of German (Institute of Germanic/Romance Languages and Cultures);
- › teacher of Russian as a foreign language (Institute of Slavonic Languages and Cultures);
- › teacher of several subjects (including Finnish) (Institute of Educational Sciences);
- › Class teacher (with a minor) (English in basic schools) (Haapsalu College).

Since the transition to the 3+2 system, teachers have been trained only for the four most common languages (as seen in the list of curricula above). The previous 4+1 system included curricula for training teachers of very different languages. While it is now also possible to be trained to become a teacher of another language (for example Finnish), this requires minoring in the language.

3.5.4.2. Teacher training graduates

Data on teacher training graduates is only available regarding graduates of the University of Tartu curriculum for upper secondary school teachers and graduates of Narva College. Since students can only study to become a teacher of English or German within the framework of an additional speciality at the School of Teacher Education, there is no accurate information about how many students who completed the class teachers' curriculum also acquired one of these specialities.

Data is included for those who were trained under the 4+1 system (Bachelor's studies + 1-year teacher training course). The first students to complete the 3+2 system graduated in 2007 and are included in the table after the + sign.

Graduates of University of Tartu	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	Total
Teacher of Spanish		1	1	1			3	1	7
Teacher of English	11	7	9	5	3	1	4	5 + 3	48
Teacher of Latin	1		2					1	4
Teacher of French			1						1
Teacher of Swedish (Norwegian, Danish)				2	1	1	2	5	11
Teacher of German	6	11	2	5	7	9	2	5 + 3	50
Teacher of Finnish	2		1					2	5
Teacher of English, Basic School*	15	12	20	12	11	8	2	2	82

* Diploma studies at Narva College on a Russian-language basis until 2007.

Table 16. Number of teacher training graduates at University of Tartu 2000 – 2007

As seen in the table the University of Tartu trained 126 upper secondary school teachers of different foreign languages and 82 basic school teachers of English between 2000 and 2007. The largest number of teachers were trained for English and German, but even with these languages the number of graduates is too small to satisfy the need for these teachers in general education schools in Estonia. There is also no information regarding the number of graduates who have started working at general education schools.

Some foreign language teachers have joined societies or associations of their respective languages. There is the Estonian Association of Teachers of English (*EATE*) (established in 1991, a member of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL), 260 members); the Estonian Association of Teachers of German (established in 1992, a member of Der Internationale Deutschlehrerverband (IDV) since 1993, 224 members); the Estonian Association of Teachers of French (established in 1992 and re-established in 1996); the Estonian Association of Teachers of Russian (established in 1998, a member of the International Association of Teachers of Russian since April 2004); the Estonian Association of Teachers of Finnish (established in 1993); and the Estonian Association of Teachers of Swedish (established in 2003, 58 members). The objectives of these associations and societies are to unite teachers of the respective language, to improve the level of language teaching and to organise seminars, conferences and training courses. There have been several attempts to establish an umbrella organisation to unite teachers of different languages, but with no success. The reason for this is the fact mentioned above: namely, language teachers focus on one language alone and on the teaching of that language.

3.5.5. Motivation to become a teacher

Although most foreign language teachers' positions are filled, there are difficulties with qualified language teachers taking up positions in general education schools and vocational education institutions. Data regarding pedagogical qualifications shows that finding foreign language teachers who comply with the qualification requirements is the most problematic aspect. In the case of English, the problem lies primarily in the fact that within the last 10 years the number of students who want to study English has risen quickly and significantly. In the case of other foreign languages, the problem is that due to the limited number of learners, teachers do not have a full work load. This in turn has an effect on salary and consequently on motivation to work as a teacher. No comprehensive and representative studies have been carried out in this field.

Since 2004 those students who have completed the teacher training course have to complete an induction year in the educational institution for the respective level. During this year the newcomers are guaranteed methodical counselling by a mentor and the necessary in-service training via the respective departments of the University of Tartu and Tallinn University. At the end of the induction year the students are evaluated on the basis of the *teachers' professional standard* and consequently awarded the teacher's vocation and grade. Between 2006 and 2007 the number of teachers attested was as follows: 8 Estonian language (mother tongue) teachers; 1 teacher of Estonian as a second language; and 16 teachers of various foreign languages. At the same time, the data shows that not everyone completed the induction year or passed the evaluation. From 2000 to 2007 40 teachers of various languages (including some able to teach two foreign languages) signed up for the induction year, but fewer than half of them were awarded the teacher's qualification (16).

A new initiative is being applied from 1 September 2008. Teachers who start working at a school for the first time will now receive a start-up grant to the value of 200,000 kroons (approximately 12,900 euros). In 2008 the grant will be given to 120 teachers commencing work at general educa-

tion schools or vocational education institutions. Start-up grants will be paid during the first three working years following completion of a teacher training course at the higher education level: 50% in the first year and 25% in the second and third years.

3.5.6. In-service training for teachers

Pursuant to the *general requirements of teacher training*, teachers must complete in-service training equal to at least 4 credit points (160 hours) over a 5-year period. The state ensures that all education institutions have the resources needed to take part in in-service training. In terms of the content of in-service training, the decision-making power and responsibility lies with the heads of schools. In-service training for teachers, including language teachers, is provided by both public universities and various education and training institutions. Both of the universities which train teachers also provide in-service training. There are two types of in-service training courses: short courses and retraining. Short courses are organised by the Continuous Education Service of the University of Tartu's Open University and the In-Service Training Centre of Tallinn University's Open University. Seminars are also arranged by:

- associations of foreign language teachers (e.g. the Estonian Association of Teachers of English, the Estonian Association of Teachers of German, the Estonian Mother Tongue Teachers' Society and the Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language);
- cultural institutes and representations of different countries (Goethe Institute, Centre Culturel Français a Tallinn, British Council, Finnish Institute etc). The latter also provide training possibilities in the countries where the respective languages are spoken.

Foreign language teachers have the chance to take part in projects of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz and in training courses provided to teachers and educational workers via the Comenius programme.

Within the framework of the *Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (2004)* and *National Integration Plan 2008-2013* free training courses are organised for teachers of Estonian (as a mother tongue and second language).

As part of state-commissioned education, within which the state allocates special resources for public universities, teachers of all languages have the possibility to take part in retraining. These resources are mainly targeted at school teachers who lack special pedagogical training. Training courses are provided by the Faculty of Philosophy of the University of Tartu (in co-operation with the In-Service Training Service of the Open University), Narva College of the University of Tartu; and Haapsalu College of the University of Tartu. The in-service training of language teachers is therefore dispersed between different institutions; there is no overview of the courses provided and participation in courses is often random.

4. LANGUAGES IN INFORMAL EDUCATION

Section 3 of the *Hobby Schools Act*, which entered force in 2007, defines hobby schools as educational institutions involved in youth work which create, within the different spheres of hobby education, possibilities for the acquisition of hobby education and diverse development of personality, including use of language and culture. Guided by the *Hobby Schools Act*, the Minister of Education and Research issued a directive in autumn 2007 which set out *the base financing principles of Sunday schools*. During the 2007/2008 academic year 12 Sunday schools with a total of 178 students of different nationalities received financing under these principles. The objective of financing is to enable ethnic minorities to study their mother tongues and cultures. In 2007/2008 financing was given to *Armenian, Azerbaijani, Dagestan, Jewish, Turkish, Ukrainian, Uzbek and Russian* Sunday schools.

Adult learners are able to learn foreign languages in language schools and on different courses, for example in the workplace. Moreover, it is also possible to take courses in Estonian as a second language and to study it at language schools. In 2008, Estonian language courses at various levels were organized by 72 language schools or training centres i.e. 18.6% of educational and training institutions providing informal education. In the case of adult learners the objective of learning Estonian is usually to find a better job or to comply with obligations arising from legislation regarding the level of professional proficiency in Estonian. It is possible to learn foreign languages in 22% (87) of educational and training institutions that provide informal education under an education licence. Most commonly these institutions offer English, German and French, but many also teach different European Union languages as well as Russian, Chinese, Japanese and more. The reason people study foreign languages is usually to comply with requirements set by their workplace, for travelling or because of their cultural interests.

4.1. Motivation to learn Estonian (comp Chapters 2.3.2, 2.3.3 and 3.4.2.2)

Proficiency in Estonian has an important pragmatic meaning for the Russian population. Knowledge of Estonian is not only a prerequisite for applying for Estonian citizenship, but it also increases competitiveness on the labour market, improves learning possibilities and enhances the feeling of security and confidence. The level of proficiency of Estonian among Russians remained stable between 2002 and 2005. The results of different studies have shown that Estonian proficiency among younger people has improved, but proficiency among the older generation has remained the same or even fallen.

	No proficiency	Some proficiency	Ability to speak and write	Fluent
1987	58	32	---	10
2003	12	61	18	9

Masso and Vihalemm (2005: 6).

Table 17. Estonian language proficiency of Russian-speaking adults in 1987 and 2003 (%)

The language proficiency of Russians with Estonian citizenship (especially young people) has improved and Russian citizens living in Estonia (mainly older people) are increasingly more critical of their proficiency in Estonian and consider it to be getting steadily worse.

Language proficiency is greatly influenced by the person's place of residence and there are considerable differences between regions. The smaller the Russian community in a region, the greater their proficiency in Estonia. Insufficient knowledge of Estonian has become an intrinsic barrier to Russian speakers. This makes them insecure and discontented about their status and decreases their ability to cope successfully in the country.

Assessment of language proficiency	1995	1996	2002	2005
Sufficient proficiency	28	31	44	48
Insufficient proficiency	55	57	53	49
Cannot say	17	12	3	3

Report on "Monitoring of Integration" study (2005:25).

Table 18. Russian-speaking residents' assessment of their proficiency in Estonian in terms of whether it is sufficient for living in Estonia (%).

Better knowledge of Estonian among young Russians also manifests itself in their growing self-confidence. More than half (54%) consider their knowledge of Estonian sufficient to live in Estonia, while 45% feel that their knowledge is insufficient for this. Insecurity arising from insufficient knowledge has a much deeper meaning; it leads to people becoming unhappy with themselves and the state. Better knowledge of Estonian is the 'key' which influences the opinions of Russians in Estonia and creates the prerequisites for an understanding of the country's citizenship policy.

Estonian is used as a means of communication all the time or from time to time by three-quarters of the Russian-speaking population on average. Despite the status of Estonian – as the official language – slightly more than a quarter of Russians do not use Estonian at all or only do so in exceptional cases.

Russian-speakers think knowing Estonian is good for getting a good job (75%), in increasing mutual trust (68%) and in showing progressiveness (60%). In the opinion of young people with higher education, proficiency in Estonian is a prerequisite for integration and the level of proficiency determines the extent to which people consider themselves to be integrated in society.

Most major companies have organised Estonian, English and Russian courses for their employees. According to employees the situation of young Estonians and Russians on the labour market is changing: whereas previously young Russian were at a disadvantage, they are now often proficient in Estonian. And since many young Estonians cannot speak Russian, Russian-speakers who are proficient in many languages are finding it easier to cope on the labour market.⁴¹

4.2. Assessment of proficiency in Estonian as a second language (Comp 3.4.2.2)

The tradition of teaching Estonian as a second language and assessing the ability to do so is not a long one. During the Soviet era Estonian was taught in Russian-language schools, but in many schools this was a formality. Language courses were not organised for people who came to Estonia from other regions of the Soviet Union. The Language Act of 1989 established a requirement for all workers who needed Estonian in order to perform their duties to be able to speak the language. Language proficiency was assessed using a 6-point scale – A, B, C, D, E and F – in which A was used for the lowest level, with F denoting fluency. During the examination used to determine the category of language proficiency the exam taker's language ability was assessed using question cards. 6–10 question cards were prepared for each category. This resulted in short

⁴¹Public procurement no. 034118 "Development of National Integration Programme 2008–2013" 2008.

language courses (20-60 hours) during which the students mastered the material necessary to pass the exam. The students' performance was assessed based on an overall impression without an assessment guide or rating scale.

Since November 1995 the examination for candidates for Estonian citizenship has been organised in the form of a standardised and unified test.⁴² The test was developed with the help of experts from the Council of Europe. Based on the proficiency requirements set out in the Citizenship Act, it was determined to be equivalent to level two of ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) (Threshold Level). The development of intermediate level requirements was based on the *Threshold Level in Estonian* prepared within the framework of a Council of Europe project. The Estonian version was based on the *Threshold Level* (published in Estonian in 1996). Language specifications for basic and advanced levels were developed by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre.⁴³

Since 1 July 2008 proficiency in Estonian as a second language has been measured by proficiency examinations which conform to the proficiency levels described in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. It is possible to take A2, B1, B2 and C1 level examinations. The examinations are in the format of a test and the test assesses the skills of listening, reading, writing and speaking. The maximum score is 100. It is possible to take the exam at the examination centres of the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre located in Jõhvi, Narva, Tallinn and Tartu. Every centre offers the chance for all of the exams to be taken between 4 and 10 times a year. The number of tests depends on the number of test takers.⁴⁴ The taking of exams, including repeat exams, has been free of charge since 2002. If an exam is failed, it is possible to register for a repeat exam after 3 months.

4.3. Motivation to learn foreign languages and options for testing language proficiency

Estonia has always been a multilingual country, and as the number of speakers of Estonian is small, the majority understand that proficiency in a foreign languages is essential. Unfortunately, it is often thought today that knowledge of English is enough. An example of this tendency is the fact that parents are pressuring the heads of schools to choose English as the first foreign language. As a result English is often taught in primary schools by teachers with no professional training in the language.

Interest in learning foreign languages has certainly increased due to the fact that ETV, the television channel of the Estonian National Broadcaster, does not dub foreign language programmes but instead uses subtitles (for more information see Chapter 2.3.3) and thus viewers can hear other languages on a daily basis.

In public service people are encouraged to learn foreign languages by section 39 of the Public Service Act (additional remuneration for proficiency in foreign languages) according to which a "state official who is proficient in at least three foreign languages, to the extent specified by a person or administrative agency who has appointed him or her to office, and the use of these languages is required in the service, shall receive 10 per cent of his or her salary as additional remuneration

⁴²Until 1 July 2008 three levels of language proficiency were used to determine proficiency in Estonian: basic, intermediate and advanced.

⁴³REKK has been an associate member of ALTE since 1998, <http://www.ekk.edu.ee/>

⁴⁴For information about the results of the questionnaire distributed among exam takers during the first two months of 2007, see Epner 2008.

for the third and each subsequent foreign language, but not more than a total of 30 per cent." The problem with this provision is the subjectivity and lack of transparency in determining language proficiency. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs applies a 9-level scale and pays additional remuneration starting from level 5 in the case of the first and second foreign languages and in the case of the third to fifth foreign languages from level 3. The same system has been adopted by several other ministries, but it is unclear who makes decisions regarding employee proficiency and on what basis. Certificates issued by various schools are acknowledged, but how the result of language proficiency assessment has been reached is not checked. It is sufficient if the result has been given on the 9-level scale mentioned above. The situation is different in the Ministry of Defence: since Estonia is a member of NATO, the ministry uses the STANAG (*Standardised agreement*) 6001 5-level scale to describe language proficiency. Certificates in Estonia are issued by the Testing Team of the Estonian Defence Forces, which prepares and carries out language tests approved by NATO.

The requirement for foreign language proficiency is also set out in professional standards, and in the last few years there has been a transition to a description of language proficiency using a system of levels adopted by the Council of Europe. The main reason for this transition is probably the introduction of the *Europass*. In the case of the language proficiency requirements stated in professional standards the problem lies in the fact that although the requirements have been established they are not in reality checked when awarding professional certificates. Hence: although a professional standard requires a teacher to be proficient in one foreign language to at least level B2 and in another to at least level A2, it is difficult to find teachers whose foreign language proficiency would enable them, for example, to take part in training courses offered as part of the Comenius programme.

All of this means that at least three different scales are used in Estonia to describe and provide evidence of language proficiency, which makes the movement of employees from one system to another difficult, as they often have to prove their proficiency again.

At the same time, internationally recognised tests (primarily those developed by the member organisations of ALTE, but also the TOEFL test) are suitable for certifying language proficiency. Of English tests it is possible to take the TOEFL test (with the University of Tartu and Tallinn University of Technology), the IELTS test and all Cambridge ESOL English tests through the British Council. It is also possible to take French exams at the Centre Culturel Français a Tallinn: DELF and DALF exams, TCF and TEF tests, Business French diplomas and Certificates of Legal Language. All kinds of exams in *German* are offered by the Goethe Institute and can be taken at its offices in Estonia. Recently it also became possible to take the DELE exam in Spanish and the PLIDA exam in Italian at the Language Centre of Tallinn University, while at the Pushkin Institute it is possible to take the *Russian language as a language of everyday communication* and *Professional Russian Language: Business and Enterprise* exams. The University of Tartu also organises exams in *Russian* as a foreign language. Since for all of these exams the results are presented using the system of language proficiency levels adopted by the Council of Europe (or with the results tied to this system), it seems reasonable to use this system more widely in the certification of language proficiency.

PART II. MULTILINGUALISM AND DIVERSIFICATION OF LANGUAGE EDUCATION: IMPLEMENTATION OF EUROPEAN INDICATORS AND PROGRAMMES IN ESTONIA

Integration with Europe has been considered a priority in Estonia since the restoration of independence. Moreover, foreign language proficiency has always received great attention. Therefore the work of key European Institutions and organisations (the Council of Europe and the European Union) in the field of language education has attracted a lot of interest in Estonia. As early as 1995 and 1996 a standardised and unified test of Estonian for applicants for Estonian citizenship was developed with the help of experts from the Council of Europe.¹⁰ Some of the initiatives of European institutions have already been implemented in Estonia; for example, the learning of two foreign languages (mother tongue plus two foreign languages) has been compulsory in Estonia since 1961. Language immersion programmes¹¹ have proven to be successful and have mainly been applied in Russian-language schools since 2000 (Estonian Language Immersion Programme).

To promote multilingualism the Ministry of Education and Research is compiling a document entitled *Estonian Foreign Language Strategy until 2015*. The implementation of this strategy will enhance multilingualism in Estonia and will help to develop the multilingualism of both individuals and society as a whole. The learning of Estonian by non-Estonian residents in order to promote cohesion in society has been the focal point of many other national programmes. The strategy in question concentrates on the foreign language studies of Estonian residents. The aims of the strategy are to increase residents' motivation to learn different languages; to diversify the options of learning languages; to improve the quality of language teaching in both formal and informal education; to ensure the availability of learning materials for different target groups; to ensure the quality of the training provided to language teachers and to improve the reputation of language teachers in society; and to create a modern and effective system for the approval of language proficiency. The achievement of the objectives set in the strategy and the fulfilment of the tasks envisaged for its implementation will enhance familiarity with foreign languages and other cultures; it will develop our proficiency in international and intercultural communication; and it will improve our awareness and tolerance of other cultures.

5.1. Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities.

The *Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities* drafted on 01.02.1995 in Strasbourg was signed by the Republic of Estonia on 02.02.1995. The act on the ratification of the framework convention was adopted by Estonia on 21.11.1996 with the following declaration: "The Republic of Estonia understands the concept of 'national minority', which is not defined in the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, as follows: the following Estonian citizens are considered to be members of a national minority:

- › those who live on the territory of Estonia;

¹⁰Based on the proficiency requirements set out in the Citizenship Act, it was determined to be equivalent to level two of ALTE (Association of Language Testers in Europe) (Threshold Level). The development of intermediate level requirements was based on the *Threshold Level in Estonian*, prepared within the framework of a Council of Europe project. The Estonian version was based on the *Threshold Level* (published in Estonian in 1996).

¹¹<http://www.kke.ee>

- › those who have long-term, firm and lasting ties with Estonia;
- › those who differ from Estonians because of their ethnic identity, cultural characteristics, religion or language;
- › those who are guided by their wish to preserve their cultural customs, religion or language, which forms the basis of their common identity.”

5.2. European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

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Estonia has not signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This has been justified by the general nature of the text, the possible additional expenses, the possible threat of separatism and the chance that an attempt will be made to apply the charter for political purposes to immigrant languages (as these are not protected by the charter). At the same time, the charter was analysed before Estonia's accession to the EU and it was determined that Estonia would not have any conceptual problems in observing the charter. Minority language communities have been granted a range of possibilities to learn and practise their languages and to preserve their cultural traditions (see Chapters 2.2.3.–2.2.5 and Chapter 3). One ethnic group – Russians – are able to receive state-financed Russian-language education in all stages of education (from basic school through to higher education).

In 2007 *Estonian sign language* was awarded official status (see Chapter 2.2.2).

Estonian legislation does not include a concept of *regional language*. The law defines dialects and the language varieties they produce as special local varieties of Estonian. The special regional varieties of Estonian and multi-identity have been favoured as a cultural value, a source for the development of standard Estonian and a medium of local Estonian identity. Financial support is given to the activities of the Võru Institute and the Estonian Bureau of Lesser Used Languages; many national programmes have also been implemented (see Chapter 2.2.3).

5.3. Celebration of the European Year of Languages 2001

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The objective of the European Year of Languages 2001 was to highlight the linguistic diversity of Europe and to promote language learning. This enterprise was launched by the Council of Europe and the European Union. The National Committee on the European Year of Languages 2001 in Estonia was established under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education. The year saw numerous international conferences and public events (TV and radio programmes, press conferences, lectures, language learning days et al) and many publications were released (books, CDs, stamps and more). The celebration of the year of languages helped activate society and make everyone – from ordinary language users to high-level state officials and legislators – think about language problems. Attention was given to the learning of foreign languages, to the standards of language proficiency assessment and to problems related to the mother tongue. Preparations also began for the drafting of the *Development Strategy of the Estonian Language* (2004–2010). The year of languages helped to explain the activities of the Council of Europe and the EU in the field of language to Estonian society.⁴⁷

⁴⁷See European Year of Languages in Estonia (2001) and general information about the European Year of Languages 2001.

5.4. Celebration of the European Day of Languages on 26 September

Since 2001 the linguistic diversity of Europe has been celebrated annually with a range of events on 26 September. The objectives of the European Day of Languages are to highlight the importance of learning languages and language proficiency to the general public (getting to know other cultures, more open attitudes to the world, better mutual understanding, travelling and working abroad and so on); to establish and foster a belief in the idea that all languages spoken in Europe are beautiful and valuable; and to encourage people to undertake life-long learning. The European Day of Language is a joint initiative of the Council of Europe and European Union. Since 26 September 2001 the day of languages has also been marked in a number of ways in Estonia. In fact, the tradition of celebrating such days is quite a long one in the country: On the initiative of the Mother Tongue Society, language days – which primarily took the form of meetings featuring popular science presentations which also included fiction and music – have been held since 1961. At the time the focus was Estonian and Finno-Ugric languages. Since 14 March 1996 *beautiful mother tongue day* or *Kristjan Jaak day* has been celebrated in Estonia, and since 1999 it has been celebrated as a day of national importance placing high value on all of the mother tongues spoken in Estonia.⁴⁸

5.5. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (CEFR)

The Estonian-language version of the document prepared under the initiative and leadership of the Council of Europe – the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment* (CEFR) – was published in 2003. An edited Estonian version of the document was published in 2007 under the name *Euroopa keeleõppe raamdokument: õppimine, õpetamine ja hindamine*. The translation and publication of the document was organised by the Ministry of Education and Research in co-operation with the Estonian Association for Applied Linguistics.

5.6. Development of the Estonian version of European Language Portfolio (ELP)

Preparation for and introduction of the European Language Portfolio began in Estonia during the European Year of Languages 2001. In summer 2003 a committee was formed under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Science with the aim of developing the foundations of the Estonian version of the European Language Portfolio and a model portfolio for grades 6–9. For the development of the Estonian version numerous meetings, information and training days with the participation of international experts were organised, introductory lectures were given and materials published. The draft version was tested in schools in 2004/2005. According to the most optimistic estimates, it was tested by around 1700 students. In October 2007 the Validation Committee of the Council of Europe decided that the Estonian model of the ELP for 12- to 16-year-olds (Grades 6–9) conformed to requirements. The number of the model is 93.2007.

Training courses have been launched to introduce the principles of the CEFR and ELP to language teachers. In the development of the new national curriculum the principles of the abovementioned Council of Europe documents will be taken into account.

⁴⁸Kristjan Jaak Peterson, also known as Christian Jacob Petersohn (1801–1822), was a writer whose birthday was 14 March and who could speak at least 16 languages. Knowing all these language, he placed high value on Estonian and considered it possible to write in Estonian.

5.7. Programmes of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz

Estonia has been participating in the work of programmes organised via the European Centre for Modern Languages in Graz since 1995.

5.8. Pestalozzi training programme

Pestalozzi is a Council of Europe training programme for educational workers which was established in 1969. The programme is targeted at educational workers (teachers, heads of schools, inspectors, teacher trainers, authors of books et al) in all 49 countries which have joined the European Cultural Convention. Its objectives are to provide information about the educational work carried out by the Council of Europe; share ideas, experience, information and teaching materials; form contacts; help widen the view of the world; and enrich professional knowledge. The topics of courses and seminars are closely related to the high-priority projects of the Council of Europe, such as democratic civil society and human rights, the fight against crimes against humanity, Roma education, cross-cultural learning and social integration in schools, the European dimension in the teaching of history, multilingualism, cross-cultural dialogue, conflict prevention, gender equality and more. Estonian teachers have had the possibility to take part in the programme since 1995. In addition to providing experience in international co-operation, participation in the programme has certainly also developed the teachers' foreign language proficiency.

5.9. Programme of lifelong learning 2007–2013 and its sectoral programmes: Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundtvig et al

The objective of the programme of lifelong learning introduced in 2006 by a decision of the European Parliament and Council is to improve educational co-operation between European countries and to achieve the goals of the Lisbon strategy. The programme of lifelong learning continues the activities of its predecessors – Socrates and Leonardo da Vinci (2001–2006).

Europe today is multinational – a home to people with different cultural, linguistic and historical backgrounds. Harmonious coexistence and at the same time the preservation of everyone's individuality and differences requires an ability to communicate and mutual understanding; language proficiency widens people's view of the world, supports their individual and professional development and enables them to enjoy the richness of various cultures.

Estonia's wish to take part in the European integration process and in the advancement of the quality of education was expressed in its wish as an EU candidate country to join the European educational co-operation programmes in 1998. Its participation in the programmes has become more active since its accession to the EU in 2004.

Analysis of the results of the Socrates programme⁴⁹ confirms that those people who have taken part in study trips, training courses or student/teacher exchanges have either remarkably improved their language skills and thereby widened their possibilities for co-operation at the international level or are motivated to learn and teach foreign languages. According to participants in educational programmes, the most valuable experiences are improvement of language proficiency, learning about other countries' educational systems and cultures, making new contacts and professional development. As with the preceding Socrates sub-programmes, the programme of lifelong learning also supports the learning and teaching of European languages through diffe-

⁴⁹Kirss and Uus (2007).

rent activities. Project aid and the financing of individual mobility through the Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci and Grundtvig programmes are an important contribution to the achievement of the objectives of Estonian education. From 2000 to 2006 Estonian institutions participated in 23 language learning projects (Lingua) as a partner and in 3 as a co-ordinator. The contribution of the projects to the development and launching of language teaching materials and aids, websites and Internet-based language learning environments has been of great importance for Estonian education. The role of co-operation projects in the wide-scale presentation of Estonian language and culture has also been remarkable. The Lingua project *Estonian language and Mind* was a co-operation project between eight countries and offers people the chance to learn Estonian through other languages such as English, German, Greek and French.

5.10. EU youth programme *Citizenship through Education* and the *Youth in Action* programme

In parallel to the programme of lifelong learning, the EU Citizenship through Education programme for young people has also been successful in Estonia since 1998. The programme supports young people's own projects and international co-operation outside of the formal education system. A new programme – Youth in Action (the name being left unchanged in Estonian) – was launched on 1 January 2007 and will last until 2013.

5.11. The *European Label* programme – awareness of multilingualism

The European Label for innovative projects in language teaching and learning is an initiative of the European Commission arising from the objectives of the White Paper *Teaching and Learning. Towards the Learning Society* (1995). The label has been awarded in member states of the European Union since 1998 and in Estonia since 2002. In Estonia the annual award of the label is organised by the Archimedes Foundation. The objectives of the initiative are to increase interest in and motivation for language learning; to support innovative projects in the field of language learning; to recognise the parties involved and the results; and to enable the exchange of useful experience in European countries. The label is signed by the Commissioner of the European Commission responsible for multilingualism and the Minister of Education and Research of the Republic of Estonia. The label awarded by the commission and the ministry brings international recognition and high repute. Since 2005 the Label has been awarded in two categories: foreign language project of the year and foreign language deed of the year. The latter can be awarded to a student, teacher, agency or organisation. Since 2002, 23 projects, 4 students, 1 teacher and 4 foreign language deeds have been awarded the label.

PART III. TOPICS FOR DISCUSSION

6.1. Central issues in Estonian educational policy

- › *Assurance of uniformity, sustainability and co-ordination of the language policy.* Dozens of strategies and development plans have been developed in Estonia, but at times the implementation of these strategies and plans has lacked uniformity and sustainability.
- › *Decision-making in the field of language education based on analyses and studies.*
- › *To find the necessary resources for the development of the language sector.*

6.2. Promoting Estonian and the development of language teaching

Estonian is the official language of Estonia and has been an official language of the EU since 1 May 2004. At the same time, the number of speakers of Estonian and limited knowledge of the language place it among the group of less used languages with a small number of users, as a result of which its reputation, teaching and use as a study language require purposeful development. Attention needs to be turned primarily to the following matters:

- › *How to ensure the sustainable development and use of Estonian in all spheres of social life, including higher education and science.*
- › *How to develop the learning of Estonian as a second language so that graduates of non-Estonian (Russian-language) basic schools acquire proficiency in Estonian to a level which enables them to cope in Estonian society without difficulty and to continue their studies in Estonian.*
- › *How to make the learning of Estonian more efficient for non-Estonians in order to ensure them equal possibilities on the labour market and active participation in the social life of Estonia.*

6.3. Development of the multilingualism policy

6.3.1. Language proficiency as a resource

In Estonia, as in many other European countries, there is an increasing tendency to learn English as the first language, with proficiency in English considered the most important or even the only language that needs to be learnt. The fact that people of many different nationalities living in Estonia cannot speak their own ethnic languages needs to be addressed. Attention should be turned to the following matters:

- › *How to make people see language proficiency as a major resource, including economically, and improve people's motivation to learn different languages.*
- › *How to make society understand the necessity to learn and be able to speak languages other than English.*
- › *How to make the learning of foreign languages more efficient and more valued within the framework of lifelong learning from the point of view of both learners and employees.*

- › How to acknowledge and value minority languages and the ability to speak such languages, including among people who belong to national minorities.
- › How to make the regional varieties of Estonian more attractive as a medium of Estonian identity.

6.3.2. Training and motivating of teachers and development of language learning

In Estonia, predominantly teachers of one foreign languages are trained, making teachers of different foreign languages and different foreign languages themselves rivals. There are no specific requirements in terms of skills and knowledge for teachers at different stages of study, including requirements regarding the language taught (the teachers' professional standard is too general and does not address foreign language teachers separately), and thus it is difficult to decide what a teacher who wants to teach at some other stage of study should learn. Curricula have been developed for training teachers of languages with larger but not smaller numbers of speakers. The number of people graduating from teacher training courses as a foreign language teacher is small. Moreover, there is no precise information regarding the number of graduates who begin working as teachers in general education schools.

How to develop the training system of language teachers so that it meets the requirements of modern language teaching and the conditions of Estonian educational life. How to improve graduates' motivation to start working as teachers in schools.

How to integrate Council of Europe instruments – the Common European Framework of Reference for Estonian (CEFR) and the European Language Portfolio (ELP) – most effectively into the Estonian educational system. How to emphasise their importance and use them to develop the entire language learning system and learning environment: curriculum, teacher training and in-service training, learning materials, exams etc. How to apply these instruments most effectively in the development of language teaching, for the effectiveness of language teaching and in the measurement of language proficiency.

ANNEXES

Annex 1. Number of inhabitants in major Estonian towns based on 2000 census¹²

Town/city:	Number of inhabitants	Estonians	Proportion of Estonians
Tallinn	400387	215114	53.7 %
Tartu	101169	80397	80 %
Narva	68680	3331	4.9 %
Kohtla-Järve	47679	8479	17.8 %
Pärnu	45500	36112	80 %
Viljandi	20756	18995	91.5 %
Sillamäe	17199	719	4.2 %
Rakvere	17097	14496	84.8 %
Maardu	16738	3331	20 %
Valga	14323	8970	62.6 %
Kuressaare	14925	14548	97.5 %
Võru	14879	13414	90 %
Jõhvi	12112	4022	33.2 %
Haapsalu	12054	9587	80 %
Paide	9642	8683	90 %

⁵⁰2000 Population and Housing Census II.

Annex 2. Official appendixes and studies forming part of Development Strategy of Estonian Language (2004–2010)

1. Eesti keele uurimise analüüs (Analysis of Research into Estonian). Koost. Mati Ereht. Emakeele Seltsi aastaraamat 48. 2002. Eesti Teaduste Akadeemia Emakeele Selts. Tallinn, 2003. 262 p.
2. Eesti kirjakeele kasutusvaldkondade seisundi uuringud (Situation Studies on Domains of Standard Estonian). Toim. Maire Raadik. Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikooli eesti filoloogia osakonna toimetised 4. Tallinn, 2003. 240 p.
3. Tiiu Ereht, Arvi Tavast, Eesti oskuskeelekorralduse seisund (State of Estonian LSP Planning). Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2003. 128 p.
4. Eve Alender, Kairit Henno, Annika Hussar, Peeter Päll, Evar Saar, Nimekorralduse analüüs (Analysis of Name Planning). Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2003. 118 p.
5. Kadri Muischnek, Heili Orav, Heiki-Jaan Kaalep, Haldur Õim, Eesti keele tehnoloogilised ressursid ja vahendid (Language Technological Resources of the Estonian Language). Arvutikorpused, arvutisõnastikud, keeletehnoloogiline tarkvara. Toimetaja Urve Talvik. Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2003. 86 p.
6. Vahur Laiapea, Merilin Miljan, Urmas Sutrop, Regina Toom, Eesti viipekeel (Estonian Sign Language). Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2003. 59 p.
7. Emakeel ja teised keeled IV. Eesti keel võõrkeelena/teise keelena ja võõrkeelte seisund Eestis (Mother Tongue and Other Languages IV. Estonian as a Foreign/Second Language and the State of Foreign Language in Estonia). Toim Birute Klaas ja Silvi Tenjes. Tartu Ülikooli eesti keele (võõrkeelena) õppetooli toimetised 3. Tartu, Tartu Ülikooli Kirjastus, 2004. 313 p.
8. Silvi Vare, Eesti keel vene koolis (Estonian Language in the Russian-medium School). Tallinn: Eesti Keele Sihtasutus, 2004. 127 p.

Annex 3. Institutions and organisations ensuring development and implementation of Estonian language policy and language teaching policy⁵¹

The **Ministry of Education and Research** (MER) designs and organises the national language policy through its structural units and administered institutions, prepares the necessary draft legal acts to this end, and co-ordinates research into the Estonian language, relying on the positions of the Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (DSEL) and guiding its implementation. The goal of the activities of the MER is to ensure purposeful and efficient application of the language policy which is favourable to the development of the Estonian language, including the elaboration of national development plans in the field of language and the assurance of conformity with the other national development plans (www.hm.ee).

The **Estonian Language Council** (ELC) works at the MER; the task of the ELC is to constantly monitor and analyse the linguistic situation in Estonia (including the draft legal acts dealing with language) and to submit proposals concerning the national language policy, including its funding. The Estonian Language Council will monitor the implementation of DSEL; it will review the positions of the latter every two years and submit suggestions for important amendments to the Estonian Parliament through the Minister of Education and Research. The Estonian Language Council will draw up DSEL 2 (<http://ekn.hm.ee/>).

The **Language Inspectorate** (<http://www.keeleinsp.ee/>) is a government body in the area of government of the Ministry of Education and Research. Its main tasks include supervision of the observance of the Language Act and other legal acts regulating the use of language, issuance of warnings and injunctions, and imposition of fines where necessary.

The **University of Tartu** (www.ut.ee), one of the tasks of the Faculty of Philosophy of which is to provide postgraduate education and to conduct linguistic research into Estonian and other languages. Estonian-related activities are carried out mostly at the Institute of Estonian and General Linguistics.

Tallinn University (www.tlu.ee), one of the tasks of the Faculty of Philosophy of which is to provide postgraduate education and to conduct linguistic research into Estonian and other languages. The main emphasis of teaching and research is on applied areas. Estonian-related activities are carried out mostly within the Department of Estonian Philology.

The **Institute of Estonian Language** is a state research and development institution administered by the MER, whose task is research into standard Estonian, Estonian dialects and languages related to Estonian, and the compilation of academic dictionaries. Its activities also include language planning and development of practical language planning (www.eki.ee).

The **Legislative Drafting and Legal Language Division of the Legislative Policy Department of the Ministry of Justice**, whose tasks are to organise legal language planning, harmonise language use in draft legislation and systematise legal terminology; to translate Estonian legislation into English and to translate international agreements published in the State Gazette from English into Estonian; and to edit translations and to arrange for the translation of Estonian legislation into Russian. It also organises the publication of the journal *Õiguskeel* (Legal Language).

The **Estonian Language Foundation** (<http://www.eksa.ee/>) was established in 1993 by the Institute of Estonian Language. The aims of the foundation are to support and enhance the study of Estonian language and culture and to assist in comprehensive research and preservation of Estonian as the

⁵¹The list of institutions is based on the Development Strategy of the Estonian Language: EKAS 2004 = Eesti keele arendamise strateegia 2004–2010. Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium. Eesti Keelenõukogu. Tartu, 2004. http://www.eki.ee/keelenoukogu/strat_et.pdf, 30.06.200, p 21–22.

official language and a medium of identity. The majority of the books published by the foundation are linguistic books and dictionaries; the foundation has also published Estonian literature and translations of world classics.

The **Estonian Terminology Association** (Eter) is a non-profit organisation whose aims are to coordinate terminology work in cooperation with the Institute of the Estonian Language; to organise cooperation with the international network of terminological institutions; to further develop existing term collections; to render terminological services (term advice, evaluation, translation of specialised texts and dissemination of information about specialised language); to organize LSP training and the implementation of domestic and international terminological projects; and to publish terminological dictionaries and other terminology-related literature (<http://www.eter.ee/>).

The **National Examinations and Qualifications Centre** is an institution administered by the MER that prepares assignments for national examinations in Estonian and conducts the examinations. It also issues language proficiency certificates and maintains the register of them (<http://www.ekk.edu.ee/>).

The **Võru Institute** (<http://www.wi.ee/>) is a research and development institution administered by the Ministry of Culture, whose activities cover the historical area of Võrumaa (Võru and Põlva counties and parts of Tartumaa and Valgamaa) and help to record and develop the local dialect and culture.

The **Integration Foundation** (until 2007 the **Non-Estonians' Integration Foundation**) was established on 31 March 1998 by the government with the aim of initiating, supporting and coordinating projects targeted at the integration of Estonian society. It is implementing the Estonian Integration programme and developing an action plan for the period after its programme is completed (www.meis.ee).

The **Association of Estonian Language Teachers** (<http://www.eeselts.ee/www/v1/>) is a non-profit organisation that brings together teachers of Estonian language and literature as well as other people interested in the teaching of the mother tongue, practical language planning and literature. The aims of the association are to promote and value the study and teaching of Estonian language and literature; to raise the level of knowledge of the mother tongue among its members; and to improve their professional knowledge and skills.

The **Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language** provides training and counselling regarding the methodology of teaching Estonian as a second language; it also prepares and distributed printed matter and materials for its members. The association has centres in Kohtla-Järve, Tallinn and Tartu. (<http://www.eestikeelteisekeelena.ee/>).

The **Mother Tongue Society** functions as a non-profit organisation and is associated with the Estonian Academy of Sciences. The aims of the society are to contribute to the research and planning of the Estonian language and to generate public interest in Estonian. The Language Committee of the Mother Tongue Society provides recommendations and norms concerning standard language (<http://www.emakeeleselts.ee/>).

Annex 4. Unions and Associations of National Culture Societies active in Estonia

- International Association of National Cultural Societies *LÜÜRA* (31 societies);
- Estonian Union of National Minorities (20 societies);
- the Union of Slavonic Educational and Charitable Societies in Estonia (42 societies and 33 collectives);
- Umbrella organisation of national culture societies active in Ida-Virumaa – the Roundtable of National Culture Societies of Ida-Virumaa (18 societies);
- Association of Russian Cultural Societies in Estonia (30 societies);
- Congress of Estonian Ukrainians (10 societies);
- Association of Ukraine Organisations in Estonia (9 societies);

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