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# Alternative Civil Enculturation

## Political Disenchantment and Civic Attitudes in Minority Schools in Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia

*The article investigates the ways in which minority schools in Latvia, Estonia, and Slovakia resist the dominant narratives of nation and citizenship and provide an alternative model of civil enculturation for students. It provides evidence to support the hypothesis that differences between competing narratives of statehood and nationhood among schools of two major ethnic groups in each country constitute relatively separate models of civil enculturation that may be shaped by political and social factors outside the school, such as power relations among groups.*

Separate schooling of students from different ethnic, linguistic, and religious communities is a practice that has diverse origins in state school systems of different countries. In Western Europe, where no separate schools for ethnic minorities have existed historically, racial or ethnic segregation in schools is predominantly a result of socioeconomic inequalities faced by migrants from poorer countries, and is regarded as a problem not only in the context of education, but also in housing and social policies (DG Education and Culture, 2009, pp. 18–19). The de facto segregation of students from migrant communities, when it happens within the public education system, has been also described as a problem of equal social

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chances (Paulle, 2005) to which education policymakers and local communities propose various solutions, but which has not yet been comprehensively tackled. More importantly for the context of this paper, academic publications and the media have given warnings concerning the detrimental effect of segregated schooling on common civic culture (Cantle, 2005; Paulle, 2005).

In Eastern and Central Europe, as well as in the Commonwealth of Independent States, there exists an inherited system of separate schools for major ethnic/linguistic groups. This system emerged following the process of modernization of multiethnic empires (the Habsburg Empire and the Russian Empire), when universal access to schooling first produced school systems aimed at the assimilation of minorities, and later gave rise to "national" schools for minorities as a response to that assimilation (Karády & Mitter, 1990). The system of "national schools" survived with some modifications under communist rule. In Slovakia and Romania, schools teaching in Hungarian and catering to the educational and cultural needs of the Hungarian minority are common in areas where the Hungarian population is concentrated. Sometimes the ethnic majority views these schools as loci of transmission of Hungarian political nationalism, rather than as mere loci of transmission of culture and language (see Nedelcu, Iucu, & Ciolan's article in this issue, pp. 69–86). In Estonia and Latvia, the schools for Russian-speaking students, albeit offering bilingual instruction, are sometimes viewed as a locus of transmission of another country's historical narratives and experience pressure from the nation-state to shift toward a more "unified" model of national narrative (Silova, 2006) and to produce "loyal citizens." This situation is not unique: as a comparative theoretical study of the way history curricula evolve over time demonstrates, the nation-state has always striven to inculcate regime loyalty and patriotism through curriculum, not least through history curriculum (Korostelina, 2008). It has equally often encountered sporadic resistance from groups within society that see the pressure as unwelcome.

There is an important contextual similarity between the schools catering to the needs of the largest ethnolinguistic minorities in the two Baltic states (Lithuania has to be left out of this discussion, as it has few Russian schools) and in Slovakia and Romania. While the Russian-speakers (a group consisting not only of ethnic Russians but also defined by adherence to Russian as the mother tongue and language of informal communication) in Estonia and Latvia are a numerical minority (about 28 percent and 36 percent of the population of each country, respectively), during the fifty years of Soviet rule they have enjoyed a privileged or dominant social status not commonly associated with minorities (Vilfan, 1993), and it was exactly this dominant status of the Russian language that the language and education policies of newly independent Latvia have striven to reduce since the early 1990s (Paulston, 1998, p. 2). Similarly, in Slovakia and Romania, Hungarians have in the past enjoyed a dominant status proceeding from their role as one of the two constituent nations of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and part of the current state policies, especially in Slovakia, is more or less explicitly directed not merely at imposing and reinforcing the Slovak national identity in politics and social life,

but also, at least partly, at undermining the identification of Hungarians in Slovakia with the Hungarian political nation—frequently seeking to use the school as one of the loci of national political indoctrination (e.g., the Patriotism Act, 2010). In Slovakia, as in Latvia, the party system to some extent reflects the ethnolinguistic cleavage in the population, with minority political parties claiming to cater to the interests of Hungarians and Russian-speakers respectively. These similarities: the former dominant status of minority, the existence of separate schools for that minority, the presence of a significant geopolitical "other" whose influence can be felt in inner political struggles (Russia in the case of Estonia and Latvia, Hungary in the case of Slovakia), and the use of schools as the loci of imposition and contestation of political loyalty to the nation-state project, make Estonia and Latvia, on the one hand, and Slovakia, on the other hand, interesting cases for comparative analysis of the role of schools in civil enculturation of future citizens from minority background.

To date, there have not been many comparative international studies that address the issue of separate schooling for different ethnic groups as a problem of civil enculturation. Civil enculturation is a wider concept than civic education and includes factors that are not part of the official curriculum but nevertheless shape the students' civic identity. The authors of the first seminal study on civil enculturation have defined civil enculturation as "the process by which an individual acquires the mental representations (beliefs, knowledge and so forth) and patterns of behavior required to function as a member of a (civil) culture, largely taking part as part of the process of . . . education" (Schiffauer, Baumann, Kastroyano, & Vertovec, 2004, p. 2). Civil enculturation thus takes place primarily at school, set up for transmission of (national) civil culture by the nation-state: according to Gerd Baumann, "The nation-state school has taken on two missions at once: it is expected to perpetuate a sense of nation-state continuity but also to integrate non-nationals and first-generation citizens into the democratic project of equalizing chances and access for all" (ibid., p. 1).

This understanding of the role of the school in a nation-state may be well suited to the relatively unitary systems of public schools in Western Europe, however, it presents an immediate problem if one looks at the three countries in the present study. In Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia the school, while also expected to instill a sense of nation-state continuity (challenging as it is in view of the recent nature of nation-statehood), is viewed at the same time as an institution perpetuating ethnic culture, which pertains only to a certain part of the population. Previous studies in Latvia have shown that teachers in ethnic majority schools sometimes see their mission in preserving the ethnic culture of majority group (Austers, Golubeva, Kovalenko, & Strode, 2006), possibly reflecting the previous subordinate status of the current majority (Paulston, 1998). The data quoted below demonstrates that the concern over the perpetuation of ethnic culture is even more pronounced in minority schools in all three countries. The dual task of perpetuation of nation-statehood and ethnic identity produces tensions—indeed, as the following arguments strive

to prove, it has a certain limiting effect on "the democratic project of equalizing chances and access for all."

In the process of contestation of identities and loyalties exacted of teachers and students by the nation-state and by the ethnolinguistic community respectively, "hidden curriculum" may play a significant role. Hidden curriculum, or the process by which indirect transfer of social and political attitudes is effected by educators, has been studied critically by Apple (2004), exposing the socially reproductive function of education reinforced by conservative political ideology in the United States. Apple's critique was directed against the reproduction of social inequality via the implicit selectivity of curriculum, which Apple dubbed "hidden curriculum." Subsequent critiques of that approach have pointed out that with changes in the economy, the role of hidden curriculum in reproducing socioeconomic inequalities has perhaps become less straightforward (Anyon, 2006). In a wider sense, however, one could make use of "hidden curriculum" as a useful concept describing the "unofficial" transfer of social and political attitudes (such as a certain national ideology or resistance to it). In the countries described in this article, the official curriculum has been for the most part subject to scrutiny by state education authorities and international organizations in the process of transition from a postcommunist state to an EU member state, reflecting the demands of shaping national (state) and European identity. In schools for ethnic/linguistic minorities, a demand for reinforcing ethnic/cultural identity of the minority became articulated partly as a response to these pressures (Silova, 2006). As the data discussed below demonstrates, teachers in minority schools actively propose alternative interpretations of history to their students and use textbooks from the country of "ethnic origin" (Russia or Hungary respectively), and this alternative curriculum offered quasi-illicitly to the students can be seen simultaneously as a form of social action and as a "hidden curriculum."

While the seminal study on civil enculturation in four West European countries (Schiffauer, Baumann, Kastroyano, & Vertovec, 2004) dealt with models of civil enculturation as a country-specific phenomenon, which may pose specific challenges for newcomers to these countries, e.g., children of recent immigrants (Sunier, 2000), the study at the basis of this article proceeded from the hypothesis that there may be separate and even divergent models of civil enculturation represented by different ethnic groups' schools within one country. The educational community that imparts its own model of civil culture (including its vision of the community's history) to next generations in this case is not "the school" as a generic term for all state schools in the country, but rather "the group/school,"for example, "the Russian school in Estonia."

In both Estonia and Latvia, Russian-speaking families traditionally educate their children in so-called Russian schools. To be sure, neither in Estonia nor in Latvia is the school system completely divided. According to the Estonian data, before 2007 about 5,000 students whose mother tongue was not Estonian were studying in schools where Estonian was the language of instruction (data from Estonian Integra-

tion Strategy 2008–13), about fifty Russian nursery schools and basic schools had joined the Estonian-language immersion program (Mätlik, 2008). In Latvia, a recent research has revealed that about 19 percent of students in upper-secondary school (from age fifteen) in schools with Latvian language of instruction come from a minority or mixed linguistic background (Austers, Golubeva, Kovalenko, & Strode, 2006). In Slovakia, school-age children from Hungarian families living in parts of the country with a high concentration of Hungarians tend to attend Hungarian schools. There are special regulations allowing minority schools to receive funding with a smaller number of students than would be permissible for mainstream schools; thus the state's education policy in fact supports the continued existence of separate schools for minorities, including the Hungarian minority.

The system of separate schooling of the two major ethnic/linguistic groups in each country is a historic phenomenon: it was not formed in recent years as part of multicultural policies. Nevertheless, in the 1990s the paradigm within which minority schools are viewed in respective countries has been changed to reflect the recommendations of international organizations concerned with the situation of ethnic minorities in Eastern Europe and with the resurgence of nationalist sentiments in the region that seeped through into the curriculum. This contestation of curriculum by international and national ideologies has been particularly well researched for Latvia (Silova, 2006), but Estonia has experienced similar pressures (Stevick, 2007), and so did Slovakia. At the same time, the young nation-states began to exert increasing pressure on minority schools to adopt to the nation-building project, promoting the policies to strengthen state language which, in the case of Latvia and later Estonia, implied a transition to teaching primarily in the state language, even in schools designated as "minority." In view of the pressure exerted by the state, the "Russian" schools adopted a defensive stance centered on the preservation of what is seen as an identity in danger (Silova, 2002). An additional tension between official education policies and the stance adopted by minority schools in Estonia and Latvia has arisen in the field of history teaching. The divergent views of the teachers and students of "Russian" schools concerning the historical events perceived as crucial in the official narrative of the reestablished nation-states of Estonia and Latvia has been noted and criticized by historians representing the "national" narrative on the grounds that such divergence undermines the school's mission to produce patriotic or "loyal" citizens (Feldmanis, 2004). Recent studies in Latvia show that there is, indeed, a notable difference in the percentage of students in "Latvian" and "Russian" schools that agree that Latvia was occupied by the Soviet Union in 1940 (Makarov & Boldāne, 2009).

Nevertheless, a different interpretation of the challenges and needs of civil enculturation and history teaching in particular emerges if one approaches the situation in ethnically segregated schools from the perspective of positive recognition of diversity as a socially empowering factor within education systems and within societies at large (Kymlicka, 1996). Another analytical dimension is added if one adopts a constructivist perspective, seeing students' identification with one of the

two major ethnic groups within society as another aspect of social identity shaped by institutions, such as the school. Depending on the strategies of acculturation favored in a given environment, ethnic and national identities may be seen as compatible or mutually exclusive (Berry, 2005). Moreover, neither the school's role in reinforcing national (state) identity, nor its role in perpetuating ethnic/cultural identity is a given, and both can be contested from the positions of progressive views of the role of education.

Establishing the existence of differences between minority and majority schools in regard to perceptions of history is not sufficient to understand the processes that may influence divergent civic attitudes within minority schools. It is more important to identify the strategies adopted by teachers to correct what they see as an unfair attitude in the curriculum and to see whether these strategies have any effect on the students' attitude toward civic participation in a political community in which their ethnic group is a minority. It is equally important to see whether the strategies adopted by the teachers and students of mainstream (majority) schools are conducive to the overcoming of segregation in the future (i.e., whether they support equal participation for members of a minority group in a common public/political space together with members of the majority group).

## Method

The data reported in the present paper were collected during a broad-scale international project, "Divided Education. Divided Citizens?" (DEDC), devoted to schooling in a multiethnic environment and civil enculturation in seven countries—Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Kazakhstan, and Tajikistan (Golubeva, Powell, Kazimzade, and Nedelcu, 2009). The present study is based on a data set obtained in three countries: Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia.

## Participants

The study was designed to assess schools with both ethnic majority (Estonian, Latvian, and Slovak) and minority (Russian [in Estonia], Russian [in Latvia], and Hungarian, respectively) languages of instruction. Schools were representatively sampled. Estonia was represented by 26 majority (433 students, 144 teachers) and 19 minority (402 students, 108 teachers) schools sampled in all major geographical areas; Latvia by 18 majority (402 students, 183 teachers) and 19 minority (501 students, 126 teachers) schools in all major geographical areas; and Slovakia by 12 majority (305 students, 98 teachers) and 19 minority (345 students, 129 teachers) schools in areas of the country where majority and/or minority schools could be commonly found. Both students and teachers were surveyed. The students were ninth graders (on average fifteen years old), the ninth grade being the last year of compulsory education in all three countries (and thus representing the last year of school where the results of civil enculturation of almost entire student body of respective year can be sampled).

The questionnaire survey was conducted in October 2008. The survey was preceded by focus groups with students (about ten to fourteen students per group) in one minority and one majority school in each country. In focus groups, students were asked questions about their relations with students from the "other" (majority or minority) schools, about their understanding of civic participation and citizenship practices in their country, about the interethnic relations, and about the future goals of majority and minority ethnic groups in the country.

## Measures

All the participants answered a questionnaire aimed at discovering various attitudes and role behavior, goals, and values. The full set of measured variables can be found elsewhere (Golubeva, Powell, Kazimzade, and Nedelcu, 2009). For the purpose of the present study the following variables were measured: (1) Perception of fairness in the official curriculum was measured by asking (both students and teachers): "Would you say that you have noticed overt or covert presence of ethnic stereotypes in textbooks and lessons?" (2) The perception of the fairness of history curriculum was measured by asking about the extent to which students and teachers agree that "The representation of minority (translates as "Russian speakers" or "Hungarians" respectively) and majority (translates as "Estonians," "Latvians" or "Slovaks" respectively) in history textbooks we use at school is balanced and fair." (3) Civic attitudes were measured by the degree the participants agree to these statements: "If the government accepts an unfair law, it is right to protest against it," and "my participation cannot change anything in government policies."

Teachers were also asked about their beliefs regarding the hypothetical effect of desegregation (minority members attending majority schools), as well as about their endorsement of a separate school system for minorities. Meanwhile, students had to express their attitudes regarding polarizing issues in each country's history. Students were also asked whether their history teacher sometimes mentions that the view of historical events given in the official curriculum is wrong.

The difference of civic attitudes (including historical narratives) between minority and majority schools is addressed here from three angles: (1) the teachers' opinion concerning fairness/unfairness of the official curriculum and the readiness to intervene to correct the message of official curriculum (thus endorsing a specific form of hidden curriculum); (2) the dominant civic attitudes (e.g., support for civic participation) among teachers and students; and (3) the endorsement of a separate school system for minorities and attitudes associated with such system.

### *Findings*

The results of the study concern three significant areas of civil enculturation in Estonian, Latvian, and Slovakian schools: the subjective perception of unfairness of the official curriculum, particularly the history curriculum, by minority students and teachers; the lack of civic confidence (confidence in the efficiency of one's own

political participation) among teachers and students in minority schools; and the endorsement of a separate school system for minorities by the majority of teachers and students within this system.

### *Perception of (un)fairness in the official curriculum and compensatory strategies*

To test their attitude to the official curriculum, the teachers of majority and minority schools were asked to assess the presence of ethnic stereotypes in curriculum in general, and the fairness of representation of minority and majority groups in history curriculum in particular. In all countries covered by the DEDC survey, minority teachers perceive ethnic stereotypes in the way major ethnic groups are represented in the textbooks and official curricula (see Figure 1). In Estonia, Latvia, and Slovakia, more than 50 percent of minority schoolteachers feel that way. Only in Estonia, about half the majority teachers also believe in the presence of ethnic stereotypes in the curriculum.

The sense of unfairness among the "Russian school" teachers is not directed at the official curriculum alone. About 50 percent of teachers in "Russian schools" in Estonia and 37 percent of teachers in "Russian schools" in Latvia disagree with the statement that "Official policies concerning non-discrimination are implemented in everyday school life."

We also tested a hypothesis that teachers' ideas, beliefs, and attitudes may serve as predictors of students' beliefs or attitudes. That is, we assumed that teachers' have a certain influence on students during the process of education. To test such a hypothesis we performed a group level analysis. Schools participating in the study (from Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina) served as units of analysis: we computed mean values for answers by teachers and students for each school separately and those computed means in a matched form served as a data set for regression analysis, which was run separately for minority and majority schools. The results showed that in majority schools the degree teachers agree that they have noticed overt or covert presence of ethnic stereotypes in textbooks and lessons predicts the degree students agree that in case the government adopts an unfair law, it is right to protest against it, $b = .17$, $t(70) = 3.78$, $p < .01$. The results of the regression analysis also showed that the teachers' attitude explains a significant proportion of variance in students' agreement with above-mentioned statement $R^2 = .17$, $F(1, 70) = 14.23$, $p < .01$. For minority schools the regression did not yield any statistically significant results. This is an intriguing finding for which the survey data offer no direct explanation. Nevertheless, it seems to point to a hypothesis that where majority schoolteachers are more aware of the existence of ethnic stereotypes in society, their students have stronger participant orientations.

The perception of the fairness of the history curriculum is even more skewed in all three countries. When asked to agree or disagree with the statement "The representation of MINORITY (translates as "Russian speakers" or "Hungarians,"

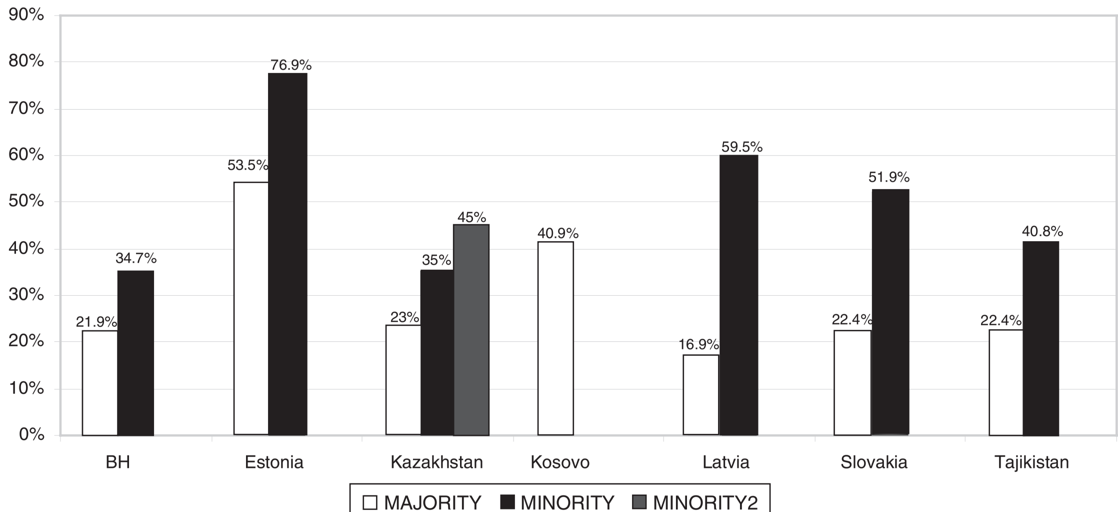


**Figure 1. Teachers' Opinions Regarding the Presence of Ethnic Stereotypes in Textbooks and Curriculum: Percentage of Those Who Confirm the Presence of Stereotypes** (7 countries)

respectively) and MAJORITY (translates as “Estonians,” “Latvians,” or “Slovaks,” respectively) in the history textbooks we use at school is balanced and fair,” only 12 percent of teachers in “Russian” schools in Estonia agreed with this statement, while none stated that they agreed “strongly.” For comparison, among the teachers of “Estonian” schools, 55 percent of teachers “agreed” or “strongly agreed” with this statement. In Latvia, the trust toward the fairness of the official history curriculum among the teachers of “Russian” schools is even lower: only 5 percent agree that the representation of Latvians and Russians in history textbooks is balanced and fair. In Slovakia, only 6 percent of teachers in “Hungarian” schools believe that the representation of ethnic groups in history textbooks is balanced and fair.

Since the teachers in minority schools are dissatisfied with the level of fairness in the curriculum, it would be only logical to expect that they would make interventions to “correct” this situation at the level of hidden curriculum. Students’ answers to the question about teachers’ comments on the representation of the minority in history textbooks show that minority teachers do intervene more often to correct the message of national history curriculum: 42 percent of students in “Russian” schools in Estonia and 43 percent in Latvia, and 48 percent of Hungarian school students in Slovakia answered that their history teacher “sometimes,” “often,” or “almost always” told them that the role of their minority in history was different from how it was described in history textbooks. Such interventions by the teacher were relatively less frequent in majority schools (see Figure 2).

Besides, the teacher survey shows that more than half the teachers in minority schools covered by the study in Slovakia and Latvia use textbooks from the country of ethnic origin (Hungary and Russia respectively). Among the teachers in “Estonian” schools about 10 percent stated that they use textbooks from Finland and only 7.6 percent said they used textbooks from Russia, teachers of Russian minority schools in Estonia use textbooks from Finland much more frequently (44 percent), and 41 percent admitted they used textbooks from Russia. The use of textbooks published in other countries is another way in which teachers can influence the message of the school curriculum and the content of their lessons. This tendency has parallels in some other countries with substantial minorities: thus, in Bosnia, according to the same study, about 60 percent of teachers working with Croat students tend to use textbooks issued in Croatia. While this situation is politically very delicate (e.g., the Latvian education system officially does not endorse the use of textbooks unapproved by the Ministry of Education), this may be an important symptom of the distrust toward majority-shaped curriculum in minority schools.

At the same time, the minority school teachers’ lack of trust in the fairness of official curriculum is not directly reflected in the students’ perceptions: approximately the same percent of students in majority and minority schools in Slovakia believes that the history curriculum is fair toward both majority and minority groups, and the greatest difference in perceived fairness of history curriculum among students in three countries (in Estonia) is 11 percent. It is thus fairly clear that while teachers in

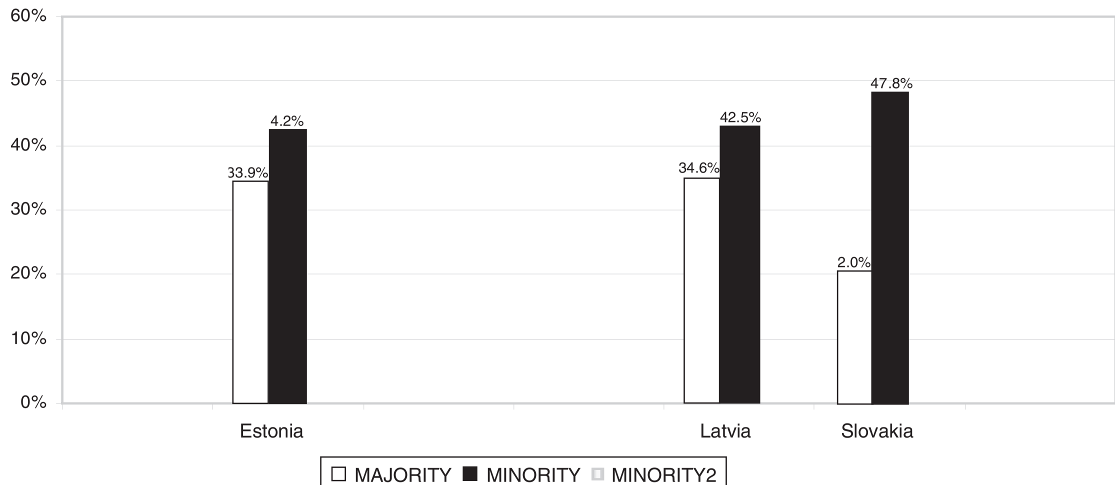


**Figure 2. Percentage of Students Whose History Teachers Sometimes Say That the View of History in the Curriculum Is Wrong**

minority schools more often pursue compensatory strategies to correct the message of official curriculum that they perceive as unfair toward their ethnic group, their students do not necessarily have the same sense of unfairness of the curriculum.

On the other hand, attitudes toward polarizing questions of history differ significantly among minority and majority schools in Estonia and Latvia. About 70 percent of students in “Latvian” and “Estonian” schools believe that “the domination of Russians and Germans in politics and economy was a major obstacle to development” of their nation—in contrast, only about 40 percent of students in “Russian” schools share that perception. In Slovakia, the differences in perceptions of history between “Hungarian” and “Slovak” school students is less pronounced: 52 percent of Slovak students agree that “the most glorious period of Slovak history before the independence was the Moravian Empire” (an idealized period before the Hungarian and Habsburg domination), and 38 percent of students in Hungarian schools share that attitude. While the students’ answers seem to suggest that minority school teachersin Slovakia intervene with official history curriculum more frequently than their colleagues in Latvia or Estonia, the effect of such interventions is less visible.

It appears from the data analysis that while the disenchantment of teachers with the official curriculum may be strong in minority schools, it does not always follow that their students share the same disenchantment. While the minority students profess attitudes to history differing from those of their peers in majority schools, the direct connection between that and the compensatory strategies adopted by their teachers is difficult to prove. The factors that lead to shared disenchantment in official history narratives in Estonia and Latvia may well lie outside the school.

## Civic attitudes

In order to evaluate the types of civic attitudes developed by students in majority and minority schools, the DEDC questionnaires included some questions consisting of statements testing the students’ subject and participant attitudes, understood according to the typology of civil culture developed by Almond and Verba (1998). Subject attitudes are more characteristic of centralized, bureaucratic, and sometimes even authoritarian political systems, and consist in concentrating on the “output” of the political system, such as good government services for citizens, and ignoring the role of citizens in the “input” phases of the political process. Participant attitudes combine high expectations regarding “input” and “output”: participant-type citizens are interested in participating in the political process and influencing decisions, while they also expect good performance from the government.

For participant attitudes, the students’ normative orientation toward participation was measured by the statement “If the government accepts an unfair law, it is right to protest against it.” No significant differences between majority and minority students in each country were revealed by the reactions to this statement. However, when it comes to the actual sense of effective participation, the data show that minority students in Estonia and Latvia tend to feel less empowered than majority

students. No similar difference exists between majority and minority students in Slovakia: indeed, students in Hungarian schools are even slightly more convinced of the effectiveness of their participation than students in Slovak schools. The difference is particularly pronounced in Estonia: while Estonian students feel the most empowered of all groups included in this study (they believe in the effectiveness of their participation more than other groups in the study), Russian students in Estonia feel much less empowered. The sense of lack of empowerment (disenfranchisement) is also greater among Russian minority students in Latvia.

In the cases of Estonia and Latvia, the students' sense of disenfranchisement (powerlessness to influence political life of the country) is similar to the teachers' attitude: as Table 1 shows, teachers in minority schools in Latvia and Estonia feel much less politically empowered than their colleagues in majority schools, while their normative orientation toward participation and protest is approximately the same (see answer to the statement on political protest).

Nevertheless, there is no direct causality between minority school teachers' lack of trust in effective participation in Latvia and Estonia and a similar lack of trust in one's own participation among minority students in the same countries. The teachers' answer to the statement "My participation cannot change anything in the policies of the government" does not predict the students' reaction to the same statement in countries for which data allowing separate analysis at a group level based on school status within the country is available (Estonia, Latvia, Slovakia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina). This again implies that other factors, possibly lying outside the school, influence minority teachers' and students' joint skepticism about the impact of their own civic participation on political life in the country.

## Endorsement of a separate school system for minorities

The existence of a divided school system is fully endorsed by the teachers of minority schools. Of the teachers from "Russian" school in Estonia included in the survey, approximately 78 percent think that the existence of separate schools for minorities is "very good" (a further 17 percent think that is simply "good"). In Latvia, the situation is somewhat different: 29 percent of teachers in "Russian" schools believe that the existence of separate schools for minority and majority is "very good," while a further 46 percent believe it is simply "good." In Slovakia, 65 percent of "Hungarian" school teachers believe that the existence of separate schools for minorities is "very good."

The endorsement of the existence of a separate school system for minorities may have much to do with concern for the preservation of ethnic identity. The minority schoolteachers in all three countries tend to agree that if minority students went to majority schools, they would lose their cultural identity. This concern is not shared by teachers in majority schools. Moreover, while the latter tend to believe that joint schooling would foster a more unified civic identity in the country, minority teachers are not convinced about that (see Figure 3).

Table 1

**Percentage of Teachers and Students Agreeing with the Following Statements in Majority and Minority Schools in Estonia and Latvia**

| Statement | “Russian” school, Estonia | | “Estonian” school | | “Russian” school, Latvia | | “Latvian” school | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | teacher | student | teacher | student | teacher | student | teacher | student |
| If the government accepts an unfair law, it is right to protest against it | 75.0 | 76.6 | 91.7 | 89.1 | 85.7 | 83.2 | 85.8 | 87.8 |
| My participation cannot change anything in government policies | 65.0 | 51.8 | 30.0 | 28.0 | 50.8 | 50.5 | 29.5 | 32.0 |

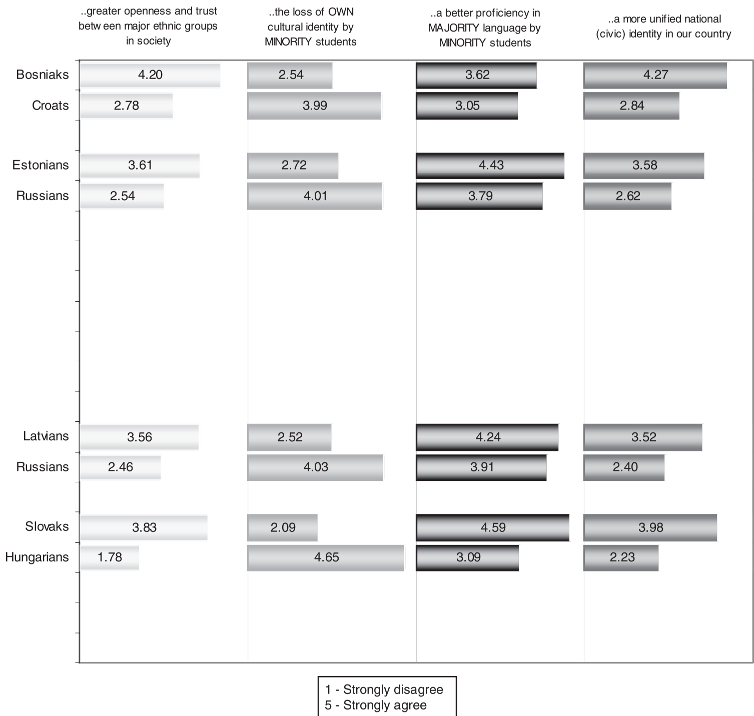


**Figure 3. The Effects of Joint Schooling of MIN and MAJ Expected by the Teachers** (means)

Similarly, minority students in all three countries more often tend to agree that joint schooling would endanger their ethnic identity, and less often than their peers in majority schools agree that it would foster a more unified civic identity.

## Discussion

This study shows that there are significant differences between the civic attitudes of minority and majority students in the same country, and the data of teachers' survey shows that students often, though not always, share the attitudes of their teachers. Nevertheless, there is little direct causality between the students' and teachers' sense of civic disenfranchisement (where it exists), and strategies adopted by minority teachers to transfer their skeptical attitudes toward official curriculum and its version of history to their students are not always successful. Where they are (in the case of history teaching, in Estonia and Latvia), it seems to be a matter of factors in society rather than the direct influence of the teachers themselves. It would be difficult to trace all differences in outcomes of civil enculturation to teachers' influence, and it is impossible with the available data to control for other major factors that may influence the students' perception of citizenship, history, and the nation, such as the media and parental influence.

Thus, while the data discussed in this article do not contradict the hypothesis that a divided school system sustains differing models of civil enculturation (i.e., differing attitudes toward history, official curriculum, identity, and civil participation), it does not follow that the civil disenchantment of minority teachers has direct effect on the sense of disenfranchisement among their students. The models of civil enculturation may indeed be different in Estonian and Russian schools in Estonia, or in Slovak and Hungarian schools in Slovakia, but it is not clear that the source of the difference lies in the school itself and not in external influences such as the family, the media, or political elites of respective groups.

The cases of Estonia and Latvia, where minority school students share their teachers' distrust in the effectiveness of political participation, seem to point in the direction of political cleavages and power relations between ethnic groups in society as factors influencing the sense of civil disenfranchisement in schools. After the regaining of independence in 1991, large parts of the Russian-speaking minorities in both countries—those whose families had arrived after the occupation by the USSR in 1940—found that the citizenship of Estonia and Latvia was not extended to them automatically, and unlike their ethnic Latvian and Estonian neighbors whose ancestors had been citizens of the independent republics before World War II, they had to undergo naturalization. This provoked resentment and a sense of disenfranchisement among part of the population, a sentiment that has subsequently been utilized by Russia's foreign policy (Muižnieks, 2006). About 15 percent of Latvia's population still are the so-called noncitizens, almost all of them belonging to the Russian-speaking minority. A recent study has argued that the first-hand experience of the phenomenon of "noncitizenship" in the family has

a direct effect on students' attitudes toward official history in Latvia's "Russian" schools (Makarov & Boldāne, 2009). Besides, when in 2004 the teachers and students of "Russian" schools took part in mass protests against the reform of language of instruction, their protests were for the most part fruitless and their opinion was disregarded by the government or condemned as a manifestation of their pro-Russian political leanings. In Estonia, the mass disorders provoked by pro-Moscow youth groups in 2007 in an attempt to prevent the removal of a monument to Soviet soldiers were blamed by the media and politicians on the whole of the Russian-speaking population. Thus, the sense of loss of political influence experienced by the Russian-speaking population after the regaining of independence was refueled by political events in both countries in the past five years (in Estonia, the "Bronze Soldier" events happened only a year before the survey). The civil disenchantment of the Russian-speaking teachers and students may thus be a reflection of the wider attitude among their group. The broader social and political context of the sense of disenfranchisements underlying the attitudes of students in "Russian" schools was further confirmed by answers in focus groups in such schools:

> It does not matter if you vote; nothing is done by us—the citizens, the voters. It is done by those who have the money. These are our thoughts, but, of course, this is just what we hear at home and it impacts us. (Student, Russian school, Latvia)
>
> A part of Russians are not citizens—they pay the taxes, but have no rights, and it is unfair. (Student, Russian school, Latvia)

Contrary to the assumption that divergent perceptions of history are a proof of the lack of "loyalty" to the respective nation-state among the teachers and students of "Russian" schools (Feldmanis, 2004), one could argue that clinging to an alternative historical narrative, along with clinging to a separate school system, is a form of compensation for a sense of political exclusion.

It is possible (as some data in the current article seems to suggest) that the desire to maintain a separate school system for Russian-speakers as an ethnolinguistic group may have something to do with a sense of lack of equal opportunities with the ethnic majority. Focus groups in minority schools in both countries reveal that minority students sometimes perceive their career chances and chances of equal participation as unequal:

> Higher positions are usually taken by Estonians, as some kind of barrier exists between Estonians and non-Estonians. Perhaps there is distrust toward us and that is why there are Estonians in leading positions. (Student, Russian school, Estonia)
>
> The attitude of Estonians toward Russians is not that good, they kind of dislike us. In Estonian school we would have felt ourselves as "others." (Student, Russian school, Estonia)

Indeed, even education researchers in the past have viewed education as yet another field for competition among ethnic groups for career opportunities and

resources, as the following quotation from Leino, Veisson, Ruus, and Sarv demonstrates:

> Who is the better citizen: [someone] native and easy-going, or a (former) immigrant who is eager? . . . For us citizenship means belonging, which means safety. Here we will ask: is it (for better future) enough just to be a native Estonian, or should one work for one's success as much as many immigrants do. (2006, p. 160).

The very way in which the question is posed indicates that the distinction between a "native Estonian" and an "immigrant" is viewed in fairly essential terms, even though the article in which the question is posed later provides some proof that ethnic identities are mutable and subject to social change.

Rather than continuing this trend of looking at ethnic groups within education system as natural competitors with clearly defined boundaries of belonging, policymakers would be well advised to proceed from the normative framework of positive recognition of diversity as a socially empowering factor within education systems, albeit a factor that requires monitoring in order to avoid embedded inequality of chances to participate in the political community.

Slovakia presents a different case, since representatives of the Hungarian minority have full access to Slovakian citizenship, and their political parties have been part of government (which never happened with parties supported predominantly by Russian-speakers in Latvia). Nevertheless, the participation of ethnic Hungarians in government has also provoked some resentment in the Slovak population, which is reflected in survey data from Slovak schools. Slovak majority school students tend to agree more often than their Estonian and Latvian peers with the statement that minorities have too much political influence in their society. More than 40 percent of students in "Slovak" schools think this is the case. In focus groups, an "inherited" or historic hostility toward the Hungarian minority was explicitly related to the imperial past:

> We learn that we were oppressed by Hungarians during the age of the Hungarian/Habsburg monarchy. It means we were oppressed by Hungarians, who are a national minority in Slovakia today. And I think they want to oppress us again. (Student, Slovak school)

The data discussed above suggests that the voluntarily segregated system of schools reproduces (rather than produces) diverging visions of national history and divergent civic attitudes. Divergent perceptions of the past, when coupled with a sense of insufficient civil empowerment or disenfranchisement, may constitute a widely different model of civil enculturation in schools for ethnic/linguistic minorities. However, this seems to be more likely to happen if outside factors such as political disenchantment and unequal power relations between ethnic groups are at work (the case of Estonia and Latvia). Where political conditions for minority group are fairly equal (the case of Slovakia), students in minority schools are optimistic about their chances for effective participation in the polity.

The results of this study show that minority teachers and students see the reinforcement of their ethnic identity as a priority in education, to be rated above civic participation in a political community which does not give them a sense of empowerment or does not welcome their equal participation. The idea of joint schooling of students from different ethnic groups meets with the resistance of minority teachers and students on the grounds of the need to preserve a separate cultural identity. This implies that any moves toward overcoming the barriers among schools for main ethnic groups can take place only via gradual removal of symbolic barriers toward greater trust between majority and minority groups. Such barriers may be of a political rather than cultural nature.

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