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THE IMPACT OF WAR IN UKRAINE ON THE NATIONAL IDENTITY
OF RUSSIAN-SPEAKERS IN ESTONIA: THE CASE STUDY OF NARVA

MA thesis

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Tartu 2023

Authorship Declaration

I have prepared this thesis independently. All the views of other authors, as well as data from literary sources and elsewhere, have been cited.

Word count of the thesis: 23, 046

Natalia Demidova, May 15, 2023

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Abstract

The purpose of this master's thesis is to find out how the war in Ukraine affected the level of national identity of the Russian-speaking residents of Narva. Did the inhabitants of the border city become more tied with Estonia or, on the contrary, turned towards Russia after the outbreak of the war in Ukraine. A high level of national identity is important for any state, because it shows the unity of the population, its cohesion, a look in one direction.

International and Estonian scientific literature was used as a theoretical basis for this master's thesis. Empirical analysis is based on 50 individual interviews with residents of Narva of different ages and genders, and interviews with three focus groups consisting of residents of the city. All interviews were analyzed, and the respondents were divided into 3 age groups based on common features: the young generation, the middle-aged generation and the older generation. The study revealed that the society of Narva is not homogeneous, different age groups have different levels of national identity (from strong to weak), while even in the same age group there can be diametrically opposed attitudes towards Estonia. The main trend is that the younger respondents are, and the better their level of knowledge of the Estonian language, the less they are engaged in the Russian information field, the higher the level of their national identity. However, changes in the level of national identity are also noticeable among the older generation. In the Conclusion part, the author will share their thoughts on how to improve the national identity of those age groups in which the majority of respondents were with a low level of national identity.

The results of thesis can be used in the future to develop strategies for integrating Narva residents into Estonian society, enhancing their national identity.

Key words: Integration, National identity, Narva, Russian-speakers

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Introduction

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many Russians living in Estonia found themselves in a situation where the immense homeland USSR that existed for them disappeared and suddenly, they found themselves in a country where they became a minority nation. For a successfully functioning state, it is important that people living in a country feel that they are part of it and define themselves as residents of that state. However, after Estonia regained its independence amid the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, Estonia found itself in a situation where 30.3% of the population were Russian native speakers and identified themselves as Russian or Soviet people (Statistics Estonia, 2018). Russia, although nearby, became a separate country. Their new position as a minority within another country, whose language and customs had become secondary, which effected the self-esteem of many of these Russian-speakers (Heidmets, 1998, 9). After regaining independence, one of the main questions for Estonia was how to connect people living in the same country with different languages, traditions, and cultural codes.

The Ida-Virumaa region and its biggest city Narva have special importance in Estonia. Most inhabitants are Russian-speaking, and a significant number are Russian Federation citizens (34,65%). This region is also characterized by poor integration into the Estonian information field and widespread exposure to Russian news. For many years, this region did not receive enough attention from Estonian officials, leading to statements that the government should send a special representative to the region (Tralla, 2023). Moreover, the Estonian language is rarely heard. Narva is the easternmost point of the NATO Alliance, and the city is connected to Russia by a bridge with the symbolic name «Дружба» (Friendship).

Various strategies have been developed to promote the integration of Russian speakers into Estonian society. Many of these integration projects were carried out in Narva because (according to Estonian Integration Monitorings and smaller surveys) Narva is the least integrated region in Estonia with many holding so-called 'Alien passports'. A House of the Estonian Language was created and sports and cultural events were organized for citizens of both cultures to create opportunities for them to communicate. The film «Выбор» (Choice) was shot in 2022. The film crew included both Estonian and Russian actors and the film was about integration. Another reason why Narva is a significant region for Estonia and needs more atten-

tion in terms of integration – is the 1993 referendum on autonomy. The autonomy referendum held in Narva on 16-17 July 1993 was an unusual event in the history of Estonia. For a country that had regained its independence only two years ago, this was a tangible test of strength, since this situation was completely new and unexpected. Since the autonomy of a strategically important border city would endanger the entire Estonian state, the government of Estonia had to act assertively with various communicative, economic, and political measures. (Lavrentjev, 2016: 5)

After the beginning of the war in Ukraine, unlike the inhabitants of other regions who actively supported Ukraine, Narva inhabitants reacted to the war passively according to the Estonian media (Nikolajev, 2022a). There were very few actions to support refugees in Narva. Those that were involved were the younger generation and students who came to Narva College from other Estonian cities and abroad. Although some residents changed their minds about Russian policy, a significant number of locals in Ida-Virumaa did not support the official position of Estonia. Without a doubt, this crisis has become a focal point for the question of national identity to the inhabitants of Narva.

This leads me to my research question: *How has the war in Ukraine impacted the national identity of the Russian-speaking people of Narva.* Smith, a prominent academic who has focused on the concept of national identity, considers that: “national identity includes a person’s relationship with the country, politics, community, history, territory, citizenship, traditions, and shared values” (Smith 1991: 14). An important part of national identity is self-identification, defining oneself as a member of a certain society, and respecting the norms and laws valid in that society (Lauristin, 2008, 145). The Russian minority in Estonia feels a national identity connected with Estonia, but a cultural connection with Russia (Vetik, 2008, 5). The strong connection between national identity and ethnic identity that exists in Estonia has created a situation where the Russian minority feels that they are not part of the country because of their ethnic origin (Vihalemm & Masso, 2004: 42). The strong connection between national identity and ethnic identity in Estonia causes a situation where the Russian minority is conflicted. Either they maintain their ethnic identity or they associate themselves with the Estonian state. This creates a choice of either assimilation or avoiding wider Estonian society – the latter of which leads to alienation (Lauristin, Uus, & Sepper, 2011: 227). This research focuses on how Narva residents view the war in Ukraine, how and what information they

consume about the conflict, how their attitude towards Russia and Estonia is changing since the beginning of the war, and how they identify themselves since February 24, 2022.

Data was collected via interviews and focus-groups with residents of Narva. During group discussions, people often enter disputes and control the wording less. In interviews, they often express their thoughts more clearly. By combining the two methods, I collected more unique information. Some people were ready to share more in an individual interview, others reveal themselves better when they participate in a discussion. The focus group also allows the researcher to control and guide the discussion, such role allows new topics and links to emerge in discussion that single interviews would not.

Selecting Narva to understand how the identity of Russian speakers changes because of the war in Ukraine minimized some of the limitations upon collecting/analyzing data, such as linguistic (the author has proficiency in widely spoken languages in the region – Estonian and Russian); financial (face-to-face interviews do not require payment and travel costs from Tallinn to Narva are not high); and informational (the author is familiar with the local authorities, journalists, and locals of different ages and genders that helped in gaining trust and getting answers from locals). This thesis seeks to understand how Narva sees Russia's war against Ukraine, how locals identify themselves, what kind of media outlets they prefer, and why. By answering these questions, I hope to envision the future of Narva, and more broadly, the Ida-Virumaa region.

This thesis consists of three chapters. The first chapter provides an overview of the concepts of identity and national identity. National identities are described, and the most important factors affecting state identity are highlighted. These observations are based on international and Estonian scientific literature. The second, empirical chapter explains the research methods this thesis uses. The third chapter analyses the research results. The study engaged 50 Russian-speaking residents of Narva aged 20-70. All interviews/focus groups were conducted from August 2022-April 2023. The author conducted semi-structured individual interviews and focus-group interviews. Qualitative content analysis is used as a research method.

This thesis is original because it offers new insights into how the national identity of Narva residents is changing due to the ongoing war in Ukraine. It is a complex question that survey research could not answer comprehensively. The results could give additional information to

Estonian integration institutions. It is hoped that this study will contribute to new integration measures, immersion and development plans for Narva and the whole Ida-Virumaa region.

1. Theoretical Framework

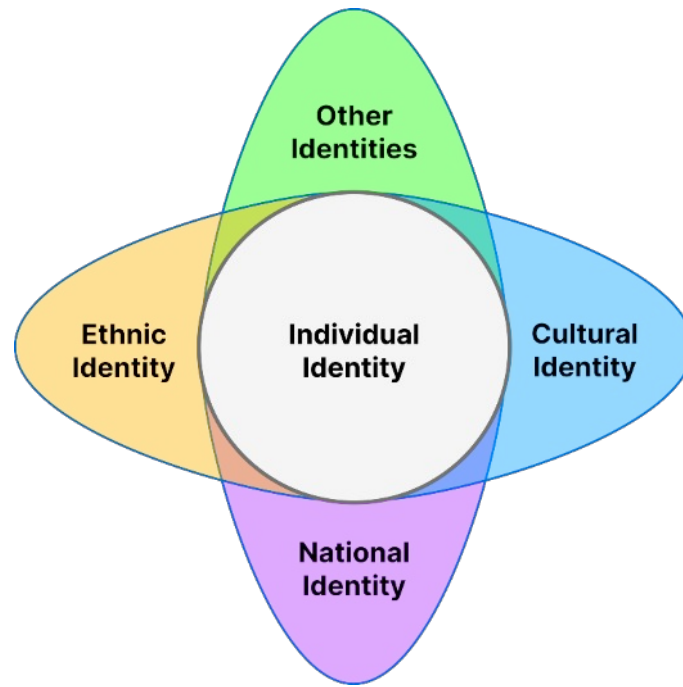
In the first part of the thesis, the author will explain based on international and Estonian scientific literature, what national identity is and what factors influence the formation of national identity. Since the topic is quite extensive, this theoretical chapter is divided into four sub-chapters: The Concept of Identity, The Concept of National Identity, National Identity in Estonia, and Ethno-political changes in Narva.

1.1 The Concept Of Identity

Identity is an extremely broad concept; its definition always depends on context. In this chapter, the author will explain the concept of national identity, and how it differs from other identities. Identity in general is a person's vision of themselves, which is created meaningfully and permanently preserved by that person. It consists of personal characteristics and behaviors that distinguish one person from another. The personality of a person is the starting point of how a person interacts with the world and surrounding environment, which, in turn, plays a large role in shaping the social role of a person in society (Valk, 2003: 229-232). According to Richard Jenkins identity is the human capacity to know 'who is who' and 'what is what' (Jenkins 2008: 5).

Personality identity development begins from birth and continues throughout a person's life. However, the most important period for identity formation is adolescence. Many identity researchers believe that later experiences do not have a significant impact on identity (Erikson, 1968: 161). According to another approach, the process of identity formation lasts a lifetime and life experience influences this process (Benson, Elder, Glen, 2011: 1652). Any change and development of personality are inextricably linked with what was acquired, felt, and learned by a person at a relatively early age (Erikson, 1993, 253). Undoubtedly, other personalities with whom the individual contacts throughout life have a strong influence on the individual. This thesis shows that people tend to adjust their identity under the influence of strong shocks or experiences, such as war.

Individual identity is surrounded from the outside by different types of identity, such as national identity, cultural identity and ethnic identity, and many other forms of identity that start to develop from the moment the individual is born and are influenced throughout life (Benson, Elder, Glen, 2011, 1643).



Source: Author

1.2 The Concept of National Identity

In existing literature, there is no single concept of national identity. The concept of national identity is interpreted in a variety of ways, and is often confused with other similar concepts such as ethnic identity. The interpretation of national identity in the Estonian and English languages is different. Therefore, it is necessary to explain the linguistic differences between the concepts to clarify which English equivalent was used for the Estonian concept of “national identity”.

The concept of nation has two definitions. The first definition is cultural, referring to traditions, religion, customs, language and ethnicity (Liebkind, 2006: 79). Another definition is political, according to which a nation consists of people living in the same territory, with a common government and a common political history (Kolsto, 2000: 256). Meanwhile, ethnic

identity is a hereditary status that is distinguished based on hereditary, social and national heritage (Feitoza, Lacerenza, Joseph, Salas, 2017: 1130). People belonging to an ethnic group share common traditions, history, language, culture, religion, physical characteristics (similarities in appearance), and other similar factors such as clothing, food, and beliefs (Liebkind, 2006: 82).

A nation is characterized by a sense of belonging and a culture of behavior that can only be characteristic of a group living in a certain territory (Taljunaite, 2013: 188). National identity is characteristic of a group living in a certain territory and recognizing itself as a nation. National characteristics are partial or complete political independence, economic relations, common history and culture, common rights, and obligations (Smith, 1991: 15).

Ethnic identity describes heritage and ancestors, national identity describes a person's relationship with society and the state. Ethnic identity is one of the components of state identity (Munck & Trpeski, 2009: 70). According to Vetik "national identity shows whether and to what extent people in the society have developed their common identification with the state and, at the same time, mutual recognition of their differences" (Vetik 2015: 24).

Vetik, who has been studying national identity in Estonia for a long time, argues that the English equivalent of the concept of national identity is used in all integration monitoring conducted in Estonia. One of the chapters of regular Integration Monitoring is devoted to the study of national identity in Estonia (Vetik, 2017: 21).

A national identity reflects belonging to a nation and has five dimensions: psychological, cultural, territorial, historical and political (Bajt, 2016: 54) Smith (1991:14) considers the essence of national identity to include an individual's relationship with the state, politics, community, history, territory, citizenship, traditions, and other shared values.

National identity is based on the belief that a person belongs to a certain nation and shares similar values that distinguish him from other nations. Unlike individual identity, common values in society play an important role in national identity (Sumino, 2017, 190). National identity is a glue that holds a nation together and is expressed by the observance of national customs, such as singing the national anthem and raising the national flag. Following customs creates an emotional bond between a person and the state (Woronov, 2007, 669). National identity is a shared image of a community, defined geographically and institutionally, de-

scribing a person's sense of belonging and security feeling, and association with society (Kymlicka, 1995: 135). If individual identity tries to answer the question "Who am I and where do I belong", then national identity is guided by the question "Who we are and how we relate to each other" (Valk, 2003: 231).

Existing literature divides the factors influencing national identity into four groups. The first group is language skills which affect a person's ability to cope in society and relationships with the majority group (Kolsto, 2000, 231). Another factor is the place of residence of an individual. Location plays an important role in whether a person is closely associated with a majority group or isolated from their minority group (Kolsto, 2000: 245). A third factor is the influence of home and family, which shape a person's personality from birth (Perälä-Littunen, 2008: 87). A fourth is the attitude towards minorities within that society (Baar, Jakubek, 2017: 84).

Knowledge of the state language is often identified as one of the most important factors influencing national identity. To be a full-fledged citizen, it is extremely important to know the language of the country in which the person lives (Kolsto, 2000: 134). According to Kolsto, insufficient knowledge of the state language leads to limited participation in the civic life of the state; the inability to find a job that matches the knowledge and needs of the individual; difficulties in communicating with most citizens; alienates a person from society; and may even lead to feelings of uselessness or depression.

The second important factor is residence. Researcher Pål Kolsto noted that a low level of national identity is very typical for border areas and regions, where the ethnic majority of the state is a minority group (Kolsto, 2000: 54). Family is also an important factor in the formation of personality, including national identity. Attitudes towards the state and the strength of ties with it are often formed as early as childhood and are often associated with how the family relates to the state. The principles acquired at a young age become permanent inner convictions in adulthood, so the house has a great influence on the national identity of young people (Sokol, 2009: 143).

Last, but not least, national identity is influenced by the prevailing attitude towards minorities in society. Intolerance is a phenomenon that is passed down from generation to generation (Baar & Jakubek, 2017: 87). Feeling a negative response to ethnic minorities can affect na-

tional identity and attitudes towards the country of residence (Taljunaite, 2013: 189). Common aspirations, a vision of a common future, and a common understanding of the present are important for a minority to consider themselves part of the state in which they live. International researchers who study identity consider national identity as a factor that unites people living in one country and who share the concept of "WE". Ethnic identity is one of the parts of state identity and complements the concept of state identity. After all, not only the adoption of state symbols, but also culture and language are important components of national identity. Perhaps we can say that national identity forms and develops throughout a person's life. National identity can change, become stronger or weaker, depend on external factors such as language, place of residence or the relationship of the majority to the minority ethnic group, or even the internal decision of the individual. Events such as war, which have a strong emotional impact on the individual and make him rethink life, can greatly affect the state identity, especially if the individual does not agree with the decision of his state to go to war. (Niukkanen, 2018: 13-14)

1.3 National Identity in Estonia

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, many people faced the need to find their identity. In the Soviet tradition, nationality was associated with a person's ethnic background, and not with belonging to a state or citizenship as in French tradition. Every Soviet-era passport had a line that read "Nationality." This is how things worked: When a person in the Soviet Union reached the age of 16, they had to choose a nationality based on their parents' nationalities. If the young person's father and mother had the same nationality, that would be his nationality. If their parents' nationalities were different, a young person could choose one. This nationality was written in his passport in the 5th position (Пятый пункт in Russian). While everything was relatively simple for many Estonians after the collapse of USSR (they lived in Estonia, spoke Estonian, and identified as Estonians), for the Russian-speakers of Estonia this became a real challenge. While they spoke Russian, their origin could be Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Moldavian, etc. In general, they often identified themselves as Soviet people. But, with the collapse of the USSR, their Soviet homeland disappeared, their historical homelands also ended up abroad, and Estonian, which many did not know, became the state language. These identity searches were especially acute in Narva. From the holding of an autonomy referendum in 1993, possible geopolitical instability after the annexation of Crimea, and the be-

ginning of the Russian war in Ukraine, the city has been closely monitored both in local and foreign media (Lavrentjev, 2018: 3). The same attention Narva received after the beginning of war in Ukraine.

The topic of national identity is undoubtedly important for any country, but especially for a young state. The national identity of Russian-speakers in Estonia and specifically the Russian-speakers living in the Ida-Virumaa region has been studied since the restoration of Estonian independence. For example, Andrey Makarychev, Raivo Vetik, Kristina Kallas, and other prominent researchers have made important contributions. The Estonian Ministry of Culture regularly orders the so-called Integration Monitoring from scientists of Tartu and Tallinn Universities, which helps to better understand the integration processes in Estonia, including the national identity of Russian-speaking residents. The special status of Narva and the peculiarities of the local identity are also summarized in Integration Monitoring 2020. This found that the residents of Narva often characterize their city as a state within a state, and something Estonian in it is perceived as alien. Locals identify themselves with Narva first, and Estonia second (Integration Monitoring, 2020). This thesis is an attempt to contribute to the wider study of Narva and local/national identities.

The concept of state identity in Estonia is closely related to ethnic 'Estonianness'. An Estonian knows the Estonian language, self-identifies as Estonian, and has Estonian ancestors. However, ethnic Estonianness and state identity are not mutually exclusive concepts, but rather complementary concepts. Estonians identify state identity with ethnic identity and its components (Valk, Karu-Kletter, & Drozdova, 2011: 35). Vetik (2015:25) considers state identity as "a form of identification relations that lies between ethnic identity and supranational identity and binds people living in the territory of a given country into one nation, regardless of their ethnic background".

For Russian-speakers in Estonia, national identity and ethnic identity are two different concepts. The Russian-speaking minority in Estonia often feels a civil identity connected with Estonia, but a cultural connection with Russia (Vetik, 2008: 5). The strong connection between national and ethnic identity that exists in Estonia has created a situation where the Russian minority feels that they are not part of the state because of their ethnic origin (Vihalemm & Masso, 2004: 42). The strong connection between national identity and ethnic identity in Estonia causes a situation where the Russian-speaking minority group has a conflict in main-

taining its ethnic identity and associating itself with the Estonian state. In conclusion, for both groups ethnicity is a base for a strong national identity.

The connection of the Russian-speaking minority with the Estonian state is also shown by the type of media this minority prefers to consume. People tend to follow media which confirms their previously formed beliefs. An elderly woman in Narva, when asked why she chose to follow Russian state media and trusts them more, replied that the information there is what she is used to. People who consume more Russian media do not have close contact with the Estonian civil and political spheres. Russian-speakers living in Estonia that consume Estonian media are more aware of what is happening in society (Sepper, 2015: 90).

Russian propaganda TV channels were banned in Estonia almost immediately after the start of the war in Ukraine by the Estonian government. One year later, while polls show a downward trend in the consumption of Russian propaganda channels among Russian-speaking people in Estonia, in Narva, locals continue to consume Russian propaganda as before. The TV signal from Russia is strong so that in Narva Russian TV channels can be watched without any obstacles.

The Russian media space is in the sphere of influence of Russian ideology and propaganda. This, in turn, does not allow Russian-speaking Estonians to integrate into society and adopt local customs (Vetik, 2008: 172). Sepper also argues that Russian propaganda favors the non-integration of native Russian speakers into Estonian society (Sepper, 2015: 97).

An important topic for Russian-speakers in Estonia, is monuments. The Bronze Soldier monument, for example, was/is seen as an important part of a positive self-image and the preservation of Russian culture in Estonia (Petersoo & Tamm, 2008: 13).



Bronze Soldier monument in Tallinn, source: ERR



Soviet tank monument in Narva, source: ERR

After the start of the war in Ukraine, a Soviet tank monument was removed from Narva. This caused a wave of indignation among locals. There also began a process for renaming local streets named after communist leaders. Martin Ehala pointed out that a person reacts very painfully to attacks on his identity and if many relevant values are threatened, one's entire existence is also felt to be threatened and the struggle for the survival of one's identity begins (Ehala, 2003: 6).

Writing about the removal of the Bronze Soldier in 2007, Lauristin highlighted that disappointment towards the Estonian state caused defiance and reluctance to belong to Estonian society among Russian-speakers (Lauristin, 2008: 161).

In this thesis, the author will consider 3 factors: sociodemographic factors, the media, and society's attitude towards the national minority. Additionally, how the residents of Narva relate to the Estonian Government's position regarding the war in Ukraine and towards refugees is considered.

1.4. Ethnopolitical Changes In Narva: From The Beginning Of The Occupation In 1944 Until 2022

The history of Narva is complicated. All the wars that took place on the territory of Estonia have touched Narva in one way or another. The Second World War (1939-1945) and the period of occupation (1944-1991) significantly changed both the architectural appearance of Narva and the national composition of the city. (Tuuder, 2022: 12) Only 114 of the city's 3,550 residences and buildings were left standing after the Second World War. Only two people remained in the town, the other inhabitants had been expelled from Narva by the Germans (Krivošejev, 1981: 50 & Kochenovski, 1991:227). At the beginning of the 20th century, Estonians made up the majority of the population of Narva, but by the end of the 20th century, they numbered below 5% (Eesti Statistikaamet, 1995). Political and ethnic changes in Narva had a serious impact on the formation of national identity in the border town. According to the 1934 census, Narva was 65% Estonians, 30% Russians, 2% Germans and 3% other nationalities. In terms of language use, the proportion was about the same (Riigi Statistika, 1935). Narva was a multicultural city where different languages and cultures coexisted, and yet it was the Estonian language that was dominant (Naidjonov 2012: 18-19).

At the end of the Second World War and during the Soviet occupation, the ethnic composition of Narva's population changed dramatically. Since the city population was evacuated in 1944 and there were very few repatriates after the war, Narva was populated based on the need to rebuild the city, restart the old industry, and build new factories with new residents from other USSR republics (Tuder & Paulus, 2020: 26-27). After the end of the Second World War, a new stage of industrialization began in Narva: in 1945, the Kreenholm factory was restarted, in 1947 Baltijets factory was built, in 1960 the Baltic power plant (Balti elektriijaam), and in 1969 Estonian power plant (Eesti elektriijaam) were built. By the mid-1960s, it became clear that the local workforce was not enough, so more workers from other USSR republics were sent to Narva. Settlers arrived mainly through organized recruitment. The few returning locals who managed to return to their hometown had to adapt to the new environment (Vseviiov, 2001). By 1989, 93% of Narva's population spoke Russian and 3% Estonian as their native language (Eesti Statistikaamet, 1995).

After the restoration of Estonian independence, Narva faced economic problems: many enterprises were closed, and the city population began to decline rapidly. The results of the 2000 census show that 68,680 people lived in Narva, of which 85.5% were Russians and 4.9% were Estonians (Statistikaamet, 2000). Over the next 10 years, Narva lost another 15% of its population, and in 2011 the population was 58,663, of which 87.7% were Russians and 5.2% were Estonians (Statistikaamet, 2011). The latest census showed that Narva's population has further decreased over the past 10 years, and the ethnic composition of the population became even more polarized – 94.2% Russians, 5,8% Estonians.

Year	1934	1989	2000	2011	2021
Population	23,500	81,200	68,680	58,663	53,911
Estonians	65%	4%	4,9%	5,2%	5,8%
Russians	30%	85%	85,5%	87,7%	94,2%

Narva city's population statistics by citizenship in the 21st century have been much more diverse than in Estonia as a whole. In the whole country in 2000, Estonian citizens made up 80% of the total population, and in 2011 already 85% (Statistical Office, 2000; 2011; 2021). In Narva, from 2000 to 2020, the proportion of people with Estonian and Russian citizenship increased (from 36% to 48% for Estonian citizenship and from 29% to 36% for Russian citizenship), the proportion of stateless people decreased almost three times - from 34% up to 13.6% (Statistical Office, 2000, 2011, City of Narva, 2021)

The war in Ukraine could greatly affect the citizenship of Narva inhabitants. As the war is ongoing, there are limited statistics on this topic at the time of writing, but the number of residents with Russian citizenship has increased in the city (i.e., many Russians moved to Narva after the war). Many respondents, especially young people, answered that they would like to change their Russian citizenship to Estonian or are already in the process.

“Yes, I applied for a change of citizenship. I know the language; I was born in Estonia. It remains only to deal with the Russian bureaucracy” (20_M_35).

2. Methodology

Considering the ethical considerations and importance of the interviewee's opinions, the author chose a qualitative, semi-structured individual interview and focus-group interviews as the data collection method. Before all interviews, interviewees gave their consent for the recording and subsequent analysis of their responses.

Qualitative research is characterized by explaining and understanding people's personal experiences and views (Johnson & Christensen 2012: 33). The collected data was analyzed using content analysis. This qualitative method provides a comprehensive overview of a person's behavior and opinion, and the basis of the method is the description of beliefs and attitudes (Hirsjärvi, Remes, & Sajavaara, 2005: 152).

2.1 Collecting Data

The focus of this thesis is the individual, and the goal is to find out the factors that influence the formation of the individual's national identity after the specific event - in this case, Russia's war in Ukraine. Due to the purpose of the work, which is the desire to explain the influence of social and informal aspects on the formation of an individual's national identity, the use of a qualitative research method, i.e., semi-structured interviews and focus-group interviews, is justified in this study, because questionnaires with predetermined answer options do not allow a detailed description of the causes and formation of people's beliefs and attitudes. Since the formation of state identity is a process that is influenced by many external factors, it is important to understand how this process takes place, what factors promote or inhibit it, and how individuals themselves feel and make sense of it. The use of semi-structured interviews allows for a deeper and more detailed study of this topic, and the focus-groups interview will fill in the remaining gaps.

The study sample consisted of 50 Russian-speaking people aged 20-70 living in Narva. Interviews were conducted between August 2022 to April 2023. This broad age scale was chosen to get an idea of the national identity of all generations and ages. National identity shows the relationship of a person to the state in which he lives. How much he shares the same values as other residents of the country. Keeping in mind the different views of national identity as ethnic and civic, author will focus on civic concept. At the same time, it was considered that the

sample should be as diverse as possible, as well as the different backgrounds of the respondents, among whom were youngsters and seniors, women and men, people with higher education and secondary school education, those who were born in Narva, and those who moved there from other places.

The interview was divided into five different topic blocks, under which there were open questions seeking an answer to the corresponding topic. The first topic block focused on self-identification, with which state interviewees identify themselves and which ties they have with Russia and Ukraine. The main goal of the first block was to determine the level of national identity, and the connection of the Russian-speaking inhabitants of the city of Narva with the Estonian state, whether they feel part of Estonian civil society. The second block of questions was about media consumption, media sources people prefer to be aware of, and how their preferences changed after the February 24 and nearly immediate ban of Russian Federation TV channels by the Estonian government. The second block explored the influence of the media on the formation of national identity. In the third block, the study delved into how the people of Narva feel about Estonia's position on the war. Estonia took a very clear and uncompromising position instantly; within a year Estonia became one of the loudest defenders of Ukraine in the international arena, Estonia was one of the most noticeable contributors to humanitarian and military assistance to Ukraine, and Estonian politicians repeatedly visited Ukraine and met with President Zelensky. It was important to find out whether the people of Narva share such a strong position. The fourth block of the study explored attitudes towards the Ukrainian refugees who fled the war and came to Estonia and specifically to Ida-Virumaa. The answers to this question, which seem to have nothing to do with national identity, show whether the interviewees feel they are part of Estonian civil society and full-fledged residents of Narva and Estonia. The interview ended with the question of whether the interviewees would like to add something that they consider important for this study. The data is analyzed in the third chapter of this thesis. A more detailed interview plan can be found in Annexes 1 and 2,3,4.

All interviews were conducted right before or right after events or visits important for Narva: the removal of Soviet tank-monument (August 16, 2022), Estonian President Alar Karis' visit to Narva (September 8, 2022), the Station Narva music festival (September 20, 2022), the visit of President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen to Narva (October 10,

2022), the premiere of the Rimini Protokoll play “100% Narva” at Vaba Lava Theater (November 21, 2022), Parliamentary elections (March 5, 2023), and the Estonian theater awards (March 27, 2023). A semi-structured interview is an oral exchange of information in which the interviewer attempts to obtain information by asking questions of the interviewee. The semi-structured individual interview plan is drawn up with the main questions, the structure of which is observed during the interview, but based on the direction of the individual interview, the interview takes place in a free form. Depending on the direction of the conversation, the interviewer may ask additional questions between the main questions (Õunapuu, 2014: 171). The use of a semi-structured interview makes it possible, if necessary, to clarify questions and compare the answers of different interviewees, considering their personal experiences. A semi-structured approach gives the ability to ask additional questions depending on the situation which allows the researcher to delve deeper into the problem. Such interviews do not give one clear answer but help to trace the logic and consistency of the thoughts of different people.

Focus groups allow participants to interact with each other, sharing their own and reacting to other people's ideas. This process allows new ideas to emerge that may not have been expressed by any individual in an individual interview. In other words, a focus group is more than just asking a few people at the same time; No one-on-one interview provides such interactivity and involvement in the process as a focus group. Combining one-to-one interviews with focus group interviews is a great opportunity to fill in the gaps left by face-to-face interviews and hear new fresh ideas emerging from participants' discussions. The collection of information about the same problem but from different sources or various methods also allows triangulation, the process by which various datasets are compared to check for consistency, helping to increase confidence in the results. 4 to 5 people took part in each focus group. This is the maximum convenient number of participants for a measured discussion that is comfortable for all participants. Participants for the focus groups were selected according to age groups. There were 3 groups in total from 20 to 29 years old, from 30 to 49 years old, and from 50 to 70 years old. Questions and topics discussed can be found in (Annex 2,3,4), the number of questions has been reduced in contrast to the questions for individual interviews because the goal was to find out from residents how they explain the most striking trends that

emerged during individual interviews. The shortest focus group discussion lasted 1:02, and the longest was 1:35.

Research participants were found through different channels. For one-on-one interviews, the researcher did interviews in public places and on Narva city streets. The goals of the study were explained to the interviewees, anonymity was guaranteed, and an agreement was obtained to record the responses on a dictaphone. To find interviewees for focus groups, invitations were published to take part in an interview for a master's thesis in the most popular Facebook groups in Narva (“Нарва - как она есть”, “Наша эстонская Нарва”, “Нарва+”, “Нарва. Я люблю свой город”). The announcements explained the purpose of the study, promised the anonymity of all interviewees and obtained consent for the recording. It was quite easy to find interlocutors for individual interviews, people refused to communicate and give interviews quite rarely, and most often they were even interested in sharing their thoughts on the current difficult political situation, their feelings and ideas, and were eager to discuss the latest news. Finding people for the focus groups was a challenge. First, it was necessary to find a place for the discussion, which usually lasted more than an hour. Second, it was challenging to find people who could come at a specific time to a specific place and would openly share what they think. However, the goal of doing 50 individual interviews with people of different ages, education, and gender, as well as conducting discussions in three focus groups, was achieved.

One-on-one interviews and interviews in focus groups were conducted in the Russian language so that all interviewees could freely and fully express their thoughts and emotions. To ensure anonymity as much as possible, interviewees were only asked for their ages. All interviews were digitally recorded as audio files with the consent of the interviewees and then transcribed using audio and video transcription software online (Sonix). Later, audio files and transcribed texts were stored on a personal computer in an encrypted folder to minimize public access to the audio files. Each audio file has a code name, for example, 25_F_14, where 25 is respondent age, F means gender (Female) and 14 is the serial number in which the interview was done. Interest from the interviewees was great. If necessary, it was possible to do even more interviews, because there were quite a lot of people who wanted to become part of the research. This shows that the topic of national identity research in the Estonian context is considered necessary and that people are ready to share their opinion and vision of the situa-

tion. Moreover, the topic is extremely relevant. It is necessary to understand how to better integrate the region into Estonia and understand the mood among locals. All respondents received a business card from the researcher, with an email address that can be contacted to receive the completed research paper for reading if they would be interested in the results of the research.

The length of the interview varied: the shortest interview lasted 4:42 minutes and the longest 17:33 minutes. Depending on the course of the discussion, it was always possible to ask additional questions, which lengthened the duration of the interview. Also, not all respondents wanted to actively talk about some topics and limited themselves to a rather short discussion without unnecessary emotions or very personal experiences. The interview started with an introduction of the interviewer and their work to create a pleasant and relaxed atmosphere. During the interview, getting into the topic, we gradually moved from one topic to another. Individual interviewee's openness determined the differences in the length of the interviews. Interviews were conducted face-to-face in Narva public places and streets, and usually before or after important events (Narva Music Week, Ursula von der Leyen's visit, the removal of the Soviet tank monument, the aftermath of the political decision to rename 11 streets in Narva, the Riigikogu election). The decision to conduct interviews in familiar and open public places was taken due to existing research that has suggested a comfortable environment can provide important additional information (Creswell, 2014, 185).

2.2 Data Analysis Method

As a method of analysis, the author chose qualitative content analysis, since it made it possible to analyze data in an understandable and comparable form that ensures a larger level of objectivity. The chosen methodology made it possible to analyze and compare the information collected during the one-on-one and focus-group interviews. The strength of qualitative content analysis is the ability to focus on important places in the text, while at the same time allowing you to find rare phenomena (Kalmus, Masso & Linno, 2015)

All interviews have been transcribed for ease of analysis. Each interviewee received a code to make it easier to quote. The code contains information about the age and gender of the respondent but does not violate the anonymity guaranteed to the interviewees. Because the interviews were long and numerous, extraneous topics that were touched upon during the inter-

views were removed from the transcribed text to ease the analysis of the texts. A total of 267 pages of transcribed text were received. To analyze the interviews, answers to questions related to the same thematic block were collected to make it easier to compare the opinions of Narva residents. As a first step in the analysis, the author of the thesis re-read the opinions received during the interview several times, along the way noting the most common answers. The author then created categories of frequently occurring topics by grouping text sections with similar meanings. Subcategories appeared in recurring topics:

The young generation:

- Associate themselves with Estonia.
- Russian media is often called propaganda.
- Ties with relatives in Russia are very weak.
- Sufficient knowledge of the Estonian language.
- Do not perceive refugees as competitors.
- Females and males have similar opinions, there is no gender difference

The middle-aged generation:

- Associate themselves with Russia or Estonia or Narva.
- Men actively consume various media in different languages, women are poorly versed in media literacy.
- There are connections with relatives, but communication is not regular. Nostalgia for the USSR.
- Knowledge of the Estonian language varies greatly. From sufficient to almost zero. Attitude towards Estonia often depends on the level of the Estonian language.
- Those who work in less-qualified jobs see refugees as competitors.
- Men are actively interested in politics, women are indifferent.

The older generation, 50+:

- Associate themselves with Russia.
- They continue to watch Russian television and consider its ban as censorship.
- Actively communicate with relatives in Russia.
- Poor knowledge of the Estonian language.
- Criticize the Estonian government, and consider it dependent on the US / EU
- Women are more tolerant of refugees than men.

3. Analysis

In this chapter, I describe in further detail the most striking trends of the interviews and focus groups. From the analysis of 50 interviews, it became clear how the different age groups of Narva civically and nationally in terms of the state identify themselves, what media outlets they consume to get information about the war in Ukraine, what locals think about the position of the Estonian government, and how they treat war refugees.

After my analysis, it was decided to divide the five age categories into 3 categories based on the general trends that were encountered among youngsters (from 20 to 29 years old) who were born after the collapse of the Soviet Union, middle-aged people (from 30 to 49 years old) who are usually the most civic and politically active part of the population, and the older generation (from 50 to 70 years old). There was also a clear division by citizenship. The young are most often citizens of Estonia, the elderly are citizens of Russia. Middle-aged people are very diverse in terms of citizenship.

All trends emerging from personal interviews were later discussed in focus groups to confirm them during the discussion and find an explanation for these trends. Also, in each age group, some respondents did not reflect general trends. They will also be mentioned.

3.1 The Self-identity of Narva Locals by Age

Among the inhabitants of the city, there are both citizens of Estonia and citizens of Russia. Some have not received citizenship of any country for various reasons and have the so-called Alien's passport, which is often called a Grey passport. However, after the beginning of the war in Ukraine in Estonia, there is a trend towards changing Russian citizenship and Alien passports for Estonian citizenship (Kärmas, 2022; Pärli, 2023). This section explores how different age groups identify themselves in terms of national identity and how the presence or absence of citizenship and level of Estonian language affect self-identification.

3.1.1 The Young Generation, 20-29 years

In the age group of 20 to 29, almost all respondents were Estonian citizens. One of the respondents was a Russian citizen, but according to him, he is in the process of changing ci-

tizenship and will soon become an official Estonian citizen. What is noteworthy is this young man when asked what happened "February 24, 2022?" answered

(20_M_35): February 24 for me is, first of all, Independence Day, as a person who was born in Estonia. But, of course, this is the day when the war began in Ukraine.

The fact of birth in Estonia was also noted by other respondents. Some even emphasize the fact of being born in Estonia.

(27_M_24): I was born here. I am an Estonian citizen with Russian-speaking roots and with Estonian roots.

Some emphasized that Estonia is their homeland.

(21_F_39): I was born here; this is my homeland. And even if some kind of war starts there or some mess starts, I will always be for my country. I do not support my government, but I will stand for my country, for my state. This is my homeland, I grew up here, I want to live my life here.

At the same time, young people also recalled their Russian origin. Often this was because their parents are Russians and the family speaks Russian at home. However, Estonian culture and traditions are no longer alien to the young generation, as they are to the older generation of Narva.

(20_M_35): I am Russian, but at the same time I was born in this country too. So, I take something from both cultures.

(21_F_39): I am Russian-Estonian. My parents are Russian by nationality, I am Russian, but at the same time, I live in Estonia and fully support it.

Only one young girl out of ten respondents in this age category stated that she associates herself with Russia. However, this is due to her insufficient knowledge of the state language, as she later mentioned in an interview.

(20_F_38): I associate myself with Russia precisely because I speak Russian.

In general, the majority of respondents of the younger generation identify themselves not as Russians, but as Russian-speakers or Estonian citizens. The connection with Estonia and interest in its culture are often emphasized, and the vast majority have practically no problems

with the Estonian language. The younger generation has very weak ties with relatives in Russia. Those who communicate with their distant relatives living in Russia feel more connected with Russia, but still, these ties cannot be called strong, but rather an interest in Russian culture.

3.1.2 The Middle-Aged Generation, 30-49

Among middle-aged interviewees, there were citizens of both Estonia and Russia. Some people have an Alien passport for various reasons: an insufficient level of Estonian language proficiency to become an Estonian citizen, as well as the convenience of living with a “Grey Passport” because there is the possibility of visa-free entrance to Russia. The majority (even those with Estonian citizenship) emphasized that they are Russian people who speak Russian.

(39_F_32): I am Russian, although I have Estonian citizenship, but I am Russian.

(33_F_41): I am rather Russian, Russian-speaking with Estonian citizenship.

(30_F_1): I am an Estonian citizen, but Russian-speaking.

To emphasize his Russian origin, but at the same time belonging to Estonia as a state of residence, a 39-year-old man said:

(39_M_42): I am a Russian Estonian.

Even for Russian citizens, it is sometimes important to emphasize their belonging to Estonia.

(44_M_33): I am a citizen of the Russian Federation and a Russian-speaking resident of Estonia.

Among middle-aged people, there was an interesting phenomenon - nostalgia for the Soviet Union and escapism in the Soviet era. What is interesting is that most of the nostalgic people were at a fairly young age when the Soviet empire ceased to exist.

(42_F_15): I have Estonian citizenship. I'm generally from the old USSR. I generally, it seems to me, from there.

Those who do not have any citizenship lean more towards Russia. Not only because of their knowledge of the Russian language but also because of some resentment towards the Republic of Estonia, believing that the rules established by Estonia for obtaining citizenship are too

harsh. Some people believe that it is too difficult to pass the Estonian language exam. Others believe that for those born in Estonia, there should be no rules and procedures at all for obtaining citizenship.

(42_M_19): I am Russian, but I do not have any citizenship.

Self-identification with the Russian Federation is often associated not only with citizenship but also with close family ties. Middle-aged people still have strong ties with relatives on the other side of the Narva River.

(43_M_43): I am Russian, and I am for Russia, I support it. I have relatives there.

In this age group, among the residents of Narva, there is a motley variety of citizenships, there are also still relatively strong connections with relatives in Russia and poor knowledge of the Estonian language. All of these factors prevent middle-aged people living in Narva from calling themselves residents of Estonia without mentioning their Russianness.

3.1.3 The Older Generation 50+

Almost all the interviewed residents of Narva aged 50 to 70 have Russian citizenship and consider themselves culturally and civically Russians. When speaking of self-identification, they rarely mention Estonia. For the majority, the adoption of Russian citizenship was a logical step after the collapse of the USSR. For others, it was a necessary measure. A 59-year-old man was in the Soviet military, even though he was born in Estonia, he could not take Estonian citizenship according to Estonian laws.

(59_M_10): I was born in Estonia, but they don't give me citizenship. Therefore, I have Russian citizenship.

There are many holders of Alien passports. Often, in their words, one feels resentment towards Estonia for, in their opinion, difficult language exams as a condition for obtaining Estonian citizenship. As a result, these people lean to Russia, talking about their belonging.

(57_M_13): I have an Alien passport. Because at the time when it was necessary to obtain a passport, it was necessary to pass exams to get Estonian citizenship, but I had to work a lot and there was no time to study the Estonian language, it was faster to get an Alien passport than even a Russian one.

(66_M_8): I am Russian. But I have no citizenship. I considered and consider myself a Russian person.

The attitude of the majority of respondents toward Russia is positive, despite the atrocities in Ukraine. Narva locals emphasize the commonality of mentalities with those living in Russia, as well as the presence of relatives in Russia and regular communication with them, including on political topics.

(57_M_13): The attitude towards Russia is positive, of course, because I know the Russian people and their mentality.

(66_M_22): I am a citizen of Russia; my relatives live there.

Long residence in Estonia (some have lived half a century in Narva) did not break the mental connection with Russia. This includes communicating with relatives and supporting the actions and policies of Russia.

(66_M_8): I am a citizen of the Russian Federation, but I have a residence permit in Estonia. I have lived in Estonia since 1972. But I have a connection with Russia.

Despite long and close ties with Estonia, one woman responded that lately, she had begun to feel like a stranger in Narva and Estonia.

(70_F_11): I feel like a stranger here, although I was born here, my mother was born here, my grandmother is buried here, and all my relatives live here. But lately, I've begun to feel like an outsider.

The war in Ukraine has posed challenges to some in Narva who have felt a weakening of their connections with Estonia. This may be due to disagreement with the policy of the Estonian government or their media choices. This will be discussed later in the dissertation.

It can be said that Russia is part of the national and cultural identity of the older generation living in Narva. The majority not only have citizenship of the Russian Federation but also actively maintain contact with relatives in Russia; they feel nostalgic for the Soviet Union and emphasize their Russianness, despite living outside their historical homeland.

3.2. Media Sources Narva Locals Prefer

In this section, we will consider the media sources Narva locals use to get information about what is happening in the world, in Ukraine, and in Estonia. In March 2022, the Estonian government banned Russian TV channels and access to certain websites in Estonia (ERR Rus, 2022a). During the year, this list of banned media resources was updated with new TV channels and websites (Delfi Rus, 2023). Data from a survey commissioned by the Government Office a year after the ban was introduced indicated that the importance of Russian information channels has declined. Over the year, the share of non-Estonians who consider Russian media channels an important source of information has decreased significantly – those who mention Russian channels as an important source of information decreased from 33% to 11%, and as a source of trust from 40% to 18% (Avaliku Arvamuse Seireuring, 2023). The media play an important role in shaping the national and cultural identity of people. Considering that for many residents of Narva Russian TV channels are accessible and understandable, it was they who formed the national and cultural identity of the city's residents. Reducing the consumption of Russian media and replacing them with Estonian Russian-language media will lead to the fact that the national identity of the inhabitants of Narva will begin to change towards Estonia.

This data covers the whole of Estonia, and not specifically Narva, where domestic Russian TV signal is easily accessible. It is almost impossible to estimate how many people in Estonia circumvent the ban on broadcasting Russian channels. In general, the media preferences of all Narva residents across age groups are very different based on language abilities, habits, media trust, and political views of the individual.

3.2.1. The Younger Generation, 20-29 years

This research found that youngsters in Narva do not have a strong habit of reading or listening to the news every day, doing so irregularly and unevenly. Furthermore, they tend not to use so-called traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers) to get information. When interviewing young people, the words “propaganda” and “disinformation” were often heard and their attitude towards the media, in general, was rather skeptical. Some young people were not ready to analyze what is happening using media sources due to an inability to separate truth from lies. For others, there was a lack of interest in public and political life.

(22_M_28): I try not to get too caught up in the news. Disinformation is coming from all sides. And somehow I don't want to get confused and all that. There is news on the Internet, but somehow I don't try to analyze it deeply.

(20_M_27): I don't really read the news, it's just that sometimes something flickers somewhere on the Internet.

Those who follow the news preferred Internet resources - often social networks and video resources: Instagram, Vkontakte (ВКонтакте), Facebook, and Youtube.

(21_F_39): I use Instagram, social media platforms, and VKontakte (ВКонтакте), but I don't watch TV or read online news portals. I'm not interested in politics at all. Sometimes I read something on Facebook, but I try to stay away from the situation in Ukraine. This is not the kind of information that should clog the brain.

(24_F_17): I sometimes read news on the Internet. I'm not specifically looking for them, but if something comes across, I can read it. When the Russia-Ukraine war just started. I watched a lot on YouTube. Now I have stopped. Lots of information, and everyone speaks differently. And now I don't go deep into such nuances.

The use of Tik-Tok and Telegram is only common among youngsters. Other age categories did not mention these sources and apps at all.

(20_M_3): I read the news on the Internet. I prefer Tiktok, YouTube, Vkontakte (ВКонтакте) and Instagram. But I'm not specifically looking for news, if I see it, I can watch it.

(20_F_21): I joined the news groups in Telegram, but I check those groups once a month when there are too many notifications.

Russian state television for young Narva inhabitants is synonymous with fake news. The word "propaganda" was mentioned repeatedly during the interviews.

(27_M_24): Talking about media, I usually read Telegram channels. But definitely not Russian television.

(27_M_24): I don't watch Russian TV channels, I believe there is a lot of propaganda there, for some reason it seems to me.

(20_M_35): Most of what is shown on Russian TV channels is propaganda.

Local media outlets are also familiar to young people living in Narva. But they also prefer to consume them on the Internet.

(20_M_35): Before and after the war, I read both the leading daily Postimees and the online news portal Delfi in both languages. There are videos on YouTube, but they are sometimes absurd. I try to take a little bit of information from all the media, and then a more realistic picture is obtained.

(20_F_38): I read the information both on the Internet online portals and on TV too. Portals are local, and television was also local if I'm not mistaken.

The media habits of the youth in Narva can be characterized as chaotic media consumption - a preference for new video formats over traditional ones. Television is only seen during visits to elderly relatives. Youngsters do not get hung up on one source of media, but regularly diversify their consumption and preferences. This is not always a deliberate and balanced decision, and it can hardly be argued that young people have a strong need to keep abreast of events and analyze them, however, there are exceptions in the form of active young women and men who are critical of information and analyze different sources. Serious gender differences in preferences were also not observed by this research, it cannot be said that young men are more interested in news and the situation in the world than girls, and vice versa.

3.2.2. The Middle-Aged Generation, 30-49

The middle-aged group is perhaps the most diverse in terms of preferences and approaches to media consumption. This age group prefers Russian state or Russian-language news resources, but, if their knowledge of languages and critical thinking allows, they browse foreign media. Women in this age group have little interest in news and politics. Men, on the contrary, are actively looking for information, although they are not always critical of it. The younger the respondent, the clearer their understanding of the Russian media and awareness of fake news.

In general, many felt tired from the flow of information, especially regarding news about the war in Ukraine. Women often spoke of a lack of interest.

(30_F_1): In general, I try not to read the news, no.

(39_F_32): I do not read the media, there is no interest and time for this.

(42_F_18): I don't read anything at all. I'm not interested in politics. If I read it, it's only the headlines.

(35_M_36): I try not to read the media at all. Because there is a lot of pessimism.

(31_M_5): Now I try not to read the news at all. I'm tired of it all, to be honest.

Before the ban on Russian television in Estonia, it was an integral part of the life of the Narva residents. This does not mean that it was the only source of information or that Russian TV channels were completely trusted. But these channels were a daily routine. Many admit that they did not analyze what they heard or read, especially women. Now, many have completely stopped reading and watching the media, because, they have become disoriented in the media space.

(33_F_41): Until the moment Russian television was banned I, of course, watched Russian TV channels and also communicated with relatives from Russia about what I have seen. But I listened to the Estonian news too. But I didn't draw any definite conclusions, I just read. But in general, I don't really want to think about news now, all this requires moral strength. Better to stay away and not delve into it.

(33_F_29): I used to watch standard media, probably some Russian First Channel or the First Baltic Channel. Now something on Facebook comes across from the news, but I don't search for any news at all. It seems to me that, after I will read what is happening in Ukraine, I will go crazy, because we also live on the border with Russia.

Some, out of habit, continue to watch despite the ban due to receiving a Russian signal. Those who cannot catch the signal can bypass the ban with the help of technical solutions. The situation is the same with banned Russian online news portals.

(39_F_31): I read and read news on Facebook. I watch Russian TV channels.

Middle-aged men are much more actively following what is happening in the world and specifically the war in Ukraine. Those who have good language skills read the news not only in Russian but also in Estonian and English. This does not always mean that they adhere to an anti-Kremlin position, but rather indicates that middle-aged men are more politically active.

(39_M_42): I started reading Meduza (A Russian independent online media outlet) more. Meduza makes excellent digests about the war in Ukraine.

(30_F_26): I read daily Postimees, Delfi, and watch Euronews, BBC in Russian. We turn on Russian news sometimes, just to find out what they say there.

(44_M_23): I read Estonian media. Postimees, for example, Ukrainian media, Russian independent ones, which still existed then, which were based in Russia. Now there are none. Western media are very different.

Middle-aged Narva citizens in this research displayed a total distrust of the Estonian media. It is widely believed that all media in Estonia are state-run and not independent. Respondents often draw this conclusion when they have no access to Russian channels, and they start watching Estonian media in the Russian language, which speaks about the war in Ukraine and the situation in Estonia differently from Russian state television.

(41_F_37): Yes, it is difficult to specifically name what was shown on TV, then I watched it on the news. All the same, all the media are controlled, and the state media are controlled 100%.

(42_F_7): The Estonian media present only one position, this is clearly visible.

(42_M_19): The media unilaterally tell everything, they only look into America's mouth and that's it. It is obvious.

(44_M_33): I read Estonian media and minimally Russian. But after the war, even Russian ones are reluctant to watch, because I used to think that they presented information too one-sidedly, so now I don't watch and don't read Russian news at all. There are also sources of information in Estonia, but I don't like them too much either, because there is not very much trust in them. It seems to me that they also write what the Estonian government wants to hear from them.

As a result, people are disoriented and stop believing journalists at all.

(39_F_31): Estonian TV channels have their own truth, Russian ones have their own. So I don't know who to believe.

The 30 to 49 age group have mixed media preferences, from the quick reading of newspaper headlines to Facebook or Western media. It is also worth noting the different approaches to news analysis. This research observed that middle-aged women are not very active media consumers, their media habits are rather chaotic and not characterized by deep analysis. Men

of this age group, on the contrary, follow events quite actively. Some even prefer pro-Kremlin sources and international Western media. Although reading the international media does not always mean respondents undertook their own critical analysis, some understood that the Russian media is spreading propaganda. Others, despite consumption of the Estonian and Western media, continue to believe the Kremlin's rhetoric. Despite the ban on some Russian media sources, Russian state television continues to be part of the lives of middle-aged Narva inhabitants. However, a small percentage have stopped watching.

3.2.3. The Older Generation, 50+

The most conservative group in terms of media consumption is the older generation. Throughout their lives, they have developed certain habits and opinions that are not easy to change. The Russian language is practically the only language through which Narva residents aged 50 and above receive information about what is happening around them. This makes them an easy target for Kremlin propaganda.

In this age group, as in the 'Middle Aged' group, the contrast in activity between men and women is very noticeable. Women have either completely stopped watching the news and reading newspapers, or are very disoriented when, in addition to Russian channels, they watch, for example, Estonian ones, where the worldview is completely different.

(59_F_44): I cried for three days when the war in Ukraine started. And then I decided to quit the media because I reacted to the news too emotionally.

(57_M_13): It's unpleasant when you watch the same episode, and on the Russian channel they show that it is the nationalists who are bombing and killing. And then you watch the same picture on Western channels, but they say something completely different, the opposite.

There is a total distrust of Estonian, even Estonian Russian-language media. Often there are accusations of venality and dependence on the Estonian government. This is a consequence of the fact that people see a completely different picture in the Estonian media, and they have a dissonance, but out of habit they still choose the Russian media.

(57_M_13): All Estonian media outlets are paid by political parties. What party is ruling now? Reform party. What they say, the media repeats.

As mentioned above, Russian TV remains easily accessible.

(59_F_44): People find ways to watch Russian news, they still find ways to catch the signal.

(61_F_16): My husband and I watch political programs all the time, we worry that there is a war going on. But this is digging, who is to blame and who is not to blame? We basically don't do it.

The pro-Kremlin rhetoric of the respondents, the repetition of Russian propaganda clichés and the shifting of the blame for the war to Western countries were typical of those who continue to watch Russian media.

(59_M_45): The Ukrainians were preparing for war; they were armed with everything.

(57_M_13): What happened in the Donbass you ask? Nationalists killed people there for 8 years, and I don't like it as a Russian person.

(57_M_13): The special operation turned into a war between Washington and Western Europe against Russia.

Against the backdrop of news from Russia, the older generation of Narva residents who limit their media consumption to Russian news distrust and reject media resources that show a different picture of the world. Another trend is a total disorientation in the media space and people generally refuse to believe any of the journalists.

(66_M_8): Estonian journalists are biased. That is why I watch Russian TV channels and there is completely different information. And the Estonian media report as it is profitable for them.

(70_F_14): Euronews says one thing there. If you listen to the Estonian news, they say something else. And Russian channels show totally different information.

(70_F_11): For myself, I decided that we do not know anything about the war and we will not learn anything about the war for another 10 years. Therefore, I do not believe any newspapers or television.

The most striking examples of Russian propaganda are repeated by men. Some of their statements are extremely aggressive and duplicate the rhetoric of the most famous Russian television propagandists.

(66_M_2): Eight years of killing Russian people, as if it's normal and everything is as it should be. Nobody noticed and nobody notices this fact.

(66_M_8): Before that, how many years did they bomb Donetsk and Lugansk? All Western media outlets were silent about this. Europe was silent. Everyone was silent. I believe that Russia answered proportionally.

(65_M_4): Ukraine state, this is Russian land, up to Lviv city. And that's where all the filth comes in. Half of the land there has already been sold to the British and Americans. They think that this is their land, and there you can do anything and kill anyone. But Putin will not allow Russians to be killed.

Of all the interviews with the older age category, only one man complained that all his friends are prone to propaganda and believe Russia without analyzing its statements. He tries to convince them and he prefers the Estonian media.

(66_M_22): Last year there was an armed aggression on the part of Russia, but in Narva, I meet misunderstanding from my own citizens of Russia. I watch Russian television, to know its tricks; Usually, I read local newspapers. They are fairly objective.

The older generation is extremely conservative in their choice of media, often due to a lack of knowledge of Estonian and English. Despite the Estonian government's ban on broadcasting Russian TV channels in Estonia, the older generation continues to look for ways to watch it. At the same time, women are rather tired of the aggressive presentation of propaganda news by Russian media, while men, on the contrary, willingly follow Russian propaganda. The practically identical repetition of Russian propaganda clichés about “8 years of killings of Russians in Donbass region” and “War in Ukraine is the U.S. secret plan” is also common. The older generation is extremely wary of the Estonian and international media, often suspecting bias and government involvement. Getting into the field of Estonian Russian-language or international Russian-language media, people of this age become disoriented, because the worldview of these media is different from what is presented on Russian television.

3.3. Attitudes Towards State And Government Decisions

After the outbreak of a full-scale war in Ukraine on February 24, 2022, the Estonian government took a tough and unequivocal position about the war, condemning the Russian attack.

Several laws and regulations were adopted domestically also. The Estonian government decided to actively support Ukraine in the fight against the aggressor, including the supply of weapons (Postimees, 2022) and also banned Russian TV channels and online media (Äripäev, 2022). Attitudes towards government decisions vary depending on the age of the respondents and their national identity. In general support or non-support for the decisions of the government of the state in which a person lives is associated with civic nationalism. At the time of writing, a proposal to restrict the right of Russian and Belarusian citizens to vote in municipal elections is under consideration (ERR Rus, 2023).

3.3.1. The Young Generation, 20-29 years

Young people comprised the majority of an anti-war rally in Narva on February 26, 2022 (Stepanov, 2022a). Young people are also more likely to support the decisions of the government, justifying this with their knowledge of the historical relations between Estonia and Russia and by moral norms that suggest an imperative to support Ukraine as the victim of this war.

(24_F_17): We are doing the right thing. Estonia proceeds from the history of relations with Russia that it is necessary to clearly define its borders.

(20_M_35): Our politicians have always been this way because history shows that we had a similar situation in Estonia. And now, when this has happened again in Ukraine, our politicians have found an opportunity for themselves to fully implement this position.

A positive tone and support were repeatedly voiced concerning the government's decision to ban the broadcasting of Russian propaganda television. However, young people are aware of the possible reactions to this decision of their older relatives, who may perceive the decision to ban propaganda sources with hostility.

(24_F_17): On the one hand, this is the right decision, because for me Russian channels are propaganda. On the other hand, if it is banned, then people will look for something somewhere even more. And the ban will cause resistance.

However, there are supporters of diplomacy and dialogue with Russia among the young. But they are not in the majority and are not outspoken.

(20_M_3): On the one hand, the government helps Ukraine, and on the one hand, it spoils relations with Russia.

(22_M_28): It seems to me that the tough position of Estonia is wrong because it is necessary to look from all sides. And Estonia pays more attention to Europe and the opinion of European countries.

Respondents frequently mentioned the government's decision to remove Soviet monuments. Although young people did not defend their removal, they recognized the importance of the monuments for the older generation.

(21_M_40): There are excessive government measures, for example, the same ban on entry from Russia to Estonia. The same thing touches monuments. I consider it excessive.

Young people generally support and understand the decisions of the Estonian government. They call the war in Ukraine a war unleashed by Russia, they do not criticize the ban on Russian media, referring to it as propaganda. However, they don't want Estonia to become an active participant in the conflict and do not want to spoil bilateral relations between Estonia and Russia. This age group of Narva residents did not hold particularly harsh opinions, although they do not always understand or agree with some decisions (i.e., the removal of monuments).

3.3.2. The Middle-Aged Generation, 30-49

The widest range of opinions in this research came from middle-aged people. The various factors that contribute to this include: the presence or absence of citizenship; knowledge of the state language; the standard of living; and media consumption habits.

Concerning assistance to Ukraine, positive voices prevail. Respondents explain the tough and unambiguous position of Estonia in different ways. Some by the prospect that Estonia may be attacked by Russia in the future, others by the need to voice the position of the EU and NATO, and others believe that helping the victim of aggression is always the right decision.

(42_F_7): We help Ukraine as much as we can. Why do we help? Because if we don't help Ukraine and Russia win the war, then we'll be next.

(33_F_29): Our government is very supportive of Ukraine. I agree with this, help is needed.

(39_M_42): The Estonian government is doing its job. The task of our officials is to voice the position of the allies. In most cases, I am neutral to their statements.

There are also supporters of neutrality.

(30_F_26): It seems to me that we still need to keep a little neutrality and engage in diplomacy.

(44_M_33): A tough position is not entirely correct in any case; you need to be more flexible in any situation and make decisions that are beneficial primarily for your country.

Some Narva residents do not understand why the Estonian government helps another state so actively. Usually, these opponents of helping Ukraine express the need to take care of their own state. They draw attention to domestic problems, both women and men.

(39_F_31): In general, I think that where our Estonia climbs in general. We already have enough problems in the country where to meddle.

(30_F_1): I think we should help Ukraine less. There are problems that our government should solve, rather than solve the problems of another state. Estonian civilians are suffering. Why should we help with our taxes? I think this is wrong. We have our own problems.

Commenting on the Russian TV ban, citizens often say this is a useless decision, noting that those who really want to watch still can anyway.

(41_F_37): People who want to watch Russian TV channels watch anyway, it's still available somewhere.

(30_F_26): It was a pointless decision because those who want it will always find a way out. And I know that everyone has found an opportunity to connect channels. Who wants, who used to watch it, they keep doing it.

Moreover, those who preferred non-political programs are unhappy that they were deprived of Soviet / Russian films and entertainment programs.

(31_M_5): There were good programs, and some films, but now they took everything and turned it off. There's a bunch of stuff in there too. Not only news.

Some critics spoke of discrimination.

(30_F_1): I believe that every person has the right to watch the news the way they want. And it turns out we don't have a choice.

(39_M_42): It was wrong to ban Russian TV channels because we scold Russia for it and become like them ourselves.

(39_F_31): Absolute nonsense this ban on channels, because we have so many Russian people. We still watch it. I have a feeling that the government discriminate against us, and the government has too much spare time for stupid ideas.

A curious opinion was expressed by a young man of 39 years. For him, the government's decision to stop broadcasting Russian television is part of Estonia's integration project.

(39_M_20): Russian channels were banned, I think, no longer because of the war, but because Estonians need Russian speakers who speak Estonian. This was done in order to learn the Estonian language faster.

Half of the respondents in this age group understand the decision to ban TV channels, even if they have some reservations.

(35_M_36): Part of the war takes place in the media space. Accordingly, it is necessary to close access to Russian television. This is a tactical decision.

(44_M_33): Those who need to watch Russian channels will continue to watch them. Although I think the ban on Russian TV is justified.

There are also 100% supportive opinions, mostly from men who have a habit of reading both Estonian and international media.

(44_M_23): I think it was a very good decision, but a few years too late. The fact is that propaganda was conducted daily from TV screens for many years and, unfortunately, this formed for many years a certain point of view of our local Russian people.

(44_M_23): people are in a different information field, they receive information even about what is happening in Estonia from Russian-language sources, that is, distorted information. Therefore, there is little interest in the real motives of certain decisions of the Estonian government.

As can be seen above, among those 30 to 49, there is no consensus on the decisions of the Estonian government that were taken in connection with the war in Ukraine. Most consider the government's decision to ban Russian media in Estonia to be a useless decision and even call it discrimination against the local population. Others understand why the decision was made and suggest that it should have been taken a long time ago. There is no single, consistent opinion expressed. Positions on this issue can be divided into 3 main groups: supporters of assistance for Ukraine, supporters of neutrality, and those who do not like Estonia's active comprehensive support for Ukraine. At the same time, most respondents suggested that Estonia's attitude towards Narva was insufficient.

3.3.3. The Older Generation, 50+

As expected, the older generation in Narva has little support for Estonia and the Estonian government. The repeated narrative is that Estonia is ruled by Western countries and does not make decisions on its own.

(59_F_44): I am inclined to believe that the Estonian government is led by orders from the West, America leads and gives orders. It is clear that Estonians themselves do not decide anything either within our state, nothing, only on orders from the West.

(57_M_13): All the states of Western Europe and America do everything wrong. And Estonia as part of the European Union. Especially the fact that weapons are supplied to Ukraine. That is, the conflict will not be resolved until the supply of weapons stops.

(66_M_8): Estonia does not have its own opinion; it listens to what Europe and America say. Estonia has no opinion in this case.

The decision of the Estonian government to ban the traditional symbols of May 9 and the demolition of Soviet monuments caused misunderstanding among the elderly. This decision was perceived as pressure on the Russian speakers living in Estonia.

(59_F_44): Estonian government puts pressure on Russians in Estonia. It began with the fact that on May 9 our symbols were banned. Now they remove monuments. This is a provocation by the Estonian government.

(66_M_2): Why is it possible to walk with a swastika, nazi signs, but not with a St. George ribbon? This is not a symbol of the USSR, it is a symbol of tsarist Russia.

The older generation is in favor of friendship with Russia, or at least good neighborly relations. Speaking of the government's calls for Russia to be punished for war crimes, this age group in particular does not support such a move. They even accuse Estonian politicians of fighting the Russian language and Russians in Estonia. In addition to criticizing the decisions and policies of the Estonian state, older residents feel abandoned and alienated.

(65_M_4): Until the Estonian authorities will act so harshly towards Russia, then there will be no changes. Let them better think with their own brains how to continue to be friends with Russia. They want to strangle the Russian language.

(66_M_2): The government needs to take care of its country, and not get into these squabbles, into big showdowns of big states. Sit still and that's it.

(66_M_22): I believe that we Russian speakers here in Narva were abandoned by the Estonian state. They told us to "go to Russia," and so they did. That's why people here now support Putin and watch Russian channels.

Only one respondent stood out by supporting the Estonian government's decisions:

(66_M_22): Yes, the Estonian government is doing everything right. There is international law, and international relations and everyone has to follow the rules, and Russia got out of them. We are often called Putinists here, it's a shame.

As the main consumers of Russian TV in Narva, the elderly took a very negative view of the government's decision immediately after the start of the war in Ukraine to ban the broadcast of Russian television in Estonia. The majority can still pick up a Russian signal or were helped by more technically advanced relatives to install devices to bypass the ban.

(57_M_13): I can easily watch Russian channels. Prohibiting TV channels is a useless solution. This is just aggravating the situation and kindling inter-ethnic relations.

(59_M_10): During the Soviet Union there was the Voice of America, it was jammed by the Soviet Union. Now Europe is jamming Russia. Why does Estonia ban channels? I want to decide for myself, give me a choice, and ask people's opinion.

Most of the negative reactions and misunderstandings in this research were demonstrated by the older generation. It is difficult for them to understand why all their lives, living in Estonia, they could watch Russian television, easily host relatives from Russia in Narva, and cele-

brate May 9 with Soviet symbols but now this has changed. A ban on the entry of Russian relatives to Estonia is difficult for older and it is relatively easy to get a fine for wearing Soviet symbols in public. The ban on TV channels is seen as something easy to circumvent. This all contributes to an even greater distrust of the government because the older generation believes that government wants to hide the truth. Furthermore, they express feelings that they are discriminated against based on their language and origin.

3.4. Attitudes Towards Refugees, Support for State Policy

Towards Refugees

In 2022, perhaps for the first time since regaining independence, Narva faced an influx of refugees (Kimmer, 2022). This was an unusual situation for a city normally associated with outward migration. At first, the Estonian government feared that the arrival of Ukrainian refugees in Narva could cause tension and conflict with the local Russian-speaking population (Government press conference, 2022). However, a year later, no serious conflicts have occurred. Moreover, the information checkpoint for refugees and the charity organization “Friends of Mariupol” started to operate in Narva (Stepanov, 2022b). Most Ukrainians used Narva as a transit point to go further to Tallinn or other European countries. Others moved to a border town because of the relatively inexpensive housing and the ability to communicate in the Russian language (Nikolajev, 2022b). According to data from the Estonian Ministry of Internal Affairs, 526 Ukrainian refugees were registered in Narva at the end of 2022 (ERR Rus, 2022b). Considering the Russian narrative about war, support or non-support for refugees is very closely linked to a person’s national identity and civic position.

3.4.1. The Younger Generation, 20-29 years

Youngsters in Narva are perhaps the most active supporters of aid and communication with Ukrainian refugees. They have no problem meeting Ukrainians and do not see them as competitors for jobs or places at the university.

(20_M_3): Narva is a friendly city, actually. If we see Ukrainians in school, we don't start beating or insulting them. We approach, get to know each other, laugh, talk, ask how life is, and how are they? That is, without any aggression.

Also, the majority of young people do not envy the benefits provided to people who fled the war.

(20_F_38): I don't follow politics much. The Estonian government provides some kind of support to Ukrainian refugees. Provides apartment houses, and I support it.

The young people this research engaged with said that they treat Ukrainians who came to Estonia well, and so do their peers.

(27_M_24): As far as I know, there is no negative towards refugees among my peers. If the city has the opportunity to accept them, then why not, if there are jobs and accommodation. Moreover, it is much easier for them here, in Narva, where the majority are Russian speakers.

(27_M_24): The media is 100% embellishing that there is a negative attitude towards refugees. Russians also support refugees, as far as I know. All my friends treat them very well.

(20_M_35): To be honest, all people have different opinions. But still, most of my peers are on the side of Ukraine.

Of course, there is also a rational approach to accepting those who fled the war. Young people understand that Ida-Virumaa and Narva are not the richest parts of Estonia, and it will not be possible to help refugees indefinitely.

(24_F_17): I understand that there are families who do not have a home, they came to another country. I try to be calm and understanding. It seems to me that we need to help as far as possible if we can help and there is this money for help, places where to accommodate them, why not. But this should not be at a loss to our citizens.

Young people understand that refugees do not always have an easy life in a new country and that attitudes towards them should not depend on their nationality.

(20_M_35): Refugees are all different, of course. I am neutral towards them, and my friends too.

(21_M_40): Personally, I did not notice any special attitude towards refugees in principle, on the part of other people. I am neutral towards them. Refugees are people after all.

(22_M_28): The attitude towards refugees is more neutral. I heard that many refugees have difficulties finding work.

Youngsters noted a negative attitude towards refugees among the older generation. They explain this attitude by perceived competition for jobs and housing.

(21_M_40): People are annoyed because refugees can occupy their jobs or flats. The dissatisfaction can be understood. However, I didn't notice any kind of, let's say, hatred on ethnic grounds.

Only one opinion of a young woman stood out from the general trend. Earlier, this woman, when asked about self-identification and knowledge of the state language, answered that she identifies herself as Russian and her knowledge of Estonian is limited. She was wary of Ukrainian refugees due to her personal negative experiences.

(21_F_39): Now here in Narva, the attitude towards Ukrainians is much more priority than towards us. Even in the sense that if we are relaxing somewhere in clubs, some kind of conflict begins with the participation of Ukrainians, the Police will always take their side, despite the fact that we are citizens of this country.

Young people have a positive or neutral attitude towards the appearance of refugees in Narva, but most importantly, displayed an understanding of why these people were forced to come to Estonia. In the interviews conducted, youngsters did not express fear that refugees would deprive them of their jobs or housing. This may be because young people have an advantageous knowledge of the Estonian language (Most at least to an intermediate B1 level). Also, for young people, the benefits that refugees receive when they come to Estonia are not perceived negatively.

3.4.2. Middle-Aged Generation, 30-49

The opinions of middle-aged people about refugees are more diverse than among young people. It can be even said that opinions are polar, from positive to negative. Most often, a negative or positive reaction to refugees is based on whether a local considers Ukrainians to be competitors. It may also be drawn from personal communication. Those who communicate with refugees at work or in other situations tend to be more friendly and tolerant towards Ukrainian refugees.

(30_F_26): We support refugees. And I think that Estonia is pursuing a good policy. My husband and I have refugees at work, and we communicate with these people.

(31_M_5): If the refugees are normal people, then let them work. Different people come to Estonia. If they work and try to do something good for the city, then that's great.

Some residents understand that refugees from Ukraine were forced to leave their homeland because of the war and now have to start everything from scratch.

(48_F_30): Narva locals have a normal attitude towards refugees, they understand that people did not just come there, that the situation there is difficult, this is a war, it's scary.

(44_M_33): I sympathize because I understand that many have either lost their homes or their jobs, of course, people need to be helped. I will not insult, humiliate or offend refugees. I understand everything, and if someone needs help, maybe I will help.

The negative attitude towards refugees among some of the middle-aged residents of Narva is explained by competition for jobs. It is not a secret that there are not many jobs in Narva, and even fewer jobs have good salaries. Unlike the younger generation, middle-aged people tend to have worse Estonian language skills, lessening their advantage over Ukrainians.

(35_M_36): Someone is afraid that refugees will take jobs. Someone, on the contrary, has a positive attitude, because we have a lack of professionals and specialists, and we always need an influx of new blood.

(44_M_23): Some approach it negatively, opposing the fact that people come here because refugees take jobs and some money is allocated for them. Attitude towards refugees is very different depending on the people.

(30_F_1): It's hard for locals to find work. And for refugees now, it seems to me, it's easier. They are in priority, and probably because of this, the attitude towards them is more negative than positive.

Another factor is allowances and benefits. Local residents repeatedly shared their resentment that when they had difficult times, the state was in no hurry to help them and allocate financial assistance. Those struggling financially at the time of the interview were especially offended. Such people are even less supportive of government decisions regarding Ukraine,

even if they understand that there is a war going on in Ukraine and people are dying, and refugees came to Estonia out of desperation.

(39_M_42): Perhaps someone in Narva does not like the fact that refugees come here and get more than those people who grew up here and lived all their lives get.

(39_F_31): The negativity comes from the understanding that Estonia helps refugees, for example, but they don't even want to provide our pensioners with food assistance. Somehow it's not fair.

(42_F_15): It would be better if the government thought about its population. Why do they have enough money for Ukraine, but there is no money for us?

(42_M_19): I would like the Estonian government to pay more attention to the locals. We help others but forget our own. Unfortunately, very often.

Most of the negative reactions to refugees from Ukraine come from those in the 30 to 49 age group who have difficulty finding jobs and who can be classified as lower middle class.

(39_F_32): Because everything in our state has become more for Ukrainians than for locals.

(42_F_18): Let the refugees go to Tallinn, there are more opportunities, and the city is bigger. We have nowhere to live and work here.

The main fears and claims of the middle-aged generation are related to the fear of losing their jobs because of the refugees, and dissatisfaction with the fact that the state allocates assistance to refugees, which many have never received from Estonia. But in this case, the presence of education and knowledge of the Estonian language plays an important role. Those who are specialists in their field, know Estonian well and belong to the middle class, most often do not feel threatened by the visitors, and vice versa. Another important factor that makes up a negative or positive attitude towards Ukrainians is personal experiences of communication. Those who work or communicate with Ukrainians are more likely to speak positively about them and even find advantages for Narva.

3.4.3 The Older Generation, 50+

If among the middle-aged generation, attitudes towards refugees depend on personal experience of communication with refugees and on whether the respondent considers refugees to be

possible competitors for jobs, then among the older generation, the attitude towards refugees depends very much on the gender of the respondent. Women are more tolerant towards newcomers, especially if they see that they need help. The older men of Narva that this research engaged with took an almost unambiguously negative position towards refugees. This is a mixture of prejudice and envy, and most often a negative attitude among those who have never met refugees personally, but rather heard myths from someone that people who came from Ukraine require special treatment or receive large financial benefits. The men that this study spoke to were dissatisfied that they were unable to raise their social status in Estonia, something likely driven by their lack of knowledge of the Estonian language. They were also dissatisfied that in difficult times the Estonian government did not provide them with such support.

Most women spoke about their desire to help refugees and their good-natured attitude towards those who came from Ukraine in the interviews.

(70_F_6): The attitude towards refugees in Narva is good. We have a youth center opposite our house, there are so many refugees there, and they are all happy with the way they were received.

(60_F_46): Since the refugees have arrived, then we need to help people, they have nowhere to go.

(61_F_16): We gave a lot of our issues to refugees. We did not ask whose refugees they are, or where they flee. The main thing is that they have children. All undressed and tired.

(70_F_11): I live in a house and Ukrainians walk past us to the bus station. It must be seen, they are with small children. I helped one girl, she has two children, bags. I ran to help her. She was so grateful, she even hugged me.

The argument against resettling refugees in Narva is the perceived increased competition this would lead to, or that new inhabitants will worsen the financial situation locally.

(70_F_14): I am fed up with these refugees, relations are escalating for the worse, and Ukrainians want too much. They claim something and demand something, but we ourselves live in poverty.

(70_M_9): Of course, war is a terrible thing. I feel sorry for people, especially small children. But first, the government needs to deal with us. We live poorly... then think about the refugees.

Men shared the harshest reactions. Some had negative experiences of communicating with refugees, while others formed a negative position based on what they heard from others.

(66_M_2): What kind of a positive attitude towards them can be if having lived in Ukraine and knowing Russian well, she refuses to talk to me in it and tells me that she does not understand? Stupid!

(66_M_8): These refugees are being too arrogant. They require too much attention. Look at the cars they have!

— *Did you meet them on the streets of Narva?*

— *No, I have not.*

(59_M_45): Refugees just came to Estonia and were immediately given jobs. And the locals still try to survive. This is the attitude of the Estonian government towards us.

Some men in this age group used the harsh language and Kremlin clichés associated with Russian Propaganda outlets, comparing Ukrainians with fascists.

(65_M_4): Population migration is never good, especially from Ukraine. Because these people, scum, they are all fascists, and I hate fascism. I am an old-school man. Yes, I lived through Soviet times. I hate fascist scum.

(57_M_13): Refugees are against Estonia's Russian-speaking population, and therefore relations between Russians and refugees will not be normal. The refugees who came here, came with money because without money you won't get to Europe.

From the interviews, it became clear that the most hostile attitudes to refugees came from 50+ men. Women were more empathic and friendly. Men's negative attitudes were sometimes driven by old grudges against the Estonian government. These include occasions where they were required to speak Estonian for work. Due to living in established social circles, these people had little chance of meeting refugees in real life. Often, attitudes were formed from negative stereotypes and myths.

3.5. Focus Group Discussions

To confirm the trends and find explanations for the non-obvious trends seen in the interviews, it was decided to conduct three focus groups: one each for the young, middle-aged, and elderly age brackets.

These focus groups confirmed the patterns displayed in interviews - that young people had rather weak ties with Russia. They considered Estonia their home and link their future with it. They do not always see this future in Narva itself but most often in Estonia. Civically and partly culturally they identify themselves with Estonia. Most were Estonian citizens or would like to become Estonian citizens in the near future. Most supported the decisions of the Estonian government vis-à-vis Ukraine.

In the focus group, it was revealed that after the start of the war in Ukraine, young people felt they had some problems communicating with the older generation.

The older population is still mentally in Russia because for so many years they have watched Russian TV channels and communicate with each other. But now, it seems to me, even the older population has revised their views because there is already so much information from different sources (Focus-group Youngsters).

Young people do not see refugees as competitors; rather, they even have an interest in their peers from Ukraine. They explained that they did not fear Ukrainians as a source of competition as they had strong ties with Estonia and a good knowledge of Estonian and English.

I know that this is my country, that I belong here and that I am needed here (Focus-group Youngsters).

Concerning the media, young people are passive. They explain their lack of interest in the news by the presence of other interests and expressed a distrust of the media in general.

Among middle-aged people with different citizenships, varying levels of language proficiency and a trend for Soviet nostalgia were noticeable. Nostalgic participants explained that they most likely experienced such feelings because they are not fully integrated into Estonian society and they were unable to consume media and culture in Estonian. Therefore, Soviet films and music were understandable and evoked memories of a happy childhood.

You know, everything was somehow clear there, everything was kind of native and resembled childhood. (Focus group Middle-aged)

When asked why some middle-aged people do not support the government's decision to ban Russian TV channels even if they understand it is propaganda, one middle-aged man said the following:

My mom's example. She has her point of view on the war in Ukraine. Well, let her sit, and watch TV on her sofa at home. She is a couch critic, let her watch this Russian television. (Focus group middle-aged)

Since the results of the interviews with the older generation did not come as a surprise, either in terms of the media they prefer or in terms of self-identification, more attention was paid to refugees during their focus group discussions. The differences between women's and men's attitudes to refugees were further explored:

Perhaps we women are more emotional and empathic. Yes, and we often walk around the city, we see a lot, including refugees. But the men are all sitting in front of the TV. (Focus-group Elderly)

4. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis was to find out the impact of the war in Ukraine and the decisions taken by the Estonian government regarding the war and Narva on the level of national identity of the inhabitants of Narva. Recalling that national identity has civic and cultural factors, we will focus on civic forms of national identity. This thesis also explored how the media habits of residents have changed, whether the residents of Narva support the arrival of Ukrainian refugees, and if they approve of the Estonian government's assistance for Ukraine. By conducting individual interviews and focus groups, this thesis explored the positions of Narva residents on these matters in detail.

Through the interview process, it became clear that Narva inhabitants are not a homogeneous group with a unanimous opinion. Even within the same demographic groups, opposing opinions occurred. Attitudes towards Estonia and national identities depended on different factors: the presence of Estonian citizenship, Estonian language level, preferred media, education, employment opportunities, and/or the strength of ties with relatives in Russia. Positive or negative individual experiences with refugees from Ukraine also influenced attitudes. A positive attitude towards the newcomers indicated an understanding of the reasons for which the refugees arrived in Estonia. These participants shared the position of the Estonian government and tended to have a stronger sense of Estonian national identity.

Those with stronger Estonian language skills (even those without Estonian citizenship) expressed more trust in Estonian government policies. Those participants have more opportunities to learn from varied media outlets and official sources about the actions of the government and life in Estonia without distortion. One respondent mentioned that the inhabitants in Narva often learn about what is happening in Estonia, the decisions of the Estonian government, and the logic of these decisions from the Russian state media. Residents with better language skills are better integrated into Estonian society, follow what is happening in other regions of Estonia more frequently, and feel that Estonia is their home. From these findings, it can be concluded that knowledge of the official national language is an important component of national identity in Estonia.

In most cases, the young people in this study did not have problems with their Estonian language knowledge, so their feelings of national identity were stronger. They consider Estonia home, appreciate the opportunities they have in Estonia, and often link their future with Estonia. They consider Russia their ancestor's homeland but often did not have strong ties. Despite a low interest in reading newspapers, monitoring online portals, and watching television, the young people in this research felt very clearly that Russian state media is synonymous with propaganda. This often leads to inter-generational family conflicts, and conflicts in society. In this case, the example of a young teacher Alina Voronchikhina (24 years old) is very indicative, who on May 9 came out in Narva in a T-shirt with the inscription "Putin x**lo". Young teacher was sharply criticized by the inhabitants of Narva of middle and older generation. The actions of the teacher were discussed among themselves and on the Internet. As a result, the teacher decided not to extend the contract with the school and leave. (Parv, 2023)

In terms of feelings of national identity, the most diverse group was middle-aged Narva residents. What they think about the Estonian state directly depends on their standard of living, how they have settled in life, job satisfaction, and Estonian language level. Higher levels of education and language knowledge led to a more diverse worldview and made engagement with different media more likely (As opposed to solely relying on Russian state television). Those whose knowledge does not allow them to read Estonian or international media most often become dependent on Russian propaganda. Estonia's position on Ukraine, support for Ukrainian refugees, banning Russian TV channels, and the removal of Soviet monuments do not always find approval among this age group. At the same time, middle-aged men take a more active civic position than women of the same age. Overall, middle-aged Narva residents displayed varied feelings about Estonian national identity. Of this cohort, there was an equal split between those who felt themselves to be an integral part of Estonia and those who felt more Russian.

This study found that the most difficult and least flexible inhabitants of Narva were the older age group, who held stubborn views about their national identity – they often felt Russian or Soviet and often not very Estonian at all. Their life values and habits are long been formed and are difficult to change. However, even among this group, there are atypical opinions. There is also a big gap between the positions of women and men. The older women who

participated in this research repeatedly noted that they stopped watching Russian political programs after the war began. They also suggested that after meeting refugees in Narva, they began to be more critical of Russia's actions in Ukraine. The situation is more complicated with the men this research spoke to. They continue to prefer Russian media outlets and condemn the banning of their broadcast as censorship. In general, feelings of Estonian national identity in this cohort can be characterized as weak. The Estonian state has a lot of work to do to engage with Narva's older generation.

4.1. Advice And Possible Future Research Topics

Feelings of Estonian national identity among Narva locals may be enhanced through positive engagement between the state and the people. Crises, like war, are an opportunity for people to rethink their values and identity. For the state, this represents an opportunity to improve relations with its residents.

During the interview, the residents of Narva repeatedly shared feelings that the rest of Estonia pays little attention to Narva and they feel abandoned. Below are some suggestions for how the government might improve the situation in Narva and improve feelings of national identity among Narva's Russian-speakers:

1. There should be more opportunities to learn Estonian in Narva. Many respondents noted that they made attempts to learn Estonian, but quality language courses are often quite expensive. Due to a lack of practice, what they learn is quickly forgotten. Poor language skills can be directly linked to a tendency to engage with Russian state propaganda. Estonian language knowledge makes it possible to better understand what is happening in Estonia. It also generates feelings of national identity by feeling more a part of the country and enhances the ability to communicate with Estonian speakers.
2. There are still many people in Narva who have Alien passports. Those without citizenship often have feelings of uselessness and low self-worth. These Alien passport holders are an easy target for manipulation by Russia. This undermines feelings of Estonian national identity. Estonia could do more to promote the benefits of Estonian citizenship to these people with awareness campaigns.

3. Banning the broadcast of Russian state TV channels was a wise decision that will bring results in the future. Of course, this caused some resistance and criticism, and some people who can catch a signal from Russia continue to consume Russian media content. However, a study commissioned by the Government Office shows that Estonian residents now watch Russian TV channels less. The ban on broadcasting Russian television should be extended because by breaking out of the information field of Russia and getting into the information field of Estonia, residents often noted they have more trust and confidence in Estonian society and the state. It was especially noticeable that those who engaged with international and Estonian media in Narva called the war a “War“, and not, as Russia insists, a “Special Military Operation“.
4. The Estonian government should support the local media in Narva more. In particular for those who do not know Estonian, the local Russian-language media is the only way to keep abreast of the news of the city, the region, and Estonia as a whole. In March 2022, the government decided to allocate grants to the Russian-language media in Estonia, the only condition was that media outlets also have the Estonian version. Therefore, the local Russian media in Narva were automatically excluded from this list. High-quality Russian-language local media is a guarantee that people in Narva will better understand the decisions of the government, even those who do not speak Estonian. Now the situation is such that the older generation often learns news about what is happening in Estonia from Russian media sources. This negatively affects their feelings of national identity and belonging. It also erodes trust in Estonia in general, as the Russian media often deliberately distort events.
5. From the interviews conducted, it became clear that residents do not always understand the rationale of the government’s decisions. Government officials could visit Narva more often and communicate more with residents. They could do more to positively engage with citizens and better explain government positions. This will create a sense of interest in Narva and will strengthen the national identity. Communication with those who shape policy is very important for people in the regions to feel involved in what is happening in the country. This is especially important to feel in Narva, where respondents repeatedly expressed feelings of abandonment.

6. The history of Narva for many residents begins in 1944-1945. For most people living in the city, Narva has always been a Russian-speaking city. More should be done to communicate and commemorate the history of the city before the Soviet occupation so residents understand that Narva is an integral part of Estonia and that the inhabitants of the city are just as important as the inhabitants of other cities in Estonia.
7. The idea to deprive Russian and Belarusian citizens of the right to vote in municipal elections should be closely scrutinized. It may harm feelings of national identity and cohesion in Narva, where a significant part of the population are Russian citizens (mostly the older generation). Moreover, this may disaffect young people (who generally hold positive views of the Estonian state) by disenfranchising their relatives and friends.
8. The locals engaged in this research held quite a few prejudices about refugees from Ukraine. However, interviews showed that those who had personal contact with refugees usually spoke positively about this experience. Those without personal contact often saw refugees as competitors. Perhaps the municipal authorities should organize more joint events for local residents and refugees to socialize.
9. Participants held prejudices relating to the benefits refugees receive as well as feelings that the refugees have an advantage in getting a job compared to locals. Municipal authorities, the government, and the media should work harder to debunk these myths. The authorities, both local and state, should ensure the residents of Narva are adequately supported.
10. It would be interesting to continue monitoring the changes in feelings of national identity in Narva. In this sense, the middle-aged generation may be the most interesting as they held diverse opinions. The media consumption habits of Narva residents are also an intriguing topic. As these habits change, it is likely that attitudes to many key issues will also change too. This may relate to their place and role in Estonia, attitudes to Estonian history, Soviet monuments and symbols. The adaptation of Ukrainian refugees in Narva is also an important topic for the state. Will Ukrainian's national identity change in Estonia? How? Future research could focus on Ukrainians in Narva and how they adapt if they choose to stay in Estonia long-term.

This research may be useful to integration organizations, local authorities, Estonian and international media, and even the Estonian government to better understand the mood in Narva after the launch of the war in Ukraine. It may also be useful to understand how the Russo-Ukrainian war and the decisions of the Estonian government have influenced feelings of national identity in Narva and what can be done to bolster feelings of national identity among Narva's different age groups.

Summary

Цель данной работы была выяснить влияния войны в Украине и принятых решений Эстонского правительства в связи с войной на уровень государственного идентитета жителей Нарвы. А также выяснить какие как изменились привычки жителей при выборе СМИ, поддерживают ли жители Нарвы приезд украинских беженцев и решение эстонского правительства всецело поддерживать Украину. В ходе индивидуальных интервью и интервью в фокус-группах было выяснено, как жители Нарвы относятся к Эстонии, как они видят себя в Эстонии, изменилась ли их ассоциация себя с Эстонией после начала войны в Украине и принятием правительством Эстонии некоторых решений, которые прямо коснулись жителей приграничного города.

Магистерская работа разделена на три основные части. В первой теоретической части автор знакомит с концепцией государственной идентичности, основными компонентами государственной идентичности и с факторами, которые оказывают на неё влияние. Также в первой части работы есть глава об истории Нарвы и изменении национального состава города, это поможет лучше понять контекст. Во второй части автор описывает метод сбора и анализа информации. Третья часть является анализом, проведенных в Нарве интервью в фокус-группах и индивидуальных интервью с жителями разных возрастов и полов.

В процессе проведения интервью стало понятно, что жители Нарвы – это не гомогенная группа с единым мнением. Даже внутри одной возрастной группы могут встречаться диаметрально противоположные взгляды. Отношение к Эстонии зависит и от наличия эстонского гражданства, уровня знания государственного языка, тому, каким СМИ они отдают предпочтение, чтобы быть в курсе новостей, образования и наличия работы, сильны ли связи с родственниками в России. Положительный или отрицательный опыт индивида с беженцами из Украины тоже влияет на отношение к Эстонии и уровень государственного идентитета.

Те, кто не имеет проблем с эстонским языком, относится к Эстонии более лояльно. Такие жители Нарвы лучше интегрированы в эстонское общество, чаще следят за происходящим в других регионах Эстонии и ощущают Эстонию своим домом. Можно

с уверенностью утверждать, что знание языка является важным компонентом государственной идентичности.

Проблем со знанием эстонского языка не имеет молодежь, поэтому их государственный идентитет в целом на высоком уровне. Они ощущают Эстонию своим домом, высоко оценивают возможности, которые у них есть в Эстонии, часто связывают своё будущее с этой страной. Россия для них – это родина предков, с которой имеется не так много связей. Несмотря на невысокий интерес к чтению газет, новостных онлайн порталов и просмотру телевидения, молодые люди от 20 до 29 лет однозначно понимают, что российские СМИ несут в себе пропаганду и искаженную информацию. Часто это знание молодых людей приводит к конфликтам поколений внутри семьи и в обществе.

Самая разнообразная возрастная группа в вопросе государственного идентитета – это люди среднего возраста от 30 до 49 лет. То, как они относятся к Эстонской республике и решениям эстонского правительства, напрямую зависит от того, как они устроились в жизни, если ли у них удовлетворяющая их работа, достаточное знание эстонского языка. Хорошее образование и знание языков помогает людям среднего возраста шире смотреть на мир, и получать более разнообразную информацию из разных СМИ, а не только посредством Российского государственного телевидения. Те же, чьи знания не позволяют читать эстонские или международные СМИ, чаще всего попадают в сети российской пропаганды. Отношение к решениям государства поддержать Украину в войне, принять украинских беженцев, запретить российские телеканалы и убрать советские памятники с агрессивными символами, не всегда находят одобрение у этой возрастной группы. Можно сказать, что именно среди людей от 30 до 49 лет самый разнообразный спектр мнений по отношению к эстонскому государству. При этом мужчины среднего возраста занимают более активную гражданскую позицию, чем женщины того же возраста. Говоря о возрастной группе от 30 до 49 лет можно сказать, что государственный идентитет этой группы находится на среднем уровне.

Самая сложная и наименее гибкая возрастная группа среди жителей Нарвы в отношении к государственного идентитета – это пожилые люди. Их жизненные ценности и привычки давно сформировались и с трудом поддаются корректировке. Однако, даже среди этой группы встречаются и нетипичные мнения. Большой разрыв наблюдается и

между женщинами и мужчинами. Женщины неоднократно отмечали, что после начала войны перестали смотреть российскими политические передачи, а также что после встреч с беженцами в Нарве, стали более критично относиться к действиям России в Украине. С мужчинами ситуация сложнее, они продолжают находиться в российском информационном поле, а запрет на трансляцию правительством Эстонии воспринимают как цензуру. В целом государственную идентичность это возрастной группы можно охарактеризовать как низкую.

При должной взаимной работе государства и самих жителей города, уровень государственного идентитета групп среднего и пожилого возраста может стать выше, потому что кризисные ситуации, как война, являются возможностью для индивида переосмыслить свои ценности и идентичность, а для государства это возможность улучшить отношения со своими жителями.

В ходе интервью жители Нарвы неоднократно делились своими переживаниями, что на их город остальная Эстония обращает мало внимания и жители чувствуют себя оставленными. Далее автор данной магистерской работы предложит, что могло бы быть сделано правительством для исправления ситуации и повышения государственного идентитета жителей Нарвы:

1. В Нарве определённно должно быть больше возможностей для изучения эстонского языка. Многие респонденты отмечали, что они делали попытки выучить эстонский язык, но часто хорошие языковые курсы довольно дорогие, а также из-за отсутствия языковой практики, выученное быстро забывается. Незнание языка приводит к ситуации, когда человек вынужденно оказывается в информационном поле России. А новости о жизни в Эстонии узнает их российских СМИ.
2. В Нарве до сих пор немало людей, имеющих Серый паспорт. Среди людей это создаёт ощущение ненужности и делает обладателей Серых паспортов легкой мишенью для манипуляций со стороны России. Эстония могла бы проводить больше информационных кампаний о преимуществах эстонского гражданства, мотивируя людей сделать выбор в его пользу.

3. Запрет на трансляцию Российских каналов в перспективе очень правильное решение. Конечно, это вызвало некоторое сопротивление и критику, а часть людей, кто может поймать сигнал из России, продолжает потреблять российский медиа контент. Однако, исследование, проведённое по заказу Канцелярии правительства, показывает, что жители Эстонии стали меньше смотреть российские телеканалы. Запрет на трансляцию Российского телевидения должен быть продлён.
4. Правительство Эстонии должно больше поддерживать местные СМИ в Нарве. Для части людей, которые не знают эстонский язык, местные русскоязычные СМИ это единственная возможность быть в курсе новостей города, региона и Эстонии в целом. В марте 2022 года правительство приняло решение выделить денежные гранты русскоязычным СМИ Эстонии при условии, что у них имеется и эстонская версия. Поэтому местные русские СМИ в Нарве автоматически выпадали из этого списка. Качественные русскоязычные местные СМИ – залог того, что в Нарве буду лучше понимать решения правительства и Эстонии в целом, даже те, у кого нет знания эстонского языка, а это в свою очередь повысит уровень государственного идентитета и чувства принадлежности к Эстонии.
5. Из интервью с жителями Нарвы стало ясно, что жители не всегда понимают суть решений правительства. Было бы правильно для представителей власти чаще посещать Нарву и больше общаться с местными жителями, разъяснять им позицию эстонского правительства и отвечать на волнующие горожан вопросы. Хорошую попытку сблизиться с Нарвой предприняла Президент Керсти Кальюлайд, продолжил традицию и нынешний Президент Алар Карис.
6. История Нарвы для многих жителей начинается с 1944-1945 годов. Для большинства людей проживающих в городе, Нарва всегда была русскоязычным городом. Следует больше рассказывать об истории города до советской оккупации, чтобы жители понимали, что Нарва – неотъемлемая часть Эстонии.
7. Идея правительства лишить граждан России и Республики Беларуси права голосовать на муниципальных выборах должна быть серьёзно

проанализировала. Возможно, это не самая лучшая идея и её реализация принесёт больше вреда для государственной идентичности жителей Нарвы, где большая часть жителей это граждане России. Более того, это может повредить высокому уровню государственного идентитета молодежи, ведь запрет голосовать на муниципальных выборах может коснуться их родственников, это в свою очередь не прибавит доверия к Эстонии.

8. У жителей Нарвы довольно много предубеждений о беженцах из Украины. Те, кто имел личные контакты с бежавшими от войны в Украине, обычно отзываются об этом опыте положительно. Те же, кто не имел контактов, часто видят в беженцах конкурентов за работу и ресурсы. Возможно, муниципальным властям следовало бы организовывать больше совместных мероприятий для местных жителей и беженцев, чтобы избавить обе группы от предубеждений друг о друге.
9. У жителей Нарвы есть немало предубеждений о том, что беженцы получают большие пособия и у них есть преимущество при получении работы. Муниципальные власти и правительство должны больше работать над развенчиванием этих мифов.
10. Было бы интересно продолжить наблюдение за изменением уровня государственной идентичности в Нарве. В этом смысле поколение среднего возраста может быть наиболее интересным, поскольку оно придерживается разных мнений. Интригующей темой также являются медиа привычки нарвских жителей. По мере изменения этих привычек, вполне вероятно, изменится и отношение ко многим ключевым вопросам: с их местом и ролью в Эстонии, отношению к истории Эстонии, советским памятникам и символам. Адаптация украинских беженцев в Нарве также является важной темой для государства. Изменится ли национальная идентичность украинцев в Эстонии? Как? Будущие исследования могут быть сосредоточены на украинцах в Нарве и на том, как они адаптируются, если решат остаться в Эстонии надолго.

Это исследование может быть полезно организациям, занимающимся интеграцией, местным органам власти, эстонским и международным СМИ и даже эстонскому

правительству, чтобы лучше понять царящие в Нарве настроения после начала войны в Украине. Также может быть важно понять, как русско-украинская война и решения эстонского правительства повлияли на чувство государственной идентичности в Нарве и что можно сделать, чтобы укрепить чувство государственной идентичности среди разных возрастных групп Нарвы.

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Annex 1

Personal

- Как вы идентифицируете себя? Русский? Гражданин Эстонии? Русскоязычный житель Эстонии? Эстонец? / *How do you identify yourself? Russian/Estonian citizen/Russian-speaking resident of Estonia/Estonian?*
- Какое у вас гражданство? Знание государственного языка? / *What is your citizenship? What is your Estonian language level?*
- Какие у вас личные связи с Украиной и Россией? / *What are your personal connections with Ukraine and Russia?*

Media

- Какие СМИ до событий в Украине Вы использовали, чтобы получать информацию? / *What media did you use to get information before the events in Ukraine?*
- Из каких СМИ получаете информацию о происходящем в Украине сейчас? / *From which media do you get information about what is happening in Ukraine now?*
- Достаточно ли объективны эстонские СМИ освещая происходящее в Украине? / *Are the Estonian media outlets objective enough about what is happening in Ukraine?*

War In Ukraine

- Что произошло 24.02.2022? / *What happened on February 24, 2022?*
- Продолжаете ли вы ассоциировать себя с Россией или русской культурой? / *Do you continue to associate yourself with Russia or Russian culture?*
- Как изменилась жизнь в Нарве после 24.02.2022? / *How has life in Narva changed since February 24, 2022?*

Attitude towards Estonia

- Как оцениваете официальную позицию правительства Эстонии по отношению к происходящему в Украине? / *How do you assess the official position of the Estonian government in relation to what is happening in Ukraine?*
- Было ли решение эстонского правительства запретить российские каналы правильным? / *Was the decision of the Estonian government to ban Russian channels the right one?*
- Как вы оцениваете отношение к себе и жителям Нарвы со стороны правительства и жителей других регионов? / *How do you assess the attitude towards people of Narva on the part of the government and residents of other regions?*

Refugees

- Какое отношение к беженцам из Украины в Нарве / *What is the attitude towards refugees from Ukraine in Narva?*
- Должна ли Нарва принимать беженцев из Украины? / *Should Narva accept refugees from Ukraine?*
- Объективны ли выводы СМИ, что жители Нарвы не поддерживают Украину и беженцев? / *Are media conclusions that the residents of Narva do not support Ukraine and refugees accurate?*

Annex 2 (Focus-group Youngsters)

Personal

- Какое у вас гражданство? Знание государственного языка? / *What is your citizenship? What is your Estonian language level?*
- Почему молодое поколение не ассоциирует себя с Россией? / *Why does the younger generation not associate themselves with Russia?*

Media

- Из каких источников молодые люди получают информацию? / *From what sources do young people get their information?*
- Почему Вы не доверяете Российским СМИ? / *Why do you not trust the Russian media?*

War In Ukraine

- Как изменилась жизнь в Нарве после 24.02.2022? / *How has life in Narva changed since February 24, 2022?*

Attitude Towards Estonia

- Было ли решение эстонского правительства запретить российские каналы правильным? / *Was the decision of the Estonian government to ban Russian channels the right one?*

Refugees

- Какое отношение к беженцам из Украины в Нарве среди молодых? / *What is the attitude towards refugees from Ukraine in Narva among youngsters?*
- Видите ли вы в беженцах конкурентов? / *Do you see refugees as competitors?*

Annex 3 (Focus group Middle-aged)

Personal

- Какое у вас гражданство? Знание государственного языка? / *What is your citizenship? What is your Estonian language level?*
- С какой страной вы себя связываете и ассоциируете? / *What country do you connect and associate yourself with?*
- Как вы объясняете советскую ностальгию у людей вашего поколения? / *How do you explain Soviet nostalgia in people of your generation?*

Media

- Из каких источников люди среднего возраста получают информацию? / *From what sources do middle-aged people get their information?*
- Почему женщины среднего возраста не заинтересованы в медиа грамотности и чтении СМИ? / *Why are middle-aged women not interested in media literacy and media consumption?*

War In Ukraine

- Как изменилась жизнь в Нарве после 24.02.2022? / *How has life in Narva changed since February 24, 2022?*

Attitude Towards Estonia

- Было ли решение эстонского правительства запретить российские каналы правильным? / *Was the decision of the Estonian government to ban Russian channels the right one?*

Refugees

- Какое отношение к беженцам из Украины в Нарве среди людей среднего возраста? / *What is the attitude towards refugees from Ukraine in Narva among the middle-aged generation?*
- Видите ли вы в беженцах конкурентов? / *Do you see competitors in refugees?*

Annex 4 (Focus-group Elderly)

Personal

- Какое у вас гражданство? Знание государственного языка? / *What is your citizenship? What is your Estonian language level?*
- С какой страной вы себя связываете и ассоциируете? / *What country do you connect and associate yourself with?*

Media

- Из каких источников люди пожилого возраста получают информацию? / *From what sources do the older generation get their information?*

War In Ukraine

- Как изменилась жизнь в Нарве после 24.02.2022? / *How has life in Narva changed since February 24, 2022?*

Attitude Towards Estonia

- Было ли решение эстонского правительства запретить российские каналы правильным? / *Was the decision of the Estonian government to ban Russian channels the right one?*

Refugees

- Какое отношение к беженцам из Украины в Нарве среди людей среднего возраста? / *What is the attitude towards refugees from Ukraine in Narva among the middle-aged generation?*
- Как вы объяснить почему женщины пожилого возраста относятся к беженцам толерантно, а мужчины наоборот? / *How do you explain why older women are tolerant towards refugees, and older men not?*

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