



Language Education Policy Profile

ESTONIA

***Language Education Policy in a Changing Society:
Shaping the Future***

Estonian Ministry of Education and Research

Language Policy Division, Strasbourg

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0 Foreword

0.1 Purposes and process of a Profile of Education language policy

The Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe offers to Member states assistance in carrying out analyses of their language education policies. “The aim is to offer member States the opportunity to undertake a ‘self-evaluation’ of their policy in a spirit of dialogue with Council of Europe experts, and with a view to focusing on possible future policy developments within the country”. It is emphasised that this assistance does not involve ‘external evaluation’. “It is a process of reflection by the authorities and members of civil society, and the Council of Europe experts have the function of acting as catalysts in this process”¹.

This activity is known as the Language Education Policy Profile, and the process culminates with an agreed joint report on the current situation and possible future developments in language education.

The process of preparing the Profile consists of three principal phases:

- A ‘Country Report’ that describes the current position and identifies issues which are under discussion or review. This report is prepared and presented by the authorities of the country in question
- An ‘Experts’ Report’ that presents a response to the ‘Country Report’ and other observations relating to meetings and discussions held during a week’s visit to the country by a small number of experts nominated by the Council of Europe from other Member states
- Finally, the ‘Language Education Policy Profile’ itself. This document is developed from the Experts’ Report and takes account of comments and feedback from those invited to a ‘round table’ discussion of the Experts’ Report. The document is agreed in its final form by the experts and the country authorities, and published by the Council of Europe and the country in question.

0.2 The Country Report

For Estonia, the process is coordinated by Tõnu Tender, *Adviser to the Language Policy Department of the Ministry of Education and Research, Chairman of the Committee which prepared the Country Report* and Made Kirtsi, *Head of the School Education Unit of the Centre for Educational Programmes, Archimedes Foundation, Co-ordinator of the Committee for the Country Report and contact with the Council of Europe*²

¹ Document DGIV/EDU/LANG (2002) 1 Rev. 3

² **Other members of the Committee which prepared the Country Report were:**

Birute Klaas – *Professor and Vice Rector, University of Tartu* ; Irene Käosaar – *Head of the Minorities Education Department, Ministry of Education and Research*; Kristi Mere – *Co-ordinator of the Department of Language, National Examinations and Qualifications Centre*; Järvi Lipasti – *Secretary for Cultural Affairs, Finnish Institute in Estonia*; Hele Pärn – *Adviser to the Language Inspectorate*; Maie Soll – *Adviser to the Language Policy Department, Ministry of Education and Research*; Anastassia Zabrodsckaja – *Research Fellow of the Department of Estonian Philology at Tallinn University*; Ülle Türk – *Lecturer, University of Tartu, Member of the Testing Team of the Estonian Defence Forces*; Jüri Valge – *Adviser, Language Policy Department of the Ministry of Education and Research*; Silvi Vare – *Senior Research Fellow, Institute of the Estonian Language*.

The Country Report, produced in September 2008, is a comprehensive document of 70 pages, including annexes. It is organized in three parts, addressing successively:

- the situation of languages in Estonia (background information, languages in society, languages in the education system, languages in informal education)
- the diversification of language education (multilingualism, implementation of European indicators and programmes)
- a series of topics for discussion

This report formed a significant part of the process, as the Profile attempts to build on, and strengthen, reforms that are already underway in Estonia. However, good information and research is still lacking in many areas relevant to language policy, and it was not possible to form a considered opinion on all of the issues raised in the Country Report. Nonetheless, there is a good range of census, survey and other official information available in Estonia, and an evidence-based approach is clearly possible in some areas. Thus, while the need for better data and research is emphasised at some points, this does not altogether inhibit the possibilities for well-grounded policy developments in others.

0.3 The Experts' Report

The Experts' Report, commenting on the Country Report, formed the second phase of the process and was the outcome of the following:

- a preparatory meeting in Tallinn in December 2007
- an analysis of the Country Report
- discussions and visits to institutions by four Council of Europe Experts and one expert appointed by the Estonian authorities (one week in October 2008)³
- documentation provided before and during the week visit by the Estonian authorities and others

The members of the Expert Group were: Daniel Coste, *Ecole normale supérieure Lettres et Sciences humaines, France* (co-rapporteur); Pádraig Ó Riagáin, *Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland* (co-rapporteur); Martin Ehala, *University of Tartu, Estonia*; Mihaela Singer, *University of Ploiesti and Institute of educational sciences, Romania*; Cecilia Serra, *University of Geneva, Switzerland*; Joseph Sheils, *Language Policy Division, Council of Europe*.

In providing comments, the Council of Europe Experts' Group bears in mind both the priorities of the country in question and the values, policies and views presented in documents of the Council, such as the *Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe*. In the view of the Council of Europe, language education policy should not be analysed and appraised

Reviewers of the Report were: Martin Ehala – *Professor, Tallinn University (at the time)*; Urmas Sutrop – *Director, Institute of the Estonian Language, Professor, University of Tartu*.

Report translated into English by Kristel Weidebaum, *Luisa Translating Bureau*.

³ The programme of the visit is in Appendix 1

in isolation. Language teaching and learning in a country needs to be understood holistically, to include teaching of the national language/mother tongue, of regional and minority languages, of the languages of recent immigrant groups, of foreign and second languages. Within this perspective, the promotion of plurilingualism, and more generally of plurilingual and intercultural education is deemed as an important aim.

The Expert's Report, by bringing together research evidence, data and information available in a broad comprehensive framework, offered an external point of view and its quantitative qualitative analysis sought to assist the internal debate. It was discussed at a Round Table held in Tallinn on June 3, 2009, in which different stakeholders took part.

The present document – referred to as the 'Profile' – emerged from the whole process as described above.

0.4 The Profile

Main themes

There are some recurring themes in the Profile document which cut across specific issues identified in the Country Report, and in subsequent meetings and discussions. These underlying themes include the following:

- *Restoration and integration*: in the period of transition and re-structuring which Estonia has experienced since the beginning of the 1990s, the main objective of language policy has concerned the legitimate desire to restore the state language to its full capacity in all the areas of social use, having due regard for its linguistic norms and rules while, on the other hand, integrating of populations which settled in Estonia after the Second World war, whose national status varies as well as their mastery and effective use of the state language. This question has obviously to be considered against the wider and more complex linguistic and ethnolinguistic scene of Estonia in its historical and regional, as well as socio-economic and demographic dimensions. (Chapter One).
- *Language as subject and/or medium of instruction*: issues related to language education policy and to school systems concentrate often on the importance of the language(s) of schooling when it comes to learning and academic success. The main language (or main languages) of school instruction and of communication within the school need(s) to be taken in consideration not only as a subject of its own and one of the components of the curriculum, but also as a medium of knowledge building and classroom interaction for other subjects. For learners whose first language is not the main language of schooling, learning that language "for itself" is a necessity but might not be sufficient to ensure success if its wide and varied uses in the school context, across the curriculum, are not fully taken into consideration. In so far as the learning of Estonian as a second language is a requisite for full integration in Estonian society⁴, one has to keep in mind its twofold aspects as language of schooling and as a school subject. (Chapter Two).
- *Issues specific to individual language sectors and issues cutting across language sectors*: as is often the case and as appears clearly in the Country Report, some issues refer to a specific language, for instance Estonian or English, or a group of languages, for instance

⁴ Subsequent chapters of this Report (especially Chapter 2) as well as the Country Report note the fact that for the residents in certain parts of Estonia, Estonian is of very limited use.

other foreign languages, while some other issues prove to be transversal to all language sectors, such as teacher training, assessment or school management. Chapters Two and Three address mainly individual language sectors, but touch as well on some of the transversal questions, which are more directly taken up in Chapter Four.

Structure of the document

- Chapter 1 outlines the key contextual factors shaping language education in Estonia and tries to identify what is distinctive about language education policy in Estonia.
- Chapters 2 and 3 then seek to identify the main strengths of Estonian language education policies (sector by sector) together with the challenges and problems faced within each sector.
- Chapter 4 uses the analysis in the preceding chapters to discuss policy priorities for future development. The suggestions draw on promising initiatives described in the Country Report, or in later discussions. The Chapter also looks at some cross-sectoral issues and discusses the possibilities of moving towards a more integrated approach.

1 The Policy Context

1.1 Introduction

The re-establishment of Estonian independence in 1991 led to fundamental changes in both internal and external relationships. Internally, the legal restoration of the nation-state had important consequences for the status of the languages spoken within the state, largely because of the restoration of Estonian as the official language, and the related issue of citizenship⁵, but also because of reforms in the fields of education and public administration. But there were other influences impinging on language policy. The rapid growth of the Estonian economy since 1991 was accompanied by a widening of external economic, political, demographic and cultural contacts as Estonia developed its relationships with Europe and the world.

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly outline the context within which language education policy operates. The chapter is based on official documents and statistics, plus relevant research studies. Full details of these sources will be found in the footnotes.

1.2 The Political and Legal Context⁶

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Estonia stipulates that the official language of Estonia is Estonian. The state guarantees everyone's right to receive instruction in Estonian (§37(4)), to address state agencies, local governments and their officials in Estonian, and to receive responses in Estonian (§51(1)). The official language of state agencies and local governments is Estonian (§52(1))⁷.

The Constitution also guarantees individuals belonging to ethnic minority groups the right to education in their native language; to establish cultural and educational institutions, and to communicate and conduct affairs using a minority language in local government institutions in localities where a majority of the residents of the region speak that language as a native tongue⁸.

1.2.1 Language Laws

The Language Act of the Estonian Republic, adopted in 1995, defines the domains in which the use of Estonian is obligatory. It also sets out the conditions and extent of the use of the languages of national minorities in state agencies and local governments⁹. In areas where at least half of the population belongs to a national minority group, residents have the right to receive information in

⁵ Pettai, V. and K. Hallik (2002) 'Understanding Processes of Ethnic Control: Segmentation, Dependency and Cooptation in Post-communist Estonia', *Nations and Nationalism*, 8 (2): 505–29.

⁶ This section draws on Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008) *Language Education Policy Profile: Country Report: Estonia*, (The Country Report) and the useful summary provided in Vetik, R. (2002) 'The Cultural and Social makeup of Estonia' in Kolstø, P. (ed.) *National Integration and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Societies: The Cases of Estonia and Moldova*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 71-103.

⁷ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008) *Language Education Policy Profile: Country Report: Estonia*, 14.

⁸ Vetik, R. (2002) op. cit. 85. According to the National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act (1993, §1) "national minorities are citizens of Estonia (ethnic groups consisting of Estonian citizens) who reside on the territory of Estonia". Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008) *Language Education Policy Profile: Country Report: Estonia*, 16.

⁹ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008) op. cit. 14.

that minority language (in addition to Estonian) from the local government and state agencies based in that area.

1.2.2 Citizenship Laws

According to the 1992 Citizenship Act persons residing in Estonia, who held Estonian citizenship before June 16, 1940, and their descendants (approximately 900,000 persons), automatically became citizens of post-Soviet Estonia. The current requirements for citizenship for other residents include: long-term residence (five years) for people settled in Estonia after 1992; knowledge of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia and the Citizenship Act; and knowledge of the Estonian language¹⁰. The citizenship examination in the Estonian language is not obligatory for applicants under 15 years of age, or for a person who has completed basic education, secondary education or higher education in the Estonian language.

1.2.3 Education Laws

The organisation and principles of the education system are set out in the Republic of Estonia Education Act and in a number of related legal documents.

In the Estonian educational system, elementary, basic, upper-secondary and vocational secondary education have been merged into one comprehensive – but at the same time differentiated – school system. The different levels of education are basic education (9 years, the first level of education); secondary education (3 years, with different study options: upper secondary general school; upper secondary school with vocational training; vocational education institution) and higher education (professional higher education, university college, university).

Pre-school education (up to 7 years of age) is not compulsory but local governments must provide all their resident children between 1 and 7 years of age the opportunity to attend child care institutions in their catchment areas if this is requested by their parents.

Under the Law on Adult Education of 1993, a set of legal guarantees provide access for the adult population to further education and training.

The requirement for pre-schools, basic and secondary education standards of education are established by the National Curriculum. The National Curriculum defines general and teaching goals in terms of competencies that should be the outcome of schooling. It provides a list of obligatory subject matters, their duration and programmes of study; the possibilities and conditions for the choice of the subjects, as well as guidelines for external and internal assessment and for graduation. The National curriculum is established by the Government of the Republic¹¹.

The language of instruction in public educational institutions is to be primarily the national language, Estonian, but any language may be used as the language of instruction, provided that "the teaching of Estonian is guaranteed according to conditions specified in legislation concerning the respective level of education" (CR, 27). The choice of language is delegated to the owner of the educational institution or to the educational establishment. In municipal schools, the

¹⁰ Budryte, D. (2005) *Taming Nationalism: Political Community Building in the Post-Soviet Baltic States*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 71-73.

¹¹ Estonia (1999) *Report Submitted by Estonia Pursuant to Article 25, Paragraph 1 of The Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, 22 December 1999*. (Document ACFC/SR(1999)016). Strasbourg: Council of Europe, 53.

local government authority determines which language should be used in schools, while in state schools the decision is made by the Ministry of Education.

1.2.4 International Relations

Integration with Europe has been a priority in Estonia since the restoration of independence¹². As early as 1993, Estonia became a member of the Council of Europe. Subsequently, Estonia joined many international organizations – e.g. United Nations, Council of the Baltic Sea States, European Union, and OSCE - who all, as a consequence of its membership, became involved in Estonian affairs to a greater or lesser extent. Estonia was invited by the EU to begin accession negotiations in 1997, and became a member in 2004. Most trade takes place with other EU member states, especially with Finland, Sweden and Germany.

Membership of these bodies has influenced language policy in two respects. First, it created a debate between Estonia, as an individual member-state, and these international bodies regarding the application of international norms (themselves established by multilateral treaties) in domestic policies. Secondly, a good deal of the work relating to language attestation, language teaching and language for citizenship has been undertaken with substantial international assistance, including assistance from the UN Development Programme and from the Phare programme associated with entry into the EU¹³.

1.3 The Economic and Socio-demographic Context

1.3.1 Ethno-demographic trends

According to Statistics Estonia, the population of Estonia in 2007 was 1,342,409. The ethnic composition was Estonian (68.6%), Russian (25.6%), Ukrainian (2.1%), Belarusian (1.2%), Finnish (0.8%) and others (4.2%).

The population has declined since 1989, due to emigration and low birth rates, with greater losses among the non-Estonian ethnic groups than ethnic Estonians¹⁴. Further decreases are predicted for the period up to 2025¹⁵. It is estimated that there will be only 27,000 persons in the 16-18 age group in 2016¹⁶, compared to 65,000 in 2005. Meanwhile, the percentage of ethnic Estonians among younger age-groups is increasing¹⁷.

The predicted decline in the school-going population will have widespread effects on all parts of the education system and on all aspects of language education policy in the schools. Among the issues are reductions in the number of teachers and schools, and consequential changes in the role and scale of initial and in-service training of teachers¹⁸.

¹² Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008) op. cit. 52.

¹³ Hogan-Brun G., U. Ozolins, M. Ramoniene & M. Rannut. (2007) 'Language Politics and Practices in the Baltic States', *Current Issues in Language Planning* . Vol. 8, no. 4. See also Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008) op. cit. 52-56.

¹⁴ Estonian Cooperation Assembly. (2008) *Estonian Human Development Report 2007*. Eesti Ekspressi Kirjastuse AS:Tallinn. p.48.

¹⁵ Eurostat News Release, 8 April 2005 'Population projections 2004-2050', Brussels.

¹⁶ OECD (2007) *Reviews of Tertiary Education: Estonia*, p.12.

¹⁷ Estonian Cooperation Assembly. (2008) op. cit. p.46.

¹⁸ OECD (2001) *Reviews of National Policies for Education: Estonia*, p.35.

1.3.2 The Economy and Labour market

The period following the restoration of independence witnessed dramatic changes in the Estonian labour market¹⁹. The size of the labour force declined. The primary sector (agriculture, fishing, forestry) effectively collapsed, the industrial sector also contracted, while the services sector remained relatively stable.

Some significant ethnic differences have emerged in the national labour market. ‘The employment structure and income level of non-Estonians ...is characterised by a higher unemployment rate and job insecurity (compared to Estonians), a (greater) tendency to belong to the ranks of blue collar rather than white collar workers and a larger discrepancy between their level of education and the requirements of their position. These differences between non-Estonians and ethnic Estonians in the labour market have not decreased, but rather grown in recent years’.²⁰

There is a view among researchers that access of employees from ethnic minorities to white collar positions is significantly inhibited by their lack of Estonian language skills²¹. Nonetheless, it has also been noted that simply belonging to an ethnic minority has an adverse effect on the probability of a person being employed in an executive position or as a top specialist in the public sector, even when other factors, such as language skills and citizenship status, are taken into account’²².

1.3.3 Regional Differences and Spatial interaction

The ethnic minorities in Estonia have historically always lived as relatively compact and separate communities²³. The regional distribution of Estonians and non-Estonians is uneven: the majority of non-Estonians are concentrated in Tallinn, where they comprise nearly 50% of the population and in the towns of north-east of Estonia, where Russian speakers comprise about 98% of the population of Sillamäe, 94% of the population of Narva, and 75% of the population of Jõhvi and Kohtla-Järve. At the same time, in all other regions including Central, Southern and Western Estonia, ethnic Estonians comprise the vast majority of the population²⁴. Recent (2007) surveys have shown that everyday contacts with other ethnic groups²⁵ are minimal for two thirds of ethnic Estonians and one third of Estonian Russians. Even in Tallinn, nearly half of the ethnic Estonian population and over a third of the Estonian Russians report their contacts with the other ethnic group to be either nonexistent or minimal. While the frequency of communication with the other group is somewhat higher among the younger age groups of Russian language speaking residents of Tallinn, the percentage is correspondingly lower among young ethnic Estonians.

¹⁹ OECD (2007) op. cit. p. 33.

²⁰ Estonian Cooperation Assembly. (2008) op. cit. p. 53.

²¹ *ibid.*, p.49.

²² *ibid.*, p. 49.

²³ UNDP (1998) *Estonian Human Development Report 1998*, Tallinn, p. 49.

²⁴ Jakobson V. (2002). Role of the Estonian Russian-language Media in the Integration of the Russian-speaking minority into Estonian society <<http://acta.uta.fi/haekokoversio.php?id=6605>> (Accessed 9 November 2009)

²⁵ Estonian Cooperation Assembly. (2008) op. cit. p. 73-4.

1.4 The Ethno-linguistic Context

A number of regular surveys have been conducted in Estonia which, together with the 2000 Census of Population, provide information on the language repertoire of Estonian society, the degree to which individual languages are used in society, and public attitudes regarding the role of languages in society and aspects of the state's language policy. Despite methodological problems and limitations, the data are robust enough to form a preliminary and general picture.

1.4.1 Ethnicity and Citizenship

The relationship between ethnic status and citizenship is complex. Since independence there have been two parallel developments affecting the relations between the majority and the minorities: the gradual increase in the ratio of ethnic Estonians (up to 70%) on the one hand, and the increase in the percentage of non-Estonians among Estonian citizens to nearly a fifth of the citizenry on the other hand.

In 2007, the non-Estonians residing in the Republic of Estonia could be divided into three large groups: citizens of the Republic of Estonia (ca 218,000 or half of the non-Estonians), citizens of the Russian Federation, CIS member states and other countries (ca 100,000) and persons with undetermined citizenship (ca 115,000).

1.4.2 Linguistic Repertoire of Estonian Society

First languages (i.e. Mother tongue).

While the first language question in the 2000 Census gave primacy to the idea of 'mother tongue', questions have been raised about the meaning of the census statistic²⁶. Nonetheless, survey evidence²⁷ would suggest that the census percentages actually correspond very closely to present language abilities within the population. According to the 2000 Census, 67.3% of the population claimed Estonian as their mother tongue, 29.7% claimed Russian, and no other language is claimed by more than 1%, although a large number of mother tongue languages were recorded. There is a close relationship between ethnic identification and mother tongue affiliation, although as the Country Report notes (p. 17-18), minorities with small numbers are less likely to claim their ethnic group language as their mother tongue, and are more likely to claim Russian rather than Estonian.

There is little evidence of language shift in the surveys²⁸. The only large-scale national survey which recorded respondents who claimed to speak two mother tongues was the Adult Education Survey conducted in 2007²⁹. In that survey, 2.5% of the sample claimed both Estonian and Russian as their mother tongue.

While there is a close relationship between claimed mother tongue and claimed ethnic affiliation, the relationship between language and citizenship is less exact – although in the 2000 Census

²⁶ Silver, B. (2001) *Nationality and Language in the New Baltic Censuses*. Report prepared for the National Council of Eurasian and East European Research (NCEEER), Washington.

²⁷ Kolstø, P. (ed.) *National Integration and Violent Conflict in Post-Soviet Societies: The Cases of Estonia and Moldova*. New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 62-61.

²⁸ Kolstø, P. (ed.) op. cit., see also Rose, R. (2005) *New Baltic Barometer VI: A Post-enlargement Survey*. Centre for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, 37.

²⁹ Statistical Office of Estonia website.

83% of Estonian citizens claimed Estonian as their mother tongue, some 15% claimed Russian and 1% claimed other languages³⁰.

Second/ Third Languages

While the evidence suggests that the pattern of mother tongue/first language acquisition remains stable, there is evidence of considerable change in the pattern of second (or third) language acquisition by the Estonian population as a whole.

Estonian as a Second Language

The Labour Force Surveys³¹ shows evidence of an increase in the percentages of the non-Estonian population who claim to be able to speak Estonian. In these eleven surveys, the claimed ability levels of non-Estonians aged between 15 and 74 years to speak Estonian increased from 34% in 1997 to 40% in 2007.

The data presented in the most recent survey published by the Integration Foundation in 2008 indicates that in 2008 about 25% of Estonian Russians claimed to be able to communicate 'freely in all situations' in Estonian and a further 33% claimed to be able to 'speak, but make mistakes'. There appears to have been a significant improvement in recent years. There is a marked relationship between citizenship status and Estonian language proficiency. In 2005, 40% of respondents who were Estonian Russians *and* Estonian citizens claimed to be able to communicate 'well' in Estonian. The corresponding figures for those who were Russian citizens or Stateless were 0% and 5% respectively. The surveys also noted a difference between age-groups³². In 2005, between 63% and 72% of Estonian Russians under 30 years claimed to be able to communicate 'well' or 'moderately well' in Estonian. These percentages compare with 38-41% for those over thirty years and under sixty years.

*Foreign Languages*³³

In the Estonian Labour Force Surveys, the ability levels of Ethnic Estonians aged between 15 and 74 years to speak Russian declined slowly over the period. In 1997, some 36% claimed to be able to speak Russian at the level of everyday communication. In 2007, the corresponding figure was 30%. (However, there is also evidence that the proportions studying Russian as a foreign language in schools has increased over the past ten years, following a period of rapid decline in the 1990s³⁴.)

³⁰ Statistical Office of Estonia. (2001) *Census of Population 2000, Vol. II Citizenship, Nationality, Mother Tongue and Command of Foreign Languages*. p.15.

³¹ Statistical Office of Estonia Web-site. (Table ML133, Accessed 12 Jan. 2009) http://pub.stat.ee/px-web.2001/I_Databas/Social_life/09Labour_market/02Education/02Educational_level/02Educational_level.asp. The Estonian Labour Force Surveys (1997-2007) have been the largest and most frequent of the available national surveys, and also the most consistent in terms of the wording of the language question. (Note: the question in these surveys asked if the respondent could speak Russian (or Estonian) 'at the level of everyday communication')

³² Proos, I. (2006) 'Language Proficiency of Estonian Russians and Their Attitude Toward Gymnasium Reform of 2007', in Pavelson M. et al., *Integration of Estonian Society: Monitoring 2005*. Tallinn: Integration Foundation.. Table 1.

³³ The language acts in Estonia define any language other than Estonian as a 'foreign language', and this distinction between Estonian and all other languages is observed throughout this Profile. However, although the legal distinction is clear, it is also clear that the concept of 'foreign languages', so defined, has to serve as a collective term for a wide and varied array of sociolinguistic contexts that differ considerably from each other. The Profile, therefore, while respecting the legal dispensations also has to respect the sociolinguistic realities as they obtain the Estonia.

³⁴ Ministry of Education and Research (2009) *Estonian Foreign Languages Strategy 2009-2015*. Figure 1.

According to the 2000 Census, English (25,2%) is clearly the third most popular language, followed by German (10,2%) and Finnish (10,1%). The percentages are somewhat higher among ethnic Estonians, and somewhat lower among Estonian Russians, although moving in the same direction.

1.4.3 Languages used in Society

Languages used in the Home

According to the Estonian Labour Force Surveys (1997-2007) the most frequently used languages in Estonian homes are Estonian 65.4%, Russian 33.8% and other languages 0.8%³⁵. When divided by ethnic group, the surveys show that 98% of Ethnic Estonians spoke Estonian most frequently, with 2% speaking Russian. Among Estonian Russians and other ethnic groups, 93% spoke Russian most frequently, 4% spoke Estonian and 3% spoke other languages. Only very small proportions used a second language in the home. The pattern appears quite stable and there is little evidence of change over the eleven years covered by the surveys.

Languages used in the Workplace

The 2000 report of the Integration Foundation indicates that about half (53% and 47% respectively) of both ethnic Estonians and Estonian Russians used only their own languages in conversation with work colleagues and the exchanges that involve both languages are also skewed towards the languages of the dominant group in the particular context.

Thus, while a majority (i.e. 55-61%) of both major linguistic groups considered that both Estonian and Russian were required in the work domain, significant minorities disagreed. Some 45% of Ethnic Estonians did not feel that a knowledge of Russian was required, and 39% of Estonian Russians did not feel that a knowledge of Estonian was required in the work domain.

*Language and Media*³⁶

The media spheres of ethnic Estonians and Estonian Russians differ to a significant degree. Some 75 % of Estonian Russians are completely or mostly unfamiliar with Estonian language media, while the percentage of ethnic Estonians who never or almost never follow Russian language media produced in Estonia or Russian media is 93%.

According to the *Estonian Human Development Report 2007*, ethnic Estonians are firmly oriented towards Estonian language media and follow Russian language channels rarely, if ever. Russian television channels are never viewed by 69 %.

But only a fifth of Estonian Russians follow Estonian media (Estonian language newspapers, radio programs, internet portals) regularly. The media sphere of Estonian Russians is dominated by Russian television channels, and Russian language television programs produced in Estonia are not popular.

Languages used in the General Community Domain

According to the *Estonian Human Development Report 2007*, in its 2007 survey, 30% of ethnic Estonians and 40% of Estonian Russians used only their native language in communication.

³⁵ Language data from the Estonian Labour Force Surveys was provided by Ülle Pettai, Population and Social Statistics Department, Statistics Estonia.

³⁶ Estonian Cooperation Assembly. (2008) op. cit. p. 78.

These are somewhat lower ratios than those recorded for the work domain in 2000, but this may simply reflect the less formal nature of general conversation. Of the ethnic Estonian respondents 5% used only Russian in communicating with other ethnicities and 10% of respondents of other ethnic groups used only Estonian when communicating with ethnic Estonians.

Currently, the most common option was to use a strategy of switching between Estonian and Russian languages (53% of ethnic Estonians and 43% of respondent of other ethnic groups). Unfortunately, the published account gives no further information about the nature of this code-switching. A third language is sometimes used by 10% of ethnic Estonians, and 5% of Estonian Russians. The 2007 survey also reported that a total of 57% of all respondents who had communicated with people of other ethnic groups during one week before the poll had used the option of switching between languages when communicating.

The language use of different age groups varies widely: young ethnic Estonians are more inclined to use only Estonian when communicating with Estonian Russians, while younger Estonian Russians are less inclined to use only Russian. However, while younger Estonian Russians are thereby more inclined to code-switch, younger Ethnic Estonians are less so inclined.

1.4.4 Public Attitudes to Languages and Related Policies

Questions asking about the value of languages as a form of economic capital have been a recurring feature of surveys, and generally they have produced similar results. The 2008 survey³⁷ asked – “What language should your children /grandchildren be able to speak?” Estonians chose English (91%), Russian (70%), German (27%) and Finish (20%). Russian speakers chose English (85%), Estonian (84%), German (17%) and Finnish (7%).

However, while the high evaluation of Estonian by Estonian Russian respondents is clear and emphatic, the *Estonian Human Development Report 2007* also notes that 50% of the population believes that it is possible to find a good job in Estonia without being proficient in the national language. This belief has not diminished over time, but rather has become more widespread³⁸.

This ambivalence may explain why public attitudes towards the recent education reforms in Russian-medium schools is, at best guarded within the Russian-speaking population. The Integration monitoring explored this issue in its 2005 survey, and a majority, albeit a narrow one, of Estonian Russians are opposed to these reforms, largely because of the threat that they perceive to group identity maintenance. Nearly two thirds of Estonian Russians would prefer to see Russian medium education maintained, while increasing the number of hours given to the teaching of Estonian. Only about one third are in favour of a bilingual type programme.

The most recent (2008) survey³⁹ confirms this pattern. In this sample, 65% would prefer Russian-medium teaching, albeit with an enhanced role for teaching Estonian. Of the 30% who would prefer some form of Estonian medium teaching for their children, more than half would like to see a meaningful Russian language and culture component included.

Ethnic Estonians, on the other hand, appear very satisfied with the reforms.

³⁷ This survey can be accessed on the website of the Integration Foundation (www.meis.ee).

³⁸ Estonian Cooperation Assembly (2008) op. cit. p. 66.

³⁹ This survey can be accessed on the website of the Integration Foundation (www.meis.ee).

1.5 Language Policy Priorities

The formal planning of language policy has a long history in Estonia. In the 1918-1940 period, Estonian had the status of official language. In the 1940-1989 period, as a result of Soviet annexation, Estonian again became a local subordinate language, and the Russian language became more important. The re-establishment of Estonian independence in 1991 led to fundamental changes again.

Two principles appear to dominate the state's current approach to language issues. These are the principles of Restoration and Integration. These principles are clearly visible in a number of major policy documents published in the past ten years – *Language Training Strategy for the Non-Estonian-Speaking Population (1998)*, *The Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (2004–2010)*, *The National Integration Plan 2008–2013*, and the *Foreign Language Strategy of Estonia 2009-2015*.

(a) *Language Training Strategy for the Non-Estonian-Speaking Population (1998)*,

This Strategy sets the framework and aims of teaching Estonian to non-Estonians⁴⁰. It is a long-term action plan designed to ensure integration and stability in Estonian society. It seeks to ensure comprehensive fulfilment of the functions of the Estonian language in all fields, as well as the functioning of other languages used in Estonian society. Thus it aims to facilitate the learning of Estonian by non-Estonian-speakers in order to stimulate Estonian-language communication and to eliminate language barriers, as well as efficient foreign language teaching planning in order to stimulate readiness for communication in a foreign language and integration into Europe. It sees cultural awareness and attachment of value to multilingualism in society as preconditions for fulfilling the integration function of the Estonian language, and supports the population belonging to ethnic minorities in exercising their right to preserve their culture and national identity⁴¹:

(b) *Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004-2010*

The objective of this strategy document is to create conditions that will enable the Estonian language to function as the main means of communication in developing a contemporary high-technological and open multicultural society on Estonian territory.

The strategy proceeds from the needs of developing the Estonian language as the mother tongue of the Estonians and it does not deal directly with the language problems of the non-Estonian population in Estonia. (Readers are referred to the 'Language Teaching Strategy of the Non-Estonian Population and the State Integration Programme'). Nonetheless, it does specify some objectives for non-Estonian Medium schools.

(a) to ensure that students of non-Estonian-medium basic schools will acquire the Estonian language on the level B2 of the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, which will create the opportunities for studying at an upper secondary school that will undergo transition to Estonian-medium teaching in 2007 and to cope in Estonian society; and

(b) to ensure that all school-leavers of non-Estonian-medium upper secondary schools will know the Estonian language in accordance with the requirements set by the curriculum, which will

⁴⁰ Estonian Language Strategy Centre (1998) *Language Training Strategy for the Non-Estonian-Speaking Population*. Tallinn, 7.

⁴¹ *ibid.* 15.

enable them to continue their studies in Estonian, including the tertiary level and to work in the Estonian-language environment.

(c) National Integration Programme 2000⁴²

The Integration Programme reflects a view of integration as a two-way process. It envisions allowing minorities to retain their distinct identity, while increasing their participation in and loyalty to the Estonian State, mainly through the medium of Estonian language instruction; a common linguistic sphere is viewed as both a means to enhance inclusion of minorities, and to reduce inequalities or tensions that may exist. The Integration Programme has defined three main spheres for the integration of Estonia's Russian-speaking minority: linguistic-communicative, legal-political and socio-economic. In practice, however, only the linguistic-communicative sphere has been fully developed in the Integration Programme's action plans to date, and measures in the education and language sectors receive three-quarters of all funding allocated to Programme integration. The Integration Programme recognises the preservation of separate ethnic identities as one of the overarching principles of integration, and elaborates a number of measures in several spheres to enhance this principle.

(d) Estonian Foreign Languages Strategy 2009-2015

This strategy focuses on the learning of foreign languages by all Estonian residents regardless of their nationality. It argues that an "effective foreign language policy supports the foreign, defence, economic and culture policies of the state and helps to achieve the objectives set in other areas of international communication. Good foreign language skills and a willingness to communicate at the international level also help to boost Estonia's visibility and recognition of the country around the world"⁴³

The aims of the Estonian foreign languages strategy are⁴⁴:

- to increase motivation among people in Estonia to study different languages;
- to diversify the opportunities that are available to people to study foreign languages in terms of teaching methods, study locations and choice of languages;
- to improve the quality of language studies in both formal and non-formal education;
- to guarantee the availability of suitable study materials for different target groups;
- to guarantee high-quality training for language teachers and to improve the reputation of language teachers in society; and
- to create a modern and effective system for the recognition of language skills.

1.6 Conclusions

Language planning is, by definition, a forward looking exercise. Current thinking about demographic trends indicates that the recent decline in the population of Estonia is likely to

⁴² Open Society Institute. (2002). *Minority Protection in Estonia: An Assessment of the Integration Programme in Estonian Society 2000–2007*. Pp. 195-200.

⁴³ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2009) *Foreign Language Strategy of Estonia 2009-2015*

⁴⁴ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2009), op. cit.

continue. Economic prospects are also unclear because of the present worldwide economic crisis, but it can be supposed that the incorporation of Estonia in global communication and economic networks will continue.

Internally, the available statistics would suggest that the two principal language communities in Estonia live somewhat separate lives, and the evidence of stability in the pattern of mother tongue acquisition is more compelling than the evidence of change. Thus for the foreseeable future the overwhelming majority of children will learn only their native languages in the home, and will begin their school careers speaking only that language. Put in other terms, these data suggest that in the short to medium-term at least, some about 20-30% of children coming into the school system will not be fluent in the state language.

While there is evidence of a slow decline in the proportions of the ethnic Estonian population who can speak Russian, there is also evidence of a modest, but consistent, increase in the proportion of Estonian Russian population who can speak Estonian. The younger generation in each case appear to leading the process of change, and this will undoubtedly continue. Although learning languages other than Estonian and Russian has become very popular, especially with regard to English, there is no evidence in official or survey statistics that English is displacing Estonian or Russian as the normal language of the home or community in Estonia, although clearly it may have become established a small number of particular work contexts.

The policy documents reviewed above indicate, when taken as a whole, a desire to find the most appropriate balance between the principles of restoration and integration.

2 Languages as media of instruction and languages as school subjects in Schools of General Education

2.1 Introduction and Overview

Estonian schools are primarily classified in terms of the language of instruction. The choice of language as the medium of instruction both reflects and largely determines the ethno-linguistic character of student intake, and also has a considerable influence on achievement levels in the state language and the choice of languages chosen as school subjects.

In this chapter the main features of the present situation, and recent past, are outlined. Further discussion of the issues raised will be found in Chapter Four, where some observations and suggestions for future policy development are offered.

Languages of instruction

The language of instruction is defined in the Education Act (§9(2)) as the language in which at least 60% of the teaching on the curriculum is taught. The available languages of instruction in basic schools are Estonian, Russian, English and Finnish. In 2000 the Government approved a regulation pursuant to which at least 60% of studies at the upper secondary school level in all municipal and state schools in Estonia must be conducted in Estonian by 2011. In the terms of the Education Act, all upper secondary schools will become part of the Estonian-medium sector from that date.

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. Overall, just 20% of the total pupil population in the general education sector received their education through the medium of Russian in 2007⁴⁵. A few schools (1%) use English or Finnish as the language of instruction.

The broad classification into Estonian and Russian medium schools does not reflect the range of school programmes which determine the language of instruction. As a number of studies have shown⁴⁶, there is actually a considerable range of school programmes in terms of the weight accorded to Estonian or Russian-medium instruction. These are discussed in more detail later.

In addition, it is noted that a significant number of pupils transfer to the vocational sector at the end of basic School. These are mentioned here as they are in the age-groups that correspond to those in upper secondary in general education. According to figures supplied by Statistics Estonia, there are some 18,000 pupils in this category, 13,000 of whom are in Estonian medium education and 5,000 in Russian medium schools/streams. However, for convenience, and because very little data is available on this element of vocational education, discussion of this sector is deferred until the following chapter.

⁴⁵ Data obtained from Statistics Estonia web-site (www.stat.ee).

⁴⁶ Asser H. et al. (2002) 'From Monolingual to Bilingual Russian Schools in Estonia 1993-2000', in Lauristin M. & M. Heidmets (eds). *The Challenge of the Russian Minority*. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 237-254.
Pavelson M. & T. Vihalemm (2002) 'The Russian Child in the Estonian Language School' in Lauristin M. & M. Heidmets (eds). *The Challenge of the Russian Minority*. Tartu: Tartu University Press, 265-278.

Languages as school subjects

In schools with Estonian as the language of instruction, Estonian is learned as the mother tongue or language of instruction from Grade 1 until the end of upper secondary school. In these schools, English is mostly chosen as the first foreign language, with German, French and Russian a long way behind in popularity. However, Russian is typically chosen as the second foreign language, with all other languages someway behind.

In educational institutions 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. 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 a second language. Typically English is then learned as a first foreign language, again with other languages lagging way behind.

Composite figures given in the *Foreign Language Strategy* indicates clearly the respective positions of English and Russian and the definite overall pattern: English as language A (student's first choice of foreign language), Russian as language B (student's second choice)⁴⁷, both a long way ahead of German, French and other foreign languages.

Table 1: First and Second Choice foreign languages studied in daily classes in general education schools in Estonia in the 2008-2009 academic year

Foreign language	First(A) or Second (B) Choice Language (Nos.)		TOTAL	First(A) or Second (B) Choice Language (as % of total)	
	A	B		A	B
English	88,853	26,851	116,554	70.9	29.9
Russian	1182	52,437	55,581	0.9	58.3
Estonian sec. lang.	29,378	68	29,447	23.4	0.1
German	4127	9973	22,828	3.3	11.1
French	1784	516	4445	1.4	0.6

2.2 Estonian

The majority (81%) of pupils attend and study in Estonian medium schools. For most of these pupils, Estonian is the language of their homes, as well as their schools. Estonian is their first language. Where Estonian is not the mother tongue of students, a different set of education issues arise.

⁴⁷ This is a shortened version of the table which appears in Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2009) *Foreign Language Strategy of Estonia 2009-2011*. Pp14-15

2.2.1 Estonian as a First language in Estonian-medium Schools

There are different views concerning the level of proficiency of students of Estonian-medium schools in the state language. On the one hand, the average mark at the end of basic school (CR, table 8, p. 33) seems satisfactory, although less so at the end of upper-secondary school. On the other hand, as a national group, Estonian students have achieved a high ranking in PISA 2006, in science, mathematics and reading, compared to other countries (for instance, above Lithuania and Latvia) and mastery of the language of schooling plays a definite role in this results, not only as far as the specific reading ranking is concerned. Moreover, for PISA and in the three areas of this international assessment, students of Estonian-medium schools score better than students of Russian-medium schools, who themselves register better results than students from Russia.

It seems to be the case that the Estonian school system is well placed in the international context, at least with regards to modes of assessment such as PISA. This would mean that the level reached in Estonian as a first language is not an impediment for learning other subjects nor for reading, understanding and selecting relevant information from texts.

On the other hand, the authors of *The Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (2004-2010)* take a different view. The report finds that “The standard language and particularly its use have been adversely affected both by immigration of non-Estonian speakers and emigration of Estonians, as well as by the absolute decrease in the number of native speakers of Estonian” The negative impact of a number of other ‘background’ factors is also cited. These include external factors such as ‘global mass culture and media environment, including the Internet’, as well as internal factors such as the ‘spread of careless attitudes towards language in society, deteriorating and even inadequate general literacy among school leavers, accompanied by inadequate knowledge of specialized language among university graduates’. Notwithstanding the performance of Estonian students in international assessments, the Strategy argues that ‘The literacy of Estonian-medium general educational school leavers is in need of improvement’ and various normative requirements for a correct use of what has been defined as ‘standard Estonian’ are proposed.

2.2.2 Estonian as a Second language in Estonian-medium Schools

According to the Country Report⁴⁸, 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. However, Vihalemm (2002) feels that the figure could be higher, as ‘the educational system keeps no special record of pupils studying in schools with the language of instruction being different to that used in pupils’ families’⁴⁹. (The most recent Integration Foundation Monitoring survey⁵⁰ would suggest that as much as 21% of Russophones are, or were, in Estonian-medium schools.)

The survey in 2008⁵¹ would suggest that the percentage of the Russian-speaking population who would prefer all-Estonian education for their children to be about 11%. Research has shown that parents who send children to Estonian medium schools are likely to come from average or above

⁴⁸ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008), op. cit. 29.

⁴⁹ Pavelson M. & T. Vihalemm (2002) op. cit. 265.

⁵⁰ Eesti ühiskonna integratsiooni monitooring 2008, p. 57.

⁵¹ This survey can be accessed on the website of the Integration Foundation (www.meis.ee).

average socioeconomic backgrounds⁵². This is partly a reflection of this class' aspiration for university education for their children, but it also reflects the fact that Russian-speaking children attending Estonian-medium schools require additional (and expensive) support in the form of private tuition, etc. These parents are also more likely to be able to speak Estonian themselves. However, one research team pointed out that there was also a trend for lower socio-economic families in Tallinn to send their children to these schools, particularly if their children are able to enter the schools at first-grade⁵³.

Once in the Estonian school, the Russian-speaking pupil is likely to find him/herself in one of three types of class⁵⁴:

- (a) An Estonian class with a few Russian-speaking pupils
- (b) An Estonian class with 33-50% of Russian-speaking pupils
- (c) An experimental class entirely of Russian-speaking pupils, in an otherwise Estonian school.

These are clearly widely varying situations and there is little evaluative research of a quantitative nature. A comprehensive and representative study is urgently needed. This should also analyse, inter alia, inter-school and inter-class variation in school entry policies and in pupils' academic and linguistic performance.

2.2.3 Estonian as a Second language in Russian-Medium Schools

In 1990/91, about 36% of pupils in the sector attended Russian-medium schools. By 2000/1, this proportion had declined to 28% and it is currently just under 20%. As already noted (Chapter One), some 29.7% of the total population in the 2000 census claimed Russian as their mother tongue. Currently (2007), official estimates suggest that 25.6 % of the population are Russian-speaking, but estimates for the school-going population are not available, but it would appear that the vast majority of Russian-speaking children attend Russian-medium schools. In total, this school sector contains some 31,000 pupils, who are predominantly Russian-speaking. Census and survey evidence would suggest that less than 1% of pupils whose mother tongue is neither Russian nor Estonian come into these schools.

In the school-year 2006/7⁵⁵, there were 92 schools, 71 of which teach entirely through the medium of Russian, and 21 of which are joint Estonian/Russian schools (i.e. with separate streams being taught through each language). In total some 1,500 classes were being taught through the medium of Russian. They are mainly situated in and around the capital (Tallinn) and in north-eastern Estonia.

Some schools with Russian as the language of instruction have joined language immersion programmes. There are two types of immersion – early and late immersion⁵⁶. The website of the

⁵² Kemppainen R. & S. E Ferrin (2002) 'Parental Choice and Language-of-Instruction Policies and Practices in Estonia', *Education and Urban Society*, 35: 86. See also Pavelson, M., & Jedomskihh, J. (1998). Muulased Eesti koolis kui pedagoogiline probleem [Aliens in Estonian schools as a pedagogical problem]. In M. Lauristin, S. Vare, T. Pedast Saar, & M. Pavelson (Eds.), *Mitmekultuuriline Eesti: Väljakutse haridusele. Projekti mitte-eesti noorte integratsioon Eesti ühiskonnas väljaanne* [Multicultural Estonia: A challenge for education. Project report on the integration of non-Estonian youth in Estonian society] (VERA II, pp. 427-457). Tartu, Estonia: Tartu Ülikool. (Note: This has not been translated, but the research is cited extensively in Kemppainen R. & S. E Ferrin (2002))

⁵³ Kemppainen R. & S. E Ferrin (2002), 86.

⁵⁴ Pavelson M. & T. Vihalemm (2002), 265

⁵⁵ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008), op. cit. Table 4, p 28

⁵⁶ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008), op. cit. 29.

Integration Foundation claims that “a third of schools in the country with a language other than Estonian as their language of instruction have so far adopted language immersion methodology, with around 3400 children attending language immersion kindergartens and schools”. Of these it is estimated that about 400 are in kindergartens, and that about 3,000 are in primary schools, or about 7% of the total number of Russian-speaking pupils.

The distribution of Russian-medium pre-schools follows the same pattern. In 2007, there were 17,164 children in such preschool institutions (30.6% of total). A very small number of these (c. 400) are part of the language immersion programme. For the remainder, the study of Estonian as a subject is compulsory, within the terms of the Pre-School Child Care Institutions Act.

In addition, it has been reported in research papers⁵⁷ that by 2002, many Russian schools in Estonia were introducing a ‘bilingual model of curriculum’ according to which, from Grade 1, some of the teaching is through the medium of Estonian and some through the medium of Russian. The authors note that this general bilingual curriculum was ‘modified’ to suit the needs and resources of individual schools. Unfortunately, no systematic information is available which would permit an assessment of the extent to which these changes have occurred throughout the sector.

Notwithstanding these changes in the sector, there appears to be widespread dissatisfaction, not least within the Russian-speaking community itself, with the proficiency levels in Estonian achieved by Russian-speaking graduates. In the surveys carried out for the Integration Foundation in 2008, about 60% of Russian-speakers, and 85% of Estonian-speakers felt that Estonian was not taught well enough in these schools so that their graduates could communicate in Estonian effectively⁵⁸. These views may be usefully be compared with self-reported survey assessments.

Survey results are based on the total age-cohort, and cannot for that reason be directly compared to school examination results. With that reservation noted, it appears that about 60-70 % of the relevant age-groups under 30 years claim to be able to communicate ‘well’ or ‘on average’ in Estonian⁵⁹. A more detailed breakdown of these figures is not available, but it would be interesting to know how these self-assessments correlate with the academic educational qualifications and school experience in Estonian of the respondents. This survey shows that respondents are more likely to claim high levels of communicative competence in Estonian if they live in regions in which the surrounding language environment is predominantly Estonian (South-Estonia and Central-Estonia) or bilingual (Tallinn).

The scale of the reforms already implemented in the area of minority education has thus been very substantial. These schools have become part of a new unified system of education, and this led to the adoption of new curricula, syllabi, textbooks and teaching materials. The further reforms scheduled from 2007-2011 will change the system Russian-medium education even more dramatically.

⁵⁷ Asser H. et al. (2002), 250.

⁵⁸ Eesti ühiskonna integratsiooni monitoring 2008, Table 17, p. 67.

⁵⁹ Proos I. (2005) op. cit. 4.

2.3 Russian

2.3.1 *Russian as a First Language in Russian-medium Schools*

The Country Report indicates that the position of Russian in Russian-medium schools is identical to that of Estonian in Estonian-medium schools, as far as number of hours, type of curriculum, general organization and levels expected at school or state exams. The exams for Russian as a subject are prepared by the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, and the average results at the end of upper secondary are, for the last few years, similar to those obtained in Estonian as a subject by students of Estonian-medium schools. However, comparisons of levels of exams for these two languages as subjects are difficult to establish.

The teaching/learning of Russian as a first language in Russian-medium schools is of course influenced by the context in which those schools operate. Narva and Tallinn, for instance, or a more rural area, present fairly different configurations with regard to contact of languages (and of their users), to media and cultural exposition, to mobility and to types of activities. Students from Russian-medium schools and their families thus experience diverse types of interactions with their environment and their practice and conceptions of uses and forms of the Russian language may be consequently affected.

It is also noted that, for Russian-medium schools since 2007, it is no longer compulsory to take the exam for Russian as a subject at the end of basic school, whereas the exam in Estonian as a second language is compulsory. The same measure will apply in 2010 at the end of (upper-) secondary school.

The detailed PISA 2006 scores show that, in the three areas of assessment (Science, Mathematics, Reading), the average scores of students from Russian-medium schools, though higher than those obtained by students from Russia, are significantly lower than those of students from Estonian-medium schools. This difference might be due to various factors, but the possibility that the level of proficiency in “academic” Russian is not quite sufficient cannot be excluded⁶⁰.

2.3.2 *Russian as a Second Language in Russian-medium Schools*

Russian-medium schools receive also students whose first language is not Russian but Ukrainian, Belarusian, etc. There is no detailed data on the situation of these students, but concerns have been expressed that their home and/or heritage language is not fully recognized. They are faced with an additional language learning burden, and should therefore require very particular attention, since they might meet with special difficulties in their school achievement.

In any case, it is not clear whether there are in Russian-medium schools special provisions to cater for the needs of students for whom Russian is *de facto* a second language (linguistically close as it might be) and who find themselves in a situation of submersion/immersion.

⁶⁰ One must add that many socio-economic and school related factors could be hypothesised to explain inter-school variation in PISA scores. Cummins and others have shown that the reasons why some groups of culturally diverse students experience long-term persistent underachievement have much more to do with issues of status and power than with linguistic factors in isolation (Cummins J. *Beyond Adversarial Discourse: Searching for Common Ground in the Education of Bilingual Students*. Presentation to the California State Board of Education, February 9, 1998, Sacramento, California). Other evidence has shown that a serious income and status divide is opening up between Ethnic Estonians and Russian Estonians.

2.3.3 Russian as a Foreign language in Estonian-medium schools

Russian can be chosen as foreign language A (first foreign language) from grade 3 on, or as language B (second foreign language), from grade 6 on. Since English is chosen as language A in nearly all schools, Russian is mainly a B language, in “competition” with German and French. From the figures given in the Country Report for the language examinations results at upper secondary state exam level and considering the fact that this exam is optional, one notes that the number of students taking the exam for Russian fluctuates between 2005 and 2008, while staying over 400. In the same period, German has dropped from over 1000 to under 600. And, with figures constantly above 9000, English goes from 85% to 90% of the total. Moreover, languages B obviously tend to be less chosen than language A for the state examination, which accentuates the dominance of English in these exams figures.

Russian language place in recent history, tensions between the two communities in the country, and the still complex relations with Russia are factors which may project on the language a negative perception by part of the ethnic Estonian population. On the other hand, in many families, proficiency in Russian was acquired before the return to independence and is still part of the linguistic repertoire of parents; this can facilitate the choice of that school subject as language B, combined with English as foreign language A.

2.4 English

In Estonia as in other European countries, English has become in the last few years the foreign language “par excellence” or, to say it differently, it is no longer deemed a foreign language but one of the key competences that every single student is entitled to develop and that society expects schools to provide. In Estonian-medium schools as in non-Estonian-medium schools, in general education as in vocational education, English is and stays the main foreign language A. At the level of the state exam, English, as compared to other languages, represented 85% of the total of exams taken in 2005 and 90% in 2008. This is quite significant since a state exam grade in a foreign language is a prerequisite for entrance in most higher education institutions.

The percentage of students who learn English in general education schools doubled from about 30% in 1990/91 to circa 60% in 2006/07. Current figures appear to be stable over recent years.

Table 1 (see section 2.1 above) gives a good view of the uptake of English as language A and as language B. This distribution reflects the fact that English is chosen as language A in Estonian-medium schools and language B in Russian-medium schools (Estonian being compulsory language A in those schools)⁶¹. This dominance of English as a foreign language in both types of schools is not uncommon in Europe. It raises some issues which have already surfaced in public debate regarding education and the place of English.

Given the current level of resources, the accelerating demand for English requires more new teachers than the system can provide. The more so since students with a good level of English can often find more lucrative jobs than the teaching profession. The retraining of teachers of other subjects to “transform” them into teachers of English has its limits and might present some

⁶¹ The number of students taking English as language B increases notably between 2004-2005 and 2006-2007. This is probably related to non-Estonian medium schools and to Russian-medium vocational education.

drawbacks, just as the recruitment of not fully qualified native speakers. There too, the school system has to manage a period of transition and adaptation. As the Country Report points out, “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”, so that “finding foreign language teachers who comply with the qualification requirements is the most problematic aspect”.

2.5 German and French

Except for Russian in Estonian-medium schools, the foreign languages offered other than English have undergone in school a relative decline in the recent years. The figures given in *The Foreign Language Strategy* show, for German, a decrease of numbers for Language A and Language B and an increase for optional Language C. The pattern is somewhat similar for French, but with much smaller figures. Understandably, this pattern is more apparent in Russian-medium schools and language immersion schools.

These tendencies are clear also in statistics provided by the state examination. For German: 9.5% of the total of the examinees for the state exam in 2005, 5.3% in 2008. It appears from data contained in the Country Report that circa 10% of general education students learned German in 2006/2007 against about 15% in 1999/2000⁶². The same source would suggest that, during this time span, French has progressed a little, while staying below 2%.

This situation has complicated, but real, knock-on effects: “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” (Country Report). One can assume that this limits the recruitment of new young teachers and that the average age of the teaching force for these languages is higher than for English.

Foreign institutes for German (Goethe Institut) and for French (Institut français) run in-service programmes for teachers and offer support of various forms. As for German, one may note the following (data provided by the Goethe Institut):

- from 2006, German courses are provided at the Kindergarten level (starting with 3 Kindergarten in Harjumaa district); so far more Kindergarten classes have been opened in 2008, with the collaboration of the Goethe-Institut in München, providing teachers training and teaching materials;
- distant learning is provided at any level;
- some schools offer bilingual teaching and a bilingual high school diploma can be prepared: Deutsche Abitur together with Estonian high school diploma.

German always had a stronger position than French in Estonia and it still benefits from a good demand in informal education. As the situation stands and despite the fact that average results at state exam level seem to be satisfactory for the limited number of students which take the examination in German or in French, one has to wonder if the ultimate proficiency achieved by the other students (those who do not opt for a state examination and/or have learned German or

⁶² It is very difficult to analyse figures in terms of percentages, but total figures for the year 2008-2009, as far as number of pupils learning a foreign language (as a A or B or C or D language), are: 116505 for English, 55578 for Russian, 22802 for German (including 8723 in C or D), 4635 for French (including 2145 in C or D).

French as a B language) is not notably inferior to the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) reference level B1, officially aimed at for the second foreign language.

Moreover, given that German and French are “under the pressure” from English, considering also that extra optional time is often allocated to English and that it may be important for reasons of social cohesion and of internal relations that a good number of ethnic Estonian students learn Russian, it seems difficult to find good solutions to reverse the declining numbers studying German.

2.6 Finnish and other neighbouring languages

Finnish and Estonian are closely related languages and Finland and Estonia enjoy close ties in many areas; trade and tourism have developed since 1992. Finnish is taught as the third or extra language in approximately 30 general education schools and is also on the curriculum in about 30 vocational schools, particularly those dealing with the service industry. The State Exam and Qualification Centre features a Finnish studies board and teachers are brought together in the Association of Estonian Finnish Teachers. Short courses in Finnish are offered by language centres in a number of high schools and the Finnish Institute conducts additional training of Finnish teachers.

However, according to Rannut (2008), Finnish "is rarely studied at school, it is mostly acquired in informal contexts, through TV programs, communication with Finnish friends, and short-time visits, courses, or employment in Finland" (431)⁶³.

2.7 Languages of historical ethnic minorities and of recent migrants in schools

2.7.1 Historical ethnic minorities

There are different situations for minority languages (CR, 2.2.5, p. 16) of communities for which the Law on Cultural Autonomy applies. According to the Country Report, the Law states: “National minority cultural autonomy may be established by persons belonging to German, Russian, Swedish and Jewish minorities and persons belonging to national minorities with a membership of more than 3000”.

In 2003, Estonia introduced new legal guarantees for the study of minority languages that are not used as a language of instruction in the schools concerned. There was the possibility to organise at least two hours of optional lessons per week on a culture and language that is not the language of instruction in the said school, upon request by parents. In practice, according to Framework Convention reports, this disposition “has not proved particularly successful”.

2.7.2 Recent migrants

Due to the economic development of newly independent Estonia, combined with the decrease of the Estonian population in recent years, new immigrants from European and mostly non European countries have come to work in Estonia, often with their families. This phenomenon is still limited and may well be interrupted by the crisis now being experienced in the global economy, but it raises the question of the education of children from these immigrant families

⁶³ Figures for 2008-2009 confirm this very low presence of Finnish in general education schools: only 963 pupils learn it (as language C or D). The situation is quite different in vocational schools (see 4.7)

and of the maintenance of their languages and culture. Social inclusion of these populations depends in no small part from the way they are received and accepted, especially with regard to the schooling of children. As in many other European countries, the matter is not only the measures taken to ensure sufficient proficiency in the language of schooling but also the type of recognition and value given to those students' linguistic repertoires. Estonia produced in 2004 a document of principles and orientations regarding these new immigrants under the title *Newly Arrived Children in the Estonian Education System. Educational policy principles and organisation of education*.⁶⁴ The organisational provision stipulated by the text is detailed and opens possibilities at the county and school level, while referring, for the native language of the students to the legal dispositions of 2003, mentioned above with regard to minority languages.

A clear distinction must of course be made between historical ethnic minorities and very recent immigrants. But, in both cases, there is a lack of data concerning the situation of their languages in the school system and one can assume that, since it concerns at present fairly small populations, no very visible specific action has been taken at that level. "Sunday schools" exist for some of the ethnic minorities languages⁶⁵; some other cultural actions are undertaken by minorities with the help of the Bureau of Lesser Used Languages. But there does not seem to be a very explicit public provision put to use for the teaching of the minorities (or new migrants) languages to the natives of these languages.

⁶⁴ http://www.meis.ee/pictures/HTM_2004%20%20Poldoc%20ing%20%20doc.pdf

⁶⁵ All "Sunday-schools" of ethnic minorities get support from the state.

3 Languages as media of instruction and languages as academic subjects in Vocational, Third level and Adult Education

3.1 Introduction

There is less information available regarding the language policy situation in these sectors of the education system. This observation applies both to official statistics and research undertakings. For this reason, the discussion here is somewhat more restricted than is desirable, and recommendations about improving the range and quality of information are even more pertinent.

3.2 Vocational Education

Since approval of the June 1998 Vocational Education Institutions Law, there are two levels in the vocational education and training system – vocational secondary education and vocational higher education. Following the acquisition of basic education, some students transfer to a vocational education institution in order to acquire secondary vocational education or professional skills. In 2008, some 4,700 pupils made this transfer. The 2001 OECD Review has claimed that there has been a decline in the number of students entering vocational education directly following basic school – or, expressed differently, a distinct preference for students to enrol in upper-secondary general education. (OECD 2001, 132).

Pupils with the general upper secondary school certificate may enter a secondary vocational school and complete the requirements for a secondary vocational education certificate in less time. In 2008, some 8,700 students transferred to vocational education institutions at this point in their academic careers.

3.2.1 Estonian

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. According to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act, the language of instruction at vocational educational institutions is to be Estonian, but other languages of instruction may also be used. During the 2007/2008 academic year 72% of students received their instruction in Estonian, and 28% in Russian (Country Report 31). Thus, it appears that at least one third of students in vocational institutions learn Estonian as a second language. There is no precise data on the number of Russian-speaking students who speak Estonian as a second language and who select the option of Estonian medium courses.

The Country Report (36) also provides evidence of the performance of ‘secondary vocational school’ graduates between 2005 and 2008. The average marks ranged between 36 and 43. If this was the same examination taken by ‘upper secondary school’ graduates (Country Report 36), then it appears that the average scores in the vocational sector are some 30 points lower. It is not clear, from the available evidence, to what extent the difference in the examination results of these two student populations is due to educational factors, to differences in academic abilities, or to sociolinguistic, community or socio-economic factors. These issues should be examined in a systematic way as a matter of urgency.

Those pupils who transfer to vocational education institutions at the end of upper secondary school form part of the tertiary education sector, and this will be discussed in the next section.

3.2.2 Foreign languages

The Foreign Language Strategy provides some important general information about foreign languages in the vocational schools:

Foreign languages are taught in vocational education institutions according to the professional curricula of the schools and the state. Estonian must be studied by groups whose language of instruction is Russian in the case of post-basic school vocational education. 73% of all students in vocational education institutions in 2007 studied English; 41% studied Russian; 31% studied Estonian as a second language; 18% studied German; 11% studied Finnish; 1.2% studied French; and 0.1% studied Italian.

Foreign languages as subjects are listed in curricula in two different ways: as foreign languages (e.g. 'German') and professional foreign languages (e.g. 'Business German'). The volume of foreign language studies varies by school and field: in service curricula up to three foreign languages are taught (Estonian groups), while in some technical curricula no foreign languages are taught at all (Russian groups).

In post-basic school vocational curricula foreign languages form a mandatory part of secondary education. Studies of the A language (English, Russian or German) which began in basic school are continued, as well as Estonian as a second language in groups with Russian as the language of instruction. Added to this as a second foreign language in a smaller volume is either the B language of the basic school or an elementary course in a third language (most commonly Finnish).

The choice of foreign languages in curricula taught on the basis of secondary education is greater: along with the A and B languages taught in basic school, elementary knowledge can also be obtained in a third language. For the majority this is Finnish, but the list of such languages also includes French, Swedish, Spanish, Italian, Portuguese and Latvian.

Much of the foreign language studies of groups with Russian as the language of instruction are taken up by Estonian. The choice of foreign languages to teach compared to groups with Estonian as the language of instruction is much narrower. (*p. 17*)

It is worth noting the place allocated to Finnish in some of these schools and the fact that students with Russian as a language of instruction have less opportunities to start or pursue the learning of foreign languages.

3.3 Third-level Education

The Higher education system has developed rapidly since 1992, both in the public and in the private sector: public and private universities, state and private institutions of professional higher education, state and private institutions of higher vocational education. By and large, the private sector grew very rapidly from 1993 up to 2003 and is declining since then. The total student population has increased 2.5 times in the last 15 years but, due to the demographic evolution, it is now receding and might go on diminishing drastically in the next few years, as the number of secondary school graduates will decrease.

3.3.1 Estonian

In accordance with the Universities Act (§22(8)) and Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act (§17), the language of instruction at the university level is Estonian; the use of other languages is decided by the council of the educational institution or by the Minister of Education and Research. Both Acts allow students who are not proficient enough in Estonian the possibility of studying Estonian intensively for one year. In such case their nominal period of studies are extended by up to one academic year. State Universities also make other arrangements to assist students who speak Estonian as a second language, such as, supportive seminars, providing some supplementary teaching in Russian and, to a limited extent, providing full degree courses in Russian.

During the 2007/2008 academic year it was possible to study in Estonian, Russian or English at the academic level in Estonia. At the level of Bachelor's degree courses, 89% of teaching is in Estonian, 3% in English and 8% in Russian. The percentage of courses taught through the medium of Estonian rises at Master's and Doctorate levels, and the percentage with Russian as the medium of instruction is less than 1% in each case. (Country Report, pp.31-2).

In the absence of a systematic assessment of the participation, success and failure rates of students from the Russian-speaking community in all parts of the tertiary sector, one can note the *OECD Review of Estonia's Tertiary Education (2007)* conclusion that Russian-speaking school leavers find themselves at a disadvantage when they reach this level.

The OECD Review provides evidence that in 2005, 39% of Estonian-speaking school-leavers accessed a state-commissioned place in tertiary education, but only 31% of Russian-speaking school-leavers did so (OECD 2007, 51). Furthermore, in the *Estonian Integration Strategy 2008-13* (p. 21), it is reported that in 2007 some 10.7% of students who have completed their previous studies in Estonian dropped out of third-level education in institutions where Estonian was the medium of instruction, but some 13.4% of students who had previously been studying in Russian failed to complete their course.

3.3.2 Foreign Languages

The Foreign Language Strategy describes the general picture in the public universities as follows:

‘At the level of higher education, the proportion of students in bachelor's or diploma studies who are studying English is 46.6%, compared to 18.2% for Russian, 12.5% for Estonian as a second or foreign language, 11.2% for German and 3.7% for French (2006 data). There is now also a much broader range of possibilities for studying other foreign languages in universities, including Italian, Spanish, Finnish, Swedish and Turkish.

Foreign languages are taught both as a specialty subject to students of foreign philology and as a general and professional language to students of all subjects in higher education. Although foreign languages are mostly offered as elective subjects, foreign language proficiency levels are classified as expressions of higher education levels in the Standard of Higher Education, which can be considered a motivating factor ‘.

The Strategy also notes the ‘internationalisation of higher education, whose objectives are to boost the competitive advantage of the quality of Estonian higher education in the region’. This

requires good foreign language skills of both teachers and students.⁶⁶ This wide movement is indicative of a policy opening studies to international fields of knowledge, research and careers, as well as of an effort to attract international students. Such a trend reinforces the image and importance of English as lingua franca.

The University of Tartu offers many Bachelor and Master programs with English as a language of instruction, including a Master in „European Union – Russian Studies“. Tallinn University offers also to both Estonian and international students the possibility to prepare in English some degrees, such as Media at Bachelor level, Anthropology, International Studies, European studies at Master level. It is part of The Baltic Graduate School (BGS), an initiative to organize a more effective cooperation between Baltic universities in doctoral education in the field of social sciences and the humanities.

Language centres are also active within the universities. For instance, Tallinn University has done much in recent years about increasing the level of foreign language proficiency of its students. At the moment, 11 foreign languages are taught, English and Spanish being the most popular. It is compulsory for every student to prove her/his competence of at least one foreign language on B2 level and intensive courses are offered for those students who want to raise their level. Tallinn University also encourages its students to master one foreign language on C1 level. All the foreign language courses end with exams that are based on CEFR criteria.

The National Examinations and Qualifications Centre is an affiliate member of ALTE and is committed to make its language exams match with CEFR.

However, several issues are of concern regarding the future of philology studies.

- Except perhaps for Estonian and English, the demographic trend is going to affect language departments in the short term, with a strong reduction of registrations.
- The fact that other departments are offering to Estonian and foreign students degree programmes in English, the development of the University language centres, the competition in certain areas with private institutions of higher education for programmes with an international opening, and the action as foreign languages “providers” of many private language schools or foreign institutes, are all factors which may distract potential students from choosing departments of foreign philologies, except when they plan to become language teachers.
- In subjects other than English or Russian, Bachelor level programmes probably have to accept students whose proficiency in the foreign language is still limited.

3.4 Adult and Informal Education

3.4.1 Estonian

As shown in Chapter One, knowledge of Estonian among the Russian-speaking population is somewhat restricted. In the most recent survey (2008) published by the Integration Foundation about 25% of adult Estonian Russians claim to be able to communicate ‘freely in all situations’

⁶⁶ “Estonian strategy for the internationalisation of higher education 2006–2015”. Approved by directive no. 16 of the Minister of Education and Research of 9 January 2007.

and a further 33% claim to be able to 'speak, but make mistakes'. In this survey, some 40% claimed to know little or no Estonian.

Pressures on the adult non-Estonian-speaking population to learn and speak Estonian come from two sources. First, the legal requirements of the Citizenship and Language laws and, secondly, pressures within the labour market where many occupations require a knowledge of Estonian. These features of the sociolinguistic situation have been fully discussed elsewhere in this document, and only the main aspects will be repeated here.

In 2008, the Language Act was amended so that mandatory language proficiencies of individuals can be related to the 6-level system that is described in the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*. The amendment also changed the language requirements for a range of specific occupations ("*Estonian language and use requirements for public servants, employees and sole proprietors*", adopted 26.06.2008, regulation no. 105, RTI, 28.06.2008, 26, 176). A proficiency examination is required for to certify the required language proficiency level. Persons wishing to obtain these certificates have until July 1, 2010 to comply with the new requirements.

Furthermore, to be naturalized as a citizen of the Republic of Estonia, the citizenship applicant must pass at least the B1-level Estonian language proficiency examination.

These requirements have created a need for language courses aimed at the adult non-Estonian-speaking population. Although the vocational education sector has a small role in adult education, these courses have generally been provided in the private sector by firms licensed to do. The study costs of those applying for citizenship of the Republic of Estonia and those directed to Estonian language examinations by the Language Inspectorate are covered from state budget resources. However, only those who have passed an Estonian language examination are eligible to apply to have their study costs reimbursed. Furthermore, the training institute which conducted the Estonian language studies must have an education licence issued by the Ministry of Education and Research.

There are no statistics available about these courses. There is some survey evidence available which suggests that these courses have only reached a relatively small proportion of the target population. In the survey conducted by the Integration Foundation in 2001 (Proos 2001, Table 2) less than 20% of Non-Estonian respondents said that they had attended language classes in order to improve their knowledge of Estonian. The survey also showed that 24% said that they had engaged in private study for this purpose, but this percentage may have included some who also attended classes. In addition, it might be noted that in the larger adult education survey, conducted by Estonian Statistics in 2007, nearly 50% of those who claimed Russian as their mother tongue, said that they had attended no adult education course of any kind in the year preceding the survey.

3.4.2 Foreign languages in non-formal education

It is always difficult to gather data about foreign languages in adult education, given that this sector is mostly covered by private schools, for which figures are scarce, sometimes unreliable or difficult to interpret (enrolment, length of studies, dropout rates...).

One can note however that interest for learning foreign languages has developed at a fast rate after 1992 with the expansion or creation of many private schools and a revival of the foreign institutes. There has been official action as well, with the Lifelong Learning Strategy (2005-2008), where there can be some support for foreign language learning.

More generally, like in other sectors, the demand for English is high in the adult sector, but other languages (German, French, Spanish) have benefited from Estonia's entry in the EU, while Finnish and Swedish are of interest for the Baltic-Nordic relations, and Chinese, Japanese, Arabic appear as important for the future.

The Foreign Language Strategy mentions that public media have provided non-formal language training (teaching Estonian, Russian, German, Finnish, Swedish and French) to interested parts of their audience.

3.5 Estonian Sign Language

Since 2007, the Estonian sign language has an official status in Estonia. It is defined as “an independent language and a form of Estonian” (CR, p. 14). Officially, the state “shall enhance the use and development of Estonian, Estonian sign language and Estonian signed language”. The Country Report indicates that the community of users includes not only sign language deaf people, but also “their children who are not deaf but whose mother tongue it often is” and some people who are hard of hearing. The total number of regular users of sign language is thus estimated at about 45 000.

4 Shaping the Future

4.1 Goals of Language Policy

Language teaching and learning in a country needs to be understood holistically, to include teaching of the national language/mother tongue, of regional and minority languages, of the languages of recent immigrant groups, of foreign and second languages.

The Language Education Policy Profile attempts to build on, and strengthen, reforms that are already underway in Estonia. The goals of language policy are to be found across a range of legal and policy statements that vary considerably in terms of precision and concreteness. They are implicitly, rather than explicitly, stated, as in the following:

1. Ensuring all inhabitants of Estonia the possibility to study the Estonian language in order to stimulate Estonian-language communication and to eliminate language barriers;
2. Supporting the population belonging to ethnic minorities in exercising their right to preserve their culture and national identity;
3. Ensuring all inhabitants of Estonia the possibility to study foreign languages in order to stimulate readiness for communication in a foreign language and integration into Europe.

4.2 Assessing Progress

Although the existing policy documents do not generally define specific measurable policy outcome indicators, there are, nonetheless, a range of officially sanctioned census, survey and examination indicators which provide an initial measure of progress to date. These are considered under the two main language categories – The Estonian language and Foreign languages, including Minority languages

4.2.1 *The Estonian Language*

- Estonian is now the medium of instruction of some 70% of the general school-going population, and of much higher proportions in universities.
- In other schools, Estonian is now taught as a subject, or in various bilingual education programmes.
- A clear majority of the Estonian population claim Estonian as their mother tongue, and this proportion has been increasing since the early 1990s.
- Among those whose mother tongue is not Estonian, there is evidence of a gradual, but consistent, increase in the proportion who can speak Estonian competently and with confidence.

4.2.2 Foreign Languages, including Minority languages

- The education system at pre-school, basic, and vocational level, and to a limited degree at tertiary level, continues to offer Russian-medium education to those who want it.
- Some 20% of all pupils in general education schools are taught through the medium of Russian.
- Russian is also widely studied as a school subject and is widely known and spoken.
- The decline in the number of pupils selecting Russian as a second/third foreign language school subject appears to have been reversed in recent years.
- In the 2000 Census about 42,2% claimed a knowledge of Russian, 25,2% English, 10,2% German, and 10,1% Finnish.
- Within the curriculum reforms, the position of the Russian, English, German and Finnish languages as school subjects has been strengthened.

4.3 Positive Developments

- There has been a substantial language shift in favour of the Estonian, compared to the situation c. 1990.
- On some measures, the increase in the number of individuals speaking Estonian as a second language has been considerable – e.g. census data suggest an increase from 14% to 38% between 1989 and 2000.
- Estonian is the dominant language in the home, work, public administration and media domains.
- Public attitudes to learning Estonian are favourable, and have remained so for many years.
- While still a minority, a growing percentage of the population have acquired a proficiency in one or more foreign languages, especially English.

4.4 Areas of Concern

- The *Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (2004-2010)* lists a number of factors which are considered to militate against the preservation and development of standard Estonian. They include concerns about the influence of English, global media, public attitudes, population decline, factors inhibiting the acquisition of Estonian by non-Estonians, etc.
- Large minorities of the adult non-Estonian population have been untouched by the language policy or, at any rate, do not seem to have benefited from it. In surveys conducted for the Integration Foundation between 1997 and 2005 about one quarter of young adult non-Estonian age-groups, and up to one half of older non-Estonian age-groups, claim not to be able to communicate in Estonian at all.

- There is evidence that the rate of Estonian language acquisition among non-Estonian adults has stalled or maybe receded, and this is related to various political, citizenship and labour market variables.
- Among those who claim (in surveys) to be able to communicate in Estonian, more than half claim only moderate or low levels of ability. Only about one third claim to be able to communicate ‘well’.
- There are important relationships between regional, occupational and citizenship factors and claimed ability to communicate in Estonian.
- According to the Estonian Labour Force Surveys (1997-2007), Russian was the most frequently used home languages for 33% of respondents, and the pattern appeared quite stable over the eleven years covered by the surveys. It thus appears that in the short to medium-term, a significant number of children coming into the school system will not be fluent in Estonian
- A majority of Estonian Russians are opposed to the 2000 education reforms, largely because of the threat that they perceive to identity maintenance.
- Some 65% of non-Estonians would prefer Russian-medium teaching, albeit with an enhanced role for teaching Estonian.
- The smaller minorities who do not speak either Russian or Estonian are being mostly assimilated into Russian-speaking communities, This started in the Soviet time

4.5 Issues for Discussion in General Education

Issues for discussion are grouped under the policy areas set out in chapters Two and Three above. They relate in turn to the teaching of Estonian, minority languages and cultures, and foreign languages. There are also some over-arching or strategic issues.

4.5.1 Teaching Estonian

4.5.1.1 General principles

There are some considerations relating to the transversal importance of the sociolinguistic and pedagogic choices which may be made for the teaching of the national language as language of schooling and as part of a more transversal language education policy. These principles pertain to Russian in Russian-medium schools as well.

- All languages of schooling, Estonian as any other, are multiple in the forms they manifest. There is no single common, unified and homogenous language. Norms have obviously to be taught and learned, but not at the expense of the variation which is constitutive, not only of language use and change, but of language systems as such.
- For the majority of education systems, the language of schooling as a subject occupies a central and probably decisive position. It makes a major contribution to achieving the various goals of education systems and largely governs the models, norms and representations which regulate the key interactions between the various language varieties present in the school.
- The language of schooling may also be the most exposed to the tensions school systems are experiencing in this period of necessary transition through which Europe is currently passing.

While the above statements are somewhat general, it is argued that, if one accepts that the status of Estonian as a national and state language is now firmly guaranteed, then the extension of its use, its actual practice and the respect of its norms are perhaps less a matter of policy enforcement and institutional control than a question of curriculum management and of teaching and testing procedures which no longer would have to enshrine the language as a protected and endangered heritage, and would rather treat and foster it as a varied and “alive” component of Estonian identity and development.

Furthermore, Estonian students rank fairly high in international assessments like PISA. This indicates that the level reached in Estonian as a first language is neither an impediment for learning other subjects, nor for reading, understanding and selecting relevant information from texts.

Taking into consideration the situation in other countries, it should be noted that this concern about the national language is not specific to Estonia. One can easily find countries, including some whose language has an international status and role, where similar questions are raised and where, for instance, official or prestigious voices draw public attention to the linguistic risks of globalisation. What appears, however, particular to the Estonian context is that the national language is described as not established and protected within the country itself, as its restoration is at such an early stage.

There might be some limits to this approach. The strong emphasis on the quality, the correction and the controlled development of the language on one hand, the responsibility given to the education system (and to the media) in the transmission and spread of models and norms on the other, can induce and encourage diverse forms of linguistic insecurity. Teachers (not only the teachers of Estonian as a subject) can be conscious of their important linguistic role and, at the same time, feel unsure of their own performances (journalists and media people as well).

Another effect of this strong emphasis on the quality of the national language can be characterised as a somewhat ambivalent relationship to other languages, be they minority or foreign languages. To illustrate this point at a concrete level, one might wonder if there is a perceived contrast of approach, practice, types of textbooks, exercises, tolerance to “mistakes” and aspects of teacher training, between the teaching of English as a foreign language and that of Estonian as a subject. Legitimate as they may be, these differences can contribute to disaffection for what would appear as a more constrained and norm-centred approach. Conversely, the focus on grammar, morphology and orthography for the main language of schooling might have the consequential effect of discouraging students from “taking risks” in the foreign language.

In the relation between attitudes toward the state language and forms of assessment, it has been legitimate, immediately after independence, to insist on the importance of defining a standard respecting the authenticity of Estonian and to promote its role in the different spheres of social activity. These choices have largely been successful in respect to the actual status and use of the language: it is more and more present in all sectors of society and the legal and institutional instruments of its preservation, observation and control have been reinforced. In this new period, the challenge is to find the right balance between, on the one side, confidence in the expansion, evolution and adaptation of the language in a fast changing national and international context and, on the other side, its protection and enshrinement as a fixed marker of national identity.

4.5.1.2 Estonian as a second language

Currently, the Russian-medium schools contain some 92 schools and 31,000 pupils. In total, some 1,500 classes are currently taught through the medium of Russian.

There appears to be widespread dissatisfaction in Estonia, not least within the Russian-speaking community itself, with the proficiency levels in Estonian achieved by Russian-speaking graduates. Survey results provide evidence that these views are well grounded.

Estonian is taught as a second language in at least five different settings within the education system. These settings are very broad categories, and each shows a considerable degree of internal variation.

These include

- General Basic and secondary Russian-medium education
- Immersion Programmes
- Various Bilingual or Partial immersion programmes
- General Basic and Secondary Estonian-medium education
- Vocational Secondary Education

The scale of the reforms already implemented in the area of minority education has thus been very substantial. These schools have become part of a new unified system of education, and this led to the adoption of new curricula, syllabi, textbooks and teaching materials. The further reforms scheduled from 2007-2011 will change the Russian-medium education system even more dramatically.

The sector is clearly trying to adapt to these objectives, and there has been very considerable experimentation at both national, regional and school level in introducing various forms of bilingual education. While the general thrust of the efforts to find an appropriate accommodation of the two languages is acknowledged, because of the pace and scale of change in recent and upcoming years, it is important to ensure that the quality of education does not suffer as a result of the increase in the proportion of Estonian language instruction in Russian-medium schools, and thereby limit the possibilities of access to higher education and the labour market.

It is felt that the emphasis at this point, therefore, should be directed towards a careful and comprehensive assessment and evaluation of what these various and different approaches have achieved, what impact the changes have on the academic performance of pupils – not only in learning Estonian, but in terms of their overall academic performance. As noted in the Council of Europe document *Bilingual Education: Some Policy Issues* (2003) “While it is obvious that attention must be paid to proven examples of good practice (internationally), it is also clear that success (in teaching two languages) is due more to the fit between the components of a programme and the goals and resources of a given community, rather than to the application of any universal theory. Programme components will, and should, vary depending on factors that differ not only across but within communities”.

In order to move towards a more evidence-based approach to policy development in this field, it is considered that the more important issues that need to be surveyed and researched are the following:

- Given the degree of variation in the Russian-medium sector, it has to be noted that there is very little research assessing the significance of these variations for learning Estonian. Furthermore, as far as can be established, there has been no evaluative study which would

compare pupil performance across the full range of settings in which Estonian is learned as a second language in the Russian-medium sector.

- The programme that has been most thoroughly researched is the immersion sector. Research has shown that in Estonian, the early full immersion group achieved an average of 34 points (out of 51), compared to 40 for the Estonian-medium control group, and 25 for the partial immersion group. However, the research reveals a pronounced degree of inter-school and regional variation, and the results have to be considered provisional until pupils have completed the general education cycle⁶⁷.
- To date, examination results have not been subject to in-depth analysis⁶⁸. It has been noted that there are significant differences between regions, and also between students who have acquired general secondary education and secondary vocational education⁶⁹. However, these are rather gross and obvious explanatory variables, and there is an urgent need for more systematic research, using examination results as the dependent variable, to explore the importance of a range of other explanatory variables, such as school size, sociolinguistic and socio-economic character of school catchment area, degree of bilingual education in schools, etc.
- The limited qualitative research available would suggest that while Russian-speaking pupils in Estonian-medium schools acquire a better than average knowledge of Estonian, this may be at the expense of their overall academic performance⁷⁰. However, there appears to be little evaluative research of a quantitative nature. More importantly, there appears to be no research evidence assessing inter-school and inter-class variation in the performance of these pupils.

4.5.2 Other Languages

It is evident that, in Estonia Russian, Finnish and English, for different reasons, form a category of languages that are different, in terms of their importance, to other foreign languages taught in the schools. Russian and Finnish are both the languages of neighbouring states and also spoken in the country itself, while English is the predominant language of globalisation.

4.5.2.1 Russian

4.5.2.1.1 Russian-medium Schools

There are constitutional guarantees of support for minority groups who wish to maintain their own language and culture. The quality of written and spoken Russian achieved by pupils in Russian-medium schools should, therefore, be carefully and regularly monitored. Considering that the amount of information on the teaching of Russian in Russian-medium schools is at present limited, it would be useful to gather data regarding the following points:

- Relations between the teaching of Russian and the teaching of Estonian as subjects, regarding the intra- and inter-cultural dimensions in the curriculum and, for instance, in the types of literary texts (national “canon”, European dimension, commonalities and differences between the two programmes).

⁶⁷ Asser H., M. Küppar & P. Kolk (2005) Study of the learning results of language immersion pupils and the evaluation of their parents. University of Tartu, Department of Education.

⁶⁸ It is, however, noted that a study titled ‘Motivation to study Estonian and take the National Language Examination’ has been recently commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Research and the Office of the Minister of Population.

⁶⁹ Estonian Ministry of Education and Research (2008), op. cit. 35.

⁷⁰ Pavelson M. & T. Vihalemm (2002), 267; Kemppainen R. & S. E Ferrin (2002), 95.

- Attractiveness of teaching/learning materials (For example, how dated are the textbooks? Do they reflect the contemporary life of Russian speakers in Estonia, etc?).
- Norms and variation in the actual teaching of Russian; preservation, evolution, sociolinguistic and regional dimensions.
- Recruitment and replacement (progressive change of generation and preparation of future teachers born in Estonia after the return to independence) but also aging of the teaching staff due in part to the reduction of number of students (figures in country Report, p. 42 and, above, 4.2.1).
- Existence of professional organisations; contacts with teachers of Russian as a foreign language, with other teachers of languages, with teachers of Estonian as language of schooling; contacts and exchanges with Russia.

As regards pupils who study Russian as a second language in Russian-medium schools, it is suggested that a special study be undertaken.

4.4.2.1.2 Estonian-medium schools

Since English is chosen as language A in most schools, Russian is mainly a B language in this sector.

All types of schools have an important role to play, not only in terms of language learning as such, but as well in what regards the cohesion of the Estonian society in a period of adaptation and development. This of course concerns the schools as a whole and has also to do with the way different subjects (for instance, history, geography, literature, art education) contribute on both “sides” (Estonian-medium schools and non-Estonian-medium schools) to an education opened to cultural diversity within the very process of strengthening the State identity. But language learning has a special and major role in this respect.

For the teaching of Russian as such in Estonian-medium schools, the possible implications might be a treatment somewhat different from that of other languages:

- While encouraging motivation for the learning of foreign languages other than English (since English does not require this kind of encouragement), it might be useful to enhance the specific interest each of these languages may present; one does not learn Russian in Estonia for the same reasons as one learns French or, for instance, Finnish.
- The presence of the Russian language in Estonia could be largely illustrated in the materials and textbooks used for the teaching of Russian. These materials could be (and probably are) made attractive, as for other languages, and would contrast strongly with what was the current practice before 1991.
- Whenever possible, contacts and exchanges between Estonian-medium schools and Russian-medium schools might be facilitated, in order to promote and stimulate the motivation both of students learning Russian as a foreign language and of those learning Estonian as a second language.
- Since both teachers of Russian as a first language and teachers of Russian as a foreign language undergo a similar course of training studies at university level (notably in the University of Tartu), attitudes favourable to cooperation with regard to the sectors just mentioned might be developed in this context.
- In service teacher education, especially for teachers of older generations, could integrate this desirable change in the image and place of Russian in the educational process for the students who choose to learn it.

- In the first years of schooling (pre-primary and primary), forms of language and culture awareness could be fostered which would make young pupils conscious of and opened to the plurality of languages – including Russian - and the diversity of cultures which participate in contemporary Estonian identity. This education in language awareness would remain valuable even if some students choose not to learn Russian later on.
- One should consider if more students from Estonian-medium schools than is the case now might be encouraged to take school or state exams for Russian at the end of basic and of upper secondary schools⁷¹.

4.5.2.2 English

In Estonia as in other European countries, English has become one of the key competences that every student is entitled to develop and that society expects schools to provide. It is then no wonder that the accelerating demand for English requires more new teachers than the system can “produce”. There is therefore a definite risk that in certain areas and schools, the requirements of the English curriculum will not be met and the quality of education affected.

Questions which arise frequently in other countries may need to be also addressed in Estonia:

- Is there a “ceiling effect”, whereby even well-motivated students having learnt English for many years feel they are “rehashing” the same content, no longer progressing and loose interest?
- If English is seen as a lingua franca, what place and how much weight is given to the cultural dimension of the programme?
- If English is the first foreign language taught, is it possible that its teaching and learning can be approached in a way that would prepare and facilitate the subsequent learning of other languages?

4.5.2.3 German and French

Except for Russian in Estonian-medium schools, foreign languages other than English have undergone a relative decline in the recent years.

- One can assume that this limits the recruitment of new young teachers and that the average age of teachers for these languages is higher than for English.
- German still benefits from a good demand in the informal education sector, but the question is whether the declining take-up in the school system can be reversed or stopped.
- Launching of national and local campaigns “targeting” parents and heads of schools and stressing the importance of other languages than English and Russian would help, and so would the objectives defined in the *Estonian Foreign Languages Strategy*.
- The evolution of figures regarding choices of language A over the last few years might be analysed in order to see if and how diversification at this level could be sustained by specific actions.

⁷¹ It is to be noted that the Pushkin Institute (language centre in Tallinn, www.pushkin.ee) in co-operation with different partners (e.g. the State Pushkin Institute of the Russian Language (Moscow)) offers the possibility to study the Russian language and receive the state international certificate; it also organises Russian language courses for children and adults and provides methodological advice to all Russian language teachers in Estonia etc.

4.4.2.4 Finnish and other neighbouring languages

Finnish and Estonian are closely related languages and Finland and Estonia enjoy close ties in many areas; trade and tourism have developed since 1992. However, Finnish is rarely studied at school; it is mostly acquired in informal contexts.

- The favourable factors mentioned above might help structuring a more systematic offer of Finnish as a third foreign language (perhaps, in some cases, as a B language?).
- Other neighbouring languages, such as Latvian, Lithuanian, Swedish or other Nordic languages can also be promoted in different ways, as optional third foreign languages, but this probably concerns more adult education and university language centres (or perhaps some branches of vocational education) than the general school system.

4.5.2.4 Other foreign languages

Chinese, Japanese, Arabic etc appear as important for the future.

4.5.2.5 “Smaller» Minority Languages

- In 2003, Estonia introduced new legal guarantees for the study of minority languages that are not used as a language of instruction in the schools concerned. In practice, however, very few courses appear to have been offered as a result, and it would be useful to have data about the concrete implementation of the declared principles and organisational measures.
- “Sunday schools” exist for some of the smaller national minorities languages
- Students of Estonian-medium schools could all benefit from elements of the curriculum destined to raise their awareness and their positive acceptance of the plurality of minority languages and culture traditions present in Estonia.
- Conversely, students of Estonian-medium schools could all benefit from elements of the curriculum destined to raise their awareness and their positive acceptance of the plurality of minority languages and culture traditions present in Estonia.

4.6 Vocational Education

Vocational education is a very complex sector, due to the various types of vocational schools currently operating in Estonia.

- There is no direct information on the number of students in secondary vocational education who take the state exam for foreign language or other types of exams.
- There is an issue for all types of vocational education about the kind of recognition given to results obtained for different languages with regard to the *Common European Framework of Reference* (in particular for levels inferior to B2 or B1).
- It is not clear, from the available evidence, to what extent the difference in the examination results between students in general and vocational education (who follow the same courses) is due to educational factors, to differences in academic abilities, or to sociolinguistic, community or socio-economic factors. These issues should be examined in a systematic way.
- Vocational schools created through the amalgamation process might offer a wider range of foreign languages. Diversification is important in most vocational and professional fields

(trade, tourism, relations with foreign firms and clients) and, in many circumstances, basic capacity of (professional and social) communication in several foreign languages can be more important than better mastery of just one. Partial or specific competences can be developed and valued.

- Students going to a vocational school after completing basic school have normally already learnt two foreign languages. Some recognition of the level of proficiency attained could be provided (local certificate + portfolio type dossier?) and these languages be “kept alive” in the vocational school context, with a more specific orientation (in relation either to the vocational dimension or the cultural aspect of schooling).

4.7 Tertiary Education

With reference to previous comments (see Section 3.2 above), the following points deserve attention:

- The diminishing number of students will affect master level programmes and doctoral studies, which raises the question of teacher replacement and of need for doctoral training in other countries
- There does not seem to be active exchanges and joined initiatives between departments of foreign philologies and the various programmes of other fields of studies where foreign languages are or might be an important constitutive or added dimension.
- The training of interpreters or translators in Estonia has its beginnings in 1999, when MA programmes for conference interpreters and translators began to be offered at the University of Tartu. Since 2002 similar programmes are also on offer at the MA level at the University of Tallinn. The exact nature of the links between these programmes and the departments of foreign languages needs clarification.
- There is presently a lack of detailed information about the situation in professional higher education institutions and vocational education schools.
- With regard to foreign languages, more precise data about other institutions is required to determine if the demand for English is reinforced at Higher education level (coming from students who already chose English at the upper secondary state exam and then officially with already a B2 level?) and/or if a real diversification is to be noted (as the mention of Spanish for Tallinn language centre seems to show).

As pointed in the OECD Review, the initiatives to facilitate the participation in tertiary education of the Russian-speaking minority should be sustained to equalise participation rates across language communities. It is also important to ensure that a minimum provision of support for Russian-speaking students is harmonised across institutions. Improvements in this area also depend on school-level language policies, so consistency across educational levels is required. (OECD 2007, 80)

4.8 Adult and Informal sector

The OECD review of Estonian national education policy in 2001 (p. 150) observed that there was ‘no formal policy towards adult or continuing training, and no data to show how extensive it is,

how it is financed and how successful it is in terms of quality... ... Other sectors of education are clearly important, but the lack of a strategy⁷² towards adult and continuing training – and by implication towards lifelong learning – is extremely serious given the likelihood of continuing structural change in the Estonian economy and labour market and the need for the redeployment of the workforce. With a declining school-age population, Estonia must continue to depend on its current adult population for its workforce over the next decade and beyond’.

These comments apply with equal force to the adult language training sector which, as the OECD Review states, is an intrinsic part of the adult education. Survey evidence suggests that Estonian language courses have only reached a relatively small proportion of the adult non-Estonian population. Estonian language courses appear not to be supervised in any way, beyond the initial licensing procedure. A well-designed and well-managed accreditation scheme for teaching Estonian to adult learners – which would include a periodic evaluation and re-accreditation process - could provide a logical incentive towards effective and high quality provision of language learning services.

- Fortunately there is a large amount of advice available in this area, and much of it has recently been expertly summarized at a Council of Europe conference in Strasbourg (“*The Linguistic Integration of Adult Migrants*” Seminar at Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 26-27 June 2008). For example, in the discussion of quality assurance in the provision of language education and training for adults, Rossner (2008) argues that one of the aims of an accreditation scheme should be to ensure that basic standards and criteria are bench-marked internationally. Providers would then be encouraged to meet the standards laid down by the accreditation scheme and to maintain them, and this would impact on the quality of provision, and eventually the outcomes for adults who participate in the courses.
- Like in other sectors, the demand for English is high in the adult sector, but other languages (German, French, Spanish) have benefited from Estonia’s entry in the EU, while Finnish and Swedish are of interest in Baltic-Nordic relations, and Chinese, Japanese, Arabic are important for the future.
- The Foreign Language Strategy mentions that public media have provided non-formal language training (teaching Estonian, Russian, German, Finnish, Swedish and French) to interested parts of their audience.
- The State has encouraged civil servants to improve their proficiency in foreign languages by measures such as the one quoted in the Country Report (P. 50), stipulating that a “state official who is proficient in at least three foreign languages, to the extent provided by a state 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 for the third and each subsequent foreign language, but not more than a total of 30 per cent”. This incentive is not to be disregarded but its practical implementation differs among ministries and agencies concerned, primarily for lack of a common instrument of reference. The Common European Framework of Reference could be there of some use, as it is already chosen for some language requirements regarding Estonian, for the Europass and by many language schools

⁷² It is noted, however, that the “Estonian adult education development plan 2009-2013” is currently under development.,

4.9 Sign Language

- Since 2007, the Estonian sign language has an official status in Estonia.
- Information on the support that deaf children and their parents receive for their education is not yet precisely collected.
- A question which needs to be addressed is the degree to which both Estonian Sign Language and Russian Sign Language are in use in Estonia and where and how respective teachers of these languages are trained.

4.10 Some over-arching (cross-sectoral) issues

4.10.1 Mother Tongue plus two other languages

Whether one considers the Estonian-medium schools or the Russian-medium schools, a dominant pattern is that, either as a language of schooling or as a second/foreign language, the majority of the school population in Estonia learns Estonian, Russian and English in various combinations. This “mother tongue + 2 other languages” pattern not only fulfils the EU recommendation, but may be considered an asset in regard to the labour market in Estonia as well as elsewhere in Europe and, on the other hand, with regard to interlinguistic and intercultural relations and intercomprehension in Estonia, and therefore to policies of integration and social cohesion.

4.10.2 Fostering the intercultural dimension in the curriculum and in schools

A language policy cannot be separated from the cultural aspects of language learning and use. Stressing not only the cultural aspects but also the intercultural dimension in education implies more than knowledge building about other cultures. The acknowledgment of diversity and the recognition of and tolerance towards other cultures should be asserted as a principle throughout the curriculum.

4.10.3 Curriculum development and assessment in the education system

Changing the national curriculum is a process that takes time. In this regard, the new set of objectives provides a clear orientation and drive to the reform but, in practice, implementation has to be sensitive and delicate if chosen objectives are not within the reach of students, given other conditions of the educational system (teacher training, organization of schools, textbooks and learning materials, modes of assessment).

- In this respect, it is felt that the curriculum changes now in progress, particularly for foreign languages, might benefit from a careful consideration of their feasibility in terms of human and material resources.
- One of the issues pertains to the relation to be established between the new curriculum and the objectives assigned to the learning of foreign language A and foreign language B, at the end of basic education (respectively levels B1 and A2 of the CEFR) and at the end of upper-secondary education (respectively B2 and B1).
- Experience of other European countries shows that the process of relating examinations to the levels of the CEFR is generally a complex process, since, on one hand, most school exams do not cover the whole extent of language capacities dealt with in the CEFR and, on the other hand, educational dimensions of a different kind legitimately appear in school aims and assessment and cannot be easily assessed in terms of the CEFR levels of reference.

- Estonian as a second language, Russian as a foreign language, English as a foreign language have very different status and roles within the Estonian society; and curriculum development has to take this into consideration. One of the main recommendations regarding the use of the CEFR is that it should be carefully contextualized and submitted to the wider educational aims.
- This could imply other means of recognition and possible assessment than the sheer reference to CEFR levels, such as portfolio type acknowledgement of learning experiences.
- There are two curricula for Estonian, one for Estonian-medium schools and one for Estonian as a second language. Those curricula have not been established within the same framework and do not follow the same progression. Specific attention should be given to this mismatch, justified as it might be, so that the two curricula would be more easily compared; especially with regard to the categories used for content and competence description.

4.10.4 Assessment and use of the Council of Europe CEFR

- Estonian authorities are aware of the seriousness of the above issues in terms of validity and reliability of exams and certification procedures. The National Examinations and Qualifications Centre knows the instruments produced by the Council of Europe to facilitate the work of different stakeholders in the field, such as the *Manual for relating Language Examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR)*, the audio and audiovisual materials illustrating the six levels in various languages, and the Recommendation CM/Rec(2008)7E on the use of the CEFR and the promotion of plurilingualism.
- Within the Examinations and Qualifications Centre, the Language Department has started the long process of relating the school-leaving examinations in foreign languages (including Estonian as a second language) to the CEFR levels. Similar work is underway with Estonian as the second language examinations for adults.

4.10.5 Teacher training

4.10.5.1 General orientation

Teacher training, both initial and in service, is a recurring issue. It appears under several headings: social and economic status of (language) teachers, motivation of teachers, lack or excess of human resources in this area, roles of higher education institutions in the domain, content and modalities of teacher education.

Low motivation to enter the profession is partly linked to its economic and social status. Incentive measures have been taken to encourage students and new teachers at the start of a career. It is still to see if these initiatives will prove sufficient.

4.10.5.2 Teachers of Estonian and of Russian as languages of schooling

- Teacher education and development might take into consideration not only the language as a subject of its own but also the role the language of schooling plays in learning other subjects. This is essential to knowledge building but also to the development of the language itself.
- This distinction between language as subject and language as a medium of instruction concerns teachers of Estonian in Estonian-medium schools, teachers of Russian in Russian-medium schools, teachers of Estonian as a second language in immersion/bilingual schools or upper-secondary non-Estonian medium schools, as well as many language teachers in vocational schools and teachers of foreign languages in CLIL type classes or branches. In other words, it needs to be addressed all across teacher education.

4.10.5.3 Teachers of foreign languages

- The main point to address is the quality of teacher training. In this respect, the present Profile document is fully in accord with the objectives set in the *Estonian Foreign Languages Strategy (2009-2015)*. It remains to be seen if the desirable objectives which have been set can be reached in the scheduled time span.
- The lack of trained teachers affects mostly English as a foreign language and has led to facilitating the access of foreign persons to the teaching qualifications and to reconverting teachers of other subjects to the teaching of English.
- In some cases, teachers of other foreign languages cannot teach their full load because their specialist language is in regression or because the student population is in diminution. Such teachers might be prepared to combine different subjects in their schedule, from the perspective of plurilingual or bilingual education. This would, however, imply specific training.
- It is important to ensure, in initial training as well as in in-service training, contacts, exchanges and a partly common formation to teachers of different languages in certain areas of their professional preparation (such as assessment of students, intercultural aims of learning) while stressing what is specific to each (not only from a linguistic point of view).
- The creation of an active overarching association of teachers of languages is pertinent in this respect.
- Estonia participates in the activities of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz. The 2008-2011 program, “Empowering language professionals” is of special interest for teacher trainers and various stakeholders in the field of modern languages.

4.11 A need to re-focus the overall Strategy?

The strategic focus of the language strategy to date has been on the formal education sectors at first, second and third levels. Notwithstanding the many advances that have been within these sectors, it has to be matter of concern that so many of the adult non-Estonian population have either not participated, or have not benefited from the language policy initiatives.

It appears to be generally agreed that while the proportion of young persons who learn to speak Estonian as a second language is increasing, the proportion of adults who have acquired these

skills is stable. In fact, the proportion and number of those who do not have a good command of Estonian may actually be increasing, as they are joined by those graduating from the educational system who, for one reason or another, only acquired moderate, or mediocre, language skills while they were at school. Furthermore, with the current decline in school-going age-groups, the incremental contribution of schools to the stock of adult speakers (of all languages) will be reduced.

All of this points to the urgent need to develop a National Language Policy which will develop the adult education sector as part of a lifelong learning language strategy. The present policy focuses primarily on formal education in the years of full-time education, and these remain important, but it is felt that this focus now needs to be widened.

This will require a major initiative on the part of the relevant authorities. It is suggested, in the first instance, that a well-designed and well-managed accreditation scheme for teaching Estonian to adult learners – which would include a periodic evaluation and re-accreditation process - could provide a logical incentive towards effective and high quality provision of language learning services.

4.12 The importance of a System of Policy Indicators and Good Research

- It is suggested that the development and publication of an appropriate, relevant and reliable system of language indicators is a topic that should be addressed as a matter of urgency
- There is also an urgent need for more systematic research to explore the issue of school effectiveness in the area of language teaching and learning, especially during the reform process, in order to better orient the next steps. Several specific areas of research have been identified earlier in this chapter (e.g. sections 4.4.1.2 and 4.5)
- To give these issues appropriate and urgent attention some institutional and funding arrangements need to be made. It is suggested that the establishment, as a matter of urgency, of a Language Policy Observatory in Estonia be considered.

Appendix 1 – Council of Europe viewpoint on language education: plurilingualism

In view of the linguistic diversity of Europe and each of its states, the Council of Europe has adopted the policy of valuing and promoting plurilingualism. A consensus has been reached by Council of Europe member states that plurilingualism for every European should be the principal goal of language education policies. This position is set forth in various documents (see Appendix 2) and is spelled out in the *Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe* (see Appendix 3).

The concept of plurilingualism can be misunderstood and should be clearly defined. In the first place, the plurilingual approach puts the chief emphasis of education policies not on languages as such and multilingual diversity⁷³ but on the persons who use languages. Attention is then focused on each individual's ability to learn and use more than one language in social communication.

In the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, plurilingualism is defined as 'the ability to use languages for the purpose of communication and to take part in cultural interaction, where a person viewed as a social agent has proficiency, of varying degrees, in several languages and experience of several cultures. This is not seen as the superposition or juxtaposition of distinct competences, but rather as the existence of a complex or even composite competence on which the user may draw'.⁷⁴

In any political and social entity, languages do not all enjoy the same status or even recognition: they may be official languages, languages of instruction, languages of recognized minorities, languages of unrecognized groups; some are sought after and a source of prestige, while others are devalued or a handicap and thus a factor conducive to exclusion, etc.

It is for the state to ensure by democratic means a balance between the plurilingual repertoires of different groups and between the languages which the national, regional, federal etc. community uses for its projects (relations with border regions, integration in the region and in Europe, international trade, etc.). The major role of language policies is thus to organize the balanced management of plurilingual repertoires, the languages of the territory and collective needs, according to the resources available and cultural and educational traditions, in order to ensure social cohesion, if necessary by the explicit recognition of the linguistic rights and duties of each individual.

The valuing and promotion of plurilingualism thus forms one of the fundamental aspects of social inclusion and education for democratic citizenship.

In its Declaration and Programme on education for democratic citizenship of 7 May 1999, the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe stressed that the preservation of European linguistic diversity was not an end in itself, since it was placed on the same footing as the building of a more tolerant and more interdependent society: '*a freer, more tolerant and just society based on solidarity, common values and a cultural heritage enriched by its diversity*'

⁷³ '*Multilingualism*' refers to the presence in a given large or small geographical area of several linguistic varieties (forms of verbal communication regardless of their status). '*Plurilingualism*' refers to the repertoire of linguistic varieties that may be used by speakers (including mother tongue/first language and all those acquired subsequently, again regardless of their status at school and in society and the level of mastery).

⁷⁴ *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages*, p.168

(CM (99) 76). In making, from 1997 onwards, education for democratic citizenship a priority of the Council of Europe and its member states, Heads of State and Government defined the central place of languages in the exercise of democratic citizenship in Europe: while the active participation of citizens in political decisions and society is necessary in a democracy, this means that such participation must not be rendered impossible by the absence of appropriate language skills. The possibility of citizens' taking part in the political and public life of Europe, not only in that of their own countries, presupposes plurilingual competence, that is, the ability to interact effectively and appropriately with the other citizens of Europe.

The development of plurilingualism is not just a functional necessity; it is also an essential component of democratic behaviour. Recognition of the diversity of speakers' plurilingual repertoires should lead to linguistic tolerance and thus to respect for linguistic differences, respect for the linguistic rights of individuals and groups in their relations with the state and with linguistic majorities, respect for freedom of expression, respect for linguistic minorities, respect for the least spoken and taught national languages, and respect for diversity in interregional and international communication. Language education policies are closely bound up with education in the values of democratic citizenship because their goals are complementary: language education, which provides a particularly favourable opportunity for intercultural contact, is a sector where education for democratic living in its intercultural dimensions can be given tangible form in education systems.

It should be stressed that this goal, which reflects a consensus among the member states, will have to be reached gradually. The introduction of appropriate measures (syllabuses and curricula, teacher training, etc.) may involve new forms of organization requiring additional financial resources or important policy decisions. The formulation of language education policies for the development of plurilingualism can be envisaged in many ways. We can therefore expect the implications of the *Profile* and its potential or actual consequences to vary with the country according to the national political situation or to its history and educational traditions.

Appendix 2 – Documents formulating the position of the Council of Europe on language education policy

CONVENTIONS:

- [European Cultural Convention](#) (1954)
- [European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages](#) [www.coe.int/minlang]
- [Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities](#) [www.coe.int/minorities]

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS AND RESOLUTIONS:

- **Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe** www.coe.int/T/CM
 - [Recommendation R \(2008\)7](#) on *The use of the Council of Europe's Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and the promotion of plurilingualism*
 - [Recommendation R \(98\) 6](#) based on the results of the CDCC Project 'Language Learning for European Citizenship' (1989 – 1996)
 - [Recommendation R \(82\)18](#) based on the results of the CDCC Project N° 4 ('Modern Languages 1971-1981')
- **Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe** www.assembly.coe.int
 - Recommendation 1740 (2006) on [The place of the mother tongue in school education](#)
 - Recommendation 1598 (2003) on the protection of [Sign languages](#) in the member states of the Council of Europe
 - Recommendation 1539 (2001) on the [European Year of Languages 2001](#)
 - Recommendation 1383 (1998) on [Linguistic Diversification](#) and (CM(99)97)
- **Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education**
 - [Resolution](#) on the *European Language Portfolio* adopted at the 20th Session of the Standing Conference (Krakow, Poland, October 2000)

These instruments and recommendations provide the legal and political basis for language education policies at all levels which not only facilitate the acquisition of a repertoire of language varieties – linguistic diversity for the plurilingual individual – but also ensure that attention is paid to diversification of the options for language learning. The latter refers to the need to encourage and enable the learning of a wide range of languages, not only those which have been dominant in language teaching traditions, and not only the contemporary demand for English.

The documents in question focus primarily on languages which are defined as 'minority languages' or 'modern languages'/'*langues vivantes*'. These terms usually exclude the languages considered to be the national and/or official languages of a state and education policies dealing with the teaching of these. There is, however, a need to include such languages in language education policies because they are part of the linguistic repertoire of individuals. In the third part of the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe*, options for the implementation of policies include the teaching and learning of national/official languages, which for many, but not all individuals, are their mother tongue/first language.

Appendix 3 – Council of Europe instruments: presentation

Modern Languages

1. [Guide for the development of language education policies in Europe and related Reference Studies](#)
2. [European Language Portfolio \(ELP\)](#)
3. [Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment \(CEFR\)](#)
4. [Manual for relating Language Examinations to the CEFR](#)

Languages in Education, Languages for Education

5. [Platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education](#)
6. [Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education](#)

Modern Languages

1. [From linguistic diversity to plurilingual education: Guide for the development of Language Education Policies in Europe](#) (www.coe.int/lang)

The aim of the *Guide* is to offer an analytical instrument which can serve as a reference document for the formulation or reorganization of language teaching in member states. Its purpose is to provide a response to the need to formulate language policies to promote plurilingualism and diversification in a planned manner so that decisions are coherently linked. It deals, for example, with the specification of guiding principles and aims, analysis of the particular situation and resources, expectations, needs, implementation and evaluation. Accordingly, the *Guide* does not promote any particular language education policy but attempts to identify the challenges and possible responses in the light of common principles.

To this end the *Guide* is organized in three parts:

1. Analysis of current language education policies in Europe (common characteristics of the policies of member states and presentation of Council of Europe principles)
2. Information required for the formulation of language education policies (methodologies for policy design, aspects/factors to be taken into account in decision making)
3. Implementation of language education policies (guiding principles and policy options for deciders in providing diversification in choice of languages learned and in promoting the development of plurilingual competence; inventory of technical means and description of each 'solution' with indicators of cost, lead-in time, means, teacher training implications, administration, etc.)

In order for the proposals made here to be accessible to readers with different needs, the *Guide for the Development of Language Education Policies in Europe* is available in two versions to suit the needs of specific groups of readers:

- the *Main Version* (reference version), which discusses, argues and exemplifies all the principles, analyses and approaches for organizing European language education policies, as they are conceived in the framework of the Council of Europe. This version is designed for readers interested in all aspects of these issues, including their technical dimensions. It provides the means of answering the question: *How can language education policies geared towards plurilingualism actually be introduced?* This version is itself extended by a series of [Reference Studies](#) (see website) which have been produced specifically for the *Guide* by specialists in the relevant fields. They are published separately and provide a synthesis of the issues dealt with in this version or take them up in more detail.

- an *Executive Version*, which has been written for those who influence, formulate and implement language education policies at any level, e.g. individual institution, local government, national education system or international public or private institution. It is a document not for language specialists but for policy makers who may have no specific specialist knowledge of technical matters in language education.

The two versions of the *Guide* and the Reference Studies are available online.

2. **European Language Portfolio (ELP)** www.coe.int/portfolio

The European Language Portfolio was developed and piloted by the Language Policy Division of the Council of Europe, Strasbourg, from 1998 until 2000. It was launched on a pan-European level during the European Year of Languages (2001) as a tool to support the development of plurilingualism and pluriculturalism. An accreditation system by the Council of Europe Validation Committee was set up and over 110 models accredited until December 2010, replaced by a new registration system (Spring 2011)

What is a European Language Portfolio?

It is a document in which those who are learning or have learned a language – whether at school or outside school – can record and reflect on their language learning and cultural experiences.

The Portfolio contains three parts:

- a **Language Passport** which its owner regularly updates. A grid is provided where his/her language competences can be described according to common criteria accepted throughout Europe and which can serve as a complement to customary certificates.
- a detailed **Language Biography** which describes the owner's experiences in each language and which is designed to guide the learner in planning and assessing progress.
- a **Dossier** where examples of personal work can be kept to illustrate one's language competences.

Aims

The European Language Portfolio seeks to promote the aims of the Council of Europe. These include the development of democratic citizenship in Europe through

1. the deepening of mutual understanding and tolerance among citizens in Europe;
2. the protection and promotion of linguistic and cultural diversity;
3. the promotion of lifelong language and intercultural learning for plurilingualism through the development of learner responsibility and learner autonomy;
4. the clear and transparent description of competences and qualifications to facilitate coherence in language provision and mobility in Europe.

Principles

- All competence is valued, whether it is gained inside or outside formal education.
- The European Language Portfolio is the property of the learner.
- It is linked to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

A set of common *Principles and Guidelines* have been agreed for all Portfolios (see web site) and a number of documents have been published to assist developers.

3. **Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment** (CEFR) www.coe.int/lang

Developed through a process of scientific research and wide consultation, this document provides a practical tool for setting clear standards to be attained at successive stages of learning and for evaluating outcomes in an internationally comparable manner. The CEFR provides a basis for the mutual recognition of language qualifications, thus facilitating educational and occupational mobility. It is increasingly used in the reform of national curricula and by international consortia for the

comparison of language certificates. The CEFR is a document which describes in a comprehensive manner

- the competences necessary for communication
- the related knowledge and skills
- the situations and domains of communication

The CEFR facilitates the clear definition of teaching and learning objectives and methods. It provides the necessary tools for assessment of proficiency. The CEFR is of particular interest to course designers, textbook writers, testers, teachers and teacher trainers – in fact to all who are directly involved in language teaching and testing. It is the result of extensive research and ongoing work on communicative objectives, as exemplified by the popular ‘Threshold level’ concept. The success of this standard-setting document has led to its widespread use at all levels and its translation into over thirty languages (see website).

Guides and Case Studies are available on the Council of Europe website as well as the list of over 35 language versions.

English version of the CEFR: *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*, 2001, Cambridge University Press.

ISBN: Hardback 0521803136 Paperback: 0521005310.

4. Manual for Relating Language Examinations to the CEFR www.coe.int/lang

A *Manual for relating language examinations to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFR) has been produced by the Language Policy Division in order to assist member states and national/international providers of examinations in relating their certificates and diplomas to the CEFR. The final version was published in 2009.

The primary aim of the Manual is to help providers of examinations to develop, apply and report transparent, practical procedures in a cumulative process of continuing improvement in order to situate their examination(s) in relation to the CEFR.

The Manual aims to:

- contribute to competence building in the area of linking assessments to the CEFR;
- encourage increased transparency on the part of examination providers;
- encourage the development of both formal and informal national and international networks of institutions and Experts.

The Manual is supported by illustrative material (video/DVD and CD-ROM) for the levels in a number of languages.

In addition it is complemented by a Reference Supplement which provides users of the Manual with additional information that will help them in their efforts to relate their certificates and diplomas to the CEFR.

The Manual is accompanied by [*Further Material on Maintaining Standards across Languages, Contexts and Administrations by exploiting Teacher Judgment and IRT Scaling.*](#)

Languages in Education, Languages for Education

5. Platform of resources and references for plurilingual and intercultural education” www.coe.int/lang

After producing reference documents such as the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* taught as "foreign" languages (see previous section), a new instrument is proposed, in the

form of a *Platform*, enabling member states to benefit from the experience and expertise of other member states in formulating their programmes relating to languages of schooling and all language teaching.

The *Platform* offers an open and dynamic resource, with system of definitions, points of reference, descriptions and descriptors, studies and good practices which member states are invited to consult and use in support of their policy to promote equal access to quality education according to their needs, resources and educational culture.

The ideas and proposals put forward in the Guide described below form part of the Council of Europe Language Policy Division's project, "Languages in education – languages for education", contributions to which are published on the *Platform*.

6. Guide for the development and implementation of curricula for plurilingual and intercultural education

This Guide, which was prepared in view of the Policy Forum held in Geneva in November 2010, is intended to facilitate improved implementation of the values and principles of plurilingual and intercultural education in the teaching of all languages - foreign, regional or minority, classical, and languages of schooling.

The text comprises three chapters. The first provides a general picture of the issues and principles involved in designing and/or improving curricula, and of pedagogical and didactic approaches which open the way to fuller realisation of the general aim of plurilingual and intercultural education. The next two chapters look more closely at two basic questions raised in the first: How can the specific content and aims of plurilingual and intercultural education be identified and integrated within the curriculum, while also respecting the specific content and aims of teaching individual languages? How can curriculum scenarios be used to project the spacing-out in time of this content and these objectives? Finally, several appendices provide tools and reference lists. All of this can also be supplemented by consulting the ancillary documents available on the above-mentioned platform.

The Guide is available [online](#) and is accompanied by two Studies.

Appendix 4 – Programme of the study visit

Date	Time	Meeting	Experts	Participants	Meeting room
12/10/2008	17.00-19.00	GE first meeting	Mihaela Singer Daniel Coste Padraig O'Riagan Cecilia Serra Martin Ehala	Tõnu ja Made	hotellis
	19.30-21.00	Dinner		GE and Tõnu, Made	Olde Hansa Restaurant
13/10/2008	9.30-10.30	Ministry of Education and Research	GE+ T ja M	J.Holm,K.Kurs etc Secretary General, Head of Public and Foreign Relat.Dp etc	Tõnismägi 11,Min.of Ed.
	10.30-10.40	Coffee break			
	10.40-12.15	Meeting with dpt. heads	GE +	M.Soll, A.Pung, J.Kõrgessaar, A.Adamson,K.Rein?	
	12.30-14.30	Lunch	GE +		Palace Restaurant
	14.30-16.00	Meeting with the profile authors	GE		Min.of Educ
	16.00-16.15	Coffee break	GE		Min.of Educ
	16.15-17.30	Meeting with the profile authors	GE		Min.of Educ
	18.30-19.30	Dinner	GE		TallinkCity Hotel
	19.30-22.00	Discussions	GE		Room 1013
14/10/2008	9.00-10.30	Media representatives	GE 1 (and GE 2 if r	We can divide GE into 2, group is 5 people	L.Koidula 13a, III floor
	10.40- 12.00	A:Est. Employers' Confederation B: Est. Qualification Authority	GE 1 GE 2	O.Aama	L.Koidula 13a, lower ground floor L.Koidula 13a, III floor
	12.15-13.30	Lunch	GE+T&M		Restaurant Kadriorg
	14.00-15.00?	Parliament (Riigikogu)	GE, T and M	Cultural Committee	Riigikogu
	15.30-17.00	Est. Bureau of Lesser Used Lqs	GE	Timur Seifullen, Andres Heinapuu	Raekojaplats 18
	17.00-18.00	Est. Parents' Association B: Language Immersion Parents' Association*	GE 1 GE 2	E.Kirsman + E.Zahharova	Raekojaplats 18 Raekojaplats 18
	19.00-20.00	õhtusöök	GE		hotellis
	20.30-22.00?	arutelu	GE		hotell konv.ruum
		* meaning - Association of parents whose children participate in lg immersion program			
15/10/2008	8.00-10.30	Bus to Tartu	GE+T&M		
	11.00-12.30	University of Tartu	GE+T&M	Teacher training, language centre, chais of lg-s	Language Centre, Näituse 3
	13.00-14.30	Lunch	GE+T&M		Õlikooli Vana Kohvik
	15.00-16.30	School visit	GE+T&M	Annelinna Gümnaasium -lg immersion	
	16.30-18.00	School visit		Kivilinna Gümnaasium,	
	18.30-20.00	Dinner in Tartu	GE+T&M		Pierre or Tartuffe
	20.00-22.30	Bus to Tallinn			
16/10/2008	9.30-11.00	A:Socrates , Leonardo, LLP B: Integration Foundation	GE 1 GE 2	R.Toompere, K.Teier, A.Hütt, M.Kirts	L.Koidula 13a, lower ground floor L.Koidula 13a, III floor
	11.15- 12.45	A: Cultural Institutes B: National Centre for Examinations and Qualifications	GE 1 GE 2	BC, Goethe Institute, French Institute Dpt. Of Languages	L.Koidula 13a, III floor L.Koidula 13a, lower ground floor
	13.00-14.30	Lunch	GE+T&M		Restaurant Kadriorg
	15.00-16.30	A: School visit; meeting Comenius Language Assistant	GE 1		
	15.00-16.30	University of Tallinn	GE 2	Teacher training, language institutes	L.Koidula 13a, III floor
	16.40-17.40	A: Institute of the Estonian Language B: Language Immersion Centre	GE 1 GE 2		L.Koidula 13a, III floor L.Koidula 13a, lower ground floor
	19.00-20.00	Dinner	GE		Tallink City Hotel
	20.30-22.00?	Discussion	GE		Meeting Room 1013

