



## NPLD Youth Project 08: Priorities for promoting language diversity among young people

### NPLD Local Youth Report: Estonian/Estonia

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#### 1. Introduction

NPLD Youth Project was carried out in Estonia with the aim of gaining insight into the current situation with young people in their language community, especially looking at the 12-19 year old age group. The project was carried out according to the outline provided by NPLD:

- **Literature review**  
Research was carried out on current and previous research in the field of youth in the Estonian language community. In addition, research was done on current projects and active youth organizations in the field.
- **3 focus groups** were conducted with 12-19 year old students  
The focus group with 18-19 year old students was conducted in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia. The second with 15-16 year old students was conducted in Narva, the border town in North Eastern Estonia. The third one took place in Tartu, the second largest town in Estonia, located in Southern Estonia. The different regions were selected in order to provide greater variety in language experiences and backgrounds. Consequently, Tallinn represented a capital region with approximately 60% of people speaking Estonian. Narva on the other hand represented a region with majority Russian speakers (only 20% speak Estonian). Tartu is again a majority Estonian region with a proportion of 85% Estonian speakers.
- **Workshop with Key Actors**  
The workshop was carried out in cooperation with representatives from the youth sector. The participants included representatives from the Estonian Youth Work Center, Estonian National Youth Council and Estonian School Student Council's Union. The Estonian Youth Language Association was also invited as the key stakeholder but the organization was not able to provide a representative for the workshop. The workshop was set up according to the NPLD outline.

#### 2. Socio-linguistic context

##### 2.1 Brief historical account of socio-linguistic context of Estonian speakers

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia (1992) the official language of Estonia is Estonian. The population of Estonia is currently 1.34 million, according to the Statistics Estonia 2009 data<sup>1</sup>. The number of people worldwide who speak

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<sup>1</sup> <http://pub.stat.ee/px-web.2001/dialog/statfileri.asp>

Estonian as their mother tongue at present is 1 082 000. Out of this 1.082 million 922 000 people live in Estonia and 160 000 elsewhere, mainly in Sweden, Finland, Germany, the USA, Canada and Russia.<sup>2</sup> According to the census of 2000 Estonian is spoken as a second language in Estonia by 167 804 residents (Statistics of Estonia<sup>3</sup>).

The graphs in Annex 1 present a detailed overview of the speakers of Estonian in Estonia across different age groups. It can be seen that in 2000, the number of Estonian speakers was the highest among persons 10-14 years of age. Almost 75 thousand persons between the ages of 10-14 could speak Estonian. This group accounts 8% of all Estonian speakers in Estonia. The next largest groups of speakers of Estonian were also youngsters. Almost 70 thousand people among the age group of 15-19 could speak Estonian (7.5%). In general, the number of speakers tends to decrease with age. Therefore, while the number of speakers in age group 30-34 was 62 thousand, the number among 50-54 year olds had dropped to 54 thousand people. Among people between the ages of 70-74 the number of speakers was only 40 thousand.

Annex 2 presents an overview of the Estonian speakers across regions. As seen from the graph, the proportion of Estonian speakers does vary: in the capital Tallinn almost 60% of the population speak Estonian as their mother tongue and almost 40% speak Russian as their mother tongue. At the same time, for instance, in Tartu the proportion of Russian speakers is only 15%. In contrast, the percentage of Russian speakers is very high in Ida-Viru County – almost 80% are Russian speakers while only 18% are Estonian speakers.

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

Pursuant to the laws of the Government of the Republic, language policy is the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Research (MER). The MER designs and organizes the national language policy, prepares the necessary draft legal acts to this end, and co-ordinates research into the Estonian language, relying on the positions of the Development Strategy of the Estonian Language (DSEL) and guiding its implementation. The goal of the activities of the MER is to ensure purposeful and efficient application of the language policy which is favorable to the development of the Estonian language, including the elaboration of national development plans in the field of language and the assurance of conformity with the other national development plans. The Estonian Language Council (ELC) works at the MER; the task of the ELC is to constantly monitor and analyze the linguistic situation in Estonia and to submit proposals concerning the national language policy, including its funding. The Estonian Language Council will monitor the implementation of DSEL. The other bodies and organizations active in the field are presented in Annex 3.

This section is based on the Estonian Language Policy Profile Report 2008.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.estonica.org/est/lugu.html?kateg=6&alam=100&menyy\\_id=1080](http://www.estonica.org/est/lugu.html?kateg=6&alam=100&menyy_id=1080)

<sup>3</sup> <http://pub.stat.ee/px-web.2001/dialog/statfileri.asp>

## 2.2 Brief profile of youth

According to the Estonian Youth Work Strategy 2006-2013<sup>4</sup> youth are people in the age range of 7-26. According to the 2000 Census data, the number of Estonian speaking youth between the ages of 5-29 was 332.5 thousand and between the ages of 10-24 was almost 207 thousand.

In the Estonian educational system, the national regulations allow for extensive freedom in the choice of language of instruction. Basically, any language may be used as the language of instruction. The choice of language is delegated to the owner of the educational institution or to the educational establishment. Pursuant to the Republic of Estonia Education Act (§4) everyone, wherever they are in Estonia, shall have the opportunity to acquire education in Estonian. In educational institutions and study groups using another language of instruction or a working language other than Estonian, the teaching of Estonian shall be guaranteed based on the procedure and conditions specified in legislation concerning the respective level of education. Estonian is a compulsory subject for everyone from pre-school education through to graduation from secondary school. In schools with Estonian as the language of instruction, Estonian is learnt as the mother tongue or language of instruction from Grade 1 until the end of upper secondary school. In schools with another language as the language of instruction, Estonian is learnt from Grade 1 until the end of upper secondary school, but as a second language. The national curriculum also includes the syllabus for Russian as the mother tongue/language of instruction of the school and Russian literature and prescribes the number of compulsory lessons by stages of study. In a school which does not use Estonian as the language of instruction, foreign language A is Estonian, with compulsory studies beginning in Grade 1. (Estonian Language Policy Profile Report 2008)

During the previous school year (2007/2008) in Estonia<sup>5</sup> the number of students acquiring basic and secondary education in Estonian (grades 1-12; excluding special needs schools) was 118 thousand. In contrast, the number of students acquiring basic and secondary education in other languages (mainly Russian) was only 32.7 thousand. The share of students acquiring basic and secondary education in Estonian has been increasing over the years. For instance, in the school year 2000/2001 the share of Estonian language of instruction was 73%, by 2006/2007 it had risen to 78%. This trend is also expected to continue in the future. In the background of overall decrease in the number of students, the share of students studying in Russian is expected to drop dramatically. According to the Ministry of Education forecast, the number of students studying in Russian is expected to diminish to 17.5 thousand by 2013. (MER statistics)

Pursuant to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act, the study of Estonian is compulsory at the secondary education level in vocational education institutions in which the language of instruction is a language other than Estonian. In 2007/2008 the number of vocational education students studying in Estonian was 19.7 thousand and of those studying in Russian was 7.7 thousand. (Estonian Language Policy Profile Report 2008)

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

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?popup=download&id=7157>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.hm.ee/index.php?03264>

common language of instruction in private institutions of professional higher education: 8 schools out of a total of 11. In the eight state institutions of professional higher education the language of instruction is Estonian, although Russian language groups have been opened in one such school. (Estonian Language Policy Profile Report 2008)

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

Overall, in 2007/2008 the number of students acquiring higher education in Estonian was almost 60 thousand out of total of 68 thousand. In contrast, the number of those studying in Russian was 7 thousand and in English 1 thousand. In 2007, the number of students studying Estonian in-depth in institutions of higher education was 270. (Estonian Language Policy Profile Report 2008)

According to the Youth Work Act and the Local Governments Organization Act, a local government is responsible for the organization of youth work in its administrative territory, and according to the Youth Work Concept, a local government may delegate the responsibilities of youth work to the non-profit sector. The ministry responsible for the sphere of young people is the Ministry of Education and Research, which plans youth policies and organizes youth work for facilitating young people's participation and integration in society, coordinates the activities of local municipalities in the sphere and supervises the activities of its administrative function, the Estonian Youth Work Centre. The primary partnership entity at the national level is the Council of Youth Policies, which advises the Minister of Education and Research.

There are not many youth projects and initiatives directed to promoting or supporting young people's use of Estonian. The Association of Estonian Language Teachers has been organizing contests for students. There has been a contest on reading Estonian authors' texts; a contest on preparing online study materials in Estonian; a contest on book reviewing; essay contests; a contest on reciting the works of various authors. These are still rather academically oriented activities initiated by teachers. It was not possible to pinpoint any projects initiated by youth that would have been oriented specifically towards promoting the use of Estonian.

Research on youth language attitudes is also rather limited in Estonia. There is one piece of research dating back to 2004. Martin Ehala and Katrin Niglas carried out a survey on language attitudes of Estonian Secondary School Students<sup>6</sup>. The results of the survey brought out that 18% of Estonian students (16-19 year olds) use English intensively in their daily activities. 25% of respondents thought that in 30 years, Estonian might have lost its significance in business spheres. A large number (44%) preferred to educate their children in English. 73% of students preferred a bilingual (Estonian and English) education system. The authors concluded that a large proportion of young Estonians did assign a low instrumental value to Estonian. Those assigning particularly low instrumental value to Estonian are students from well-off families, living in the capital and attending schools with an extended English curriculum (selective elite schools). Even though Estonian is classified as a language of high ethno-linguistic vitality according to objective criteria language attitudes of Estonian youth seem pose a threat to that. The most concerning issue, according to Ehala and Niglas, is the educational sphere. If the demand for education in Estonian decreases it would be a threat to the quality of education. This in turn may lead to the disintegration of the support system for Estonian on a larger scale. Still, the study shows that Estonian school students value Estonian highly from the identity perspective – only 14% thought that they would not use Estonian with their spouse and child if marrying a non-Estonian.

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<sup>6</sup> Ehala, M., and Niglas, K. 2006. „Language Attitudes of Estonian Secondary School Students“ Journal of Language , Identity, and Education, 5(3), 209-227

Another study on the use of foreign languages by Masso and Vihalemm<sup>7</sup> has shown that the usage of English with computer-related issues is significantly higher among younger people. For instance, 42% of 15-19 year olds use English with e-mail, forums, and chat rooms while only 26% of 30-44 year olds do that. 69% of 15-19 year olds use English with the internet whereas 45% of 30-44 year olds do. 79% of 15-19 year olds read menus and instruction in English when using computers; 65% of 30-44 year olds do that.

### **3. Research Findings**

In general, the focus group discussions did not bring out very distinct differences across the age groups. Large differences existed between youth from various regions due to their diverging language backgrounds. Therefore, there are not many distinctions made between age groups in the following overview. When age differences existed they are brought out.

#### **3.1 Use of Estonian when socializing with friends**

Students from Estonian backgrounds naturally communicate with their friends in Estonian, especially in regions which are majority Estonian. In the North Eastern region where the majority speak Russian it is common that Estonian students also have Russian friends. Then, with Russian friends mostly Russian has to be used: Russians students are not very eager to speak Estonian nor are their Estonian skills very good because of limited opportunities for practicing Estonian.

Regardless of language background of friends, it is common to use slang with friends. This includes slang words in Estonian, English and, more often in North Eastern region, Russian. It appears that the use of slang is more common among younger students as older students in Tallinn seem to be more aware of their language use. 18-19 year old students in Tallinn said that they do pay more attention to their Estonian. This might be affected by the fact that they have to pass an examination in Estonian at the end of secondary school. Younger children (13-14) said that they believe they would be using less slang and English words when they grow up. For them it seemed normal that when people age their language usage would become more correct.

Students of non-Estonian background seem to use their home language with friends. For instance, a Russian student from Tallinn uses only Russian with his friends. He does use Estonian at school but with his friends communication takes place in Russian. Students with mixed backgrounds (e.g. one parent Estonian, another Russian) communicate and socialize with friends in both languages using the respective languages. When students have friends both from Estonian and Russian backgrounds it is common that, in Tallinn, Estonian is generally used as a medium of communication. A female student in Tallinn who had both Estonian and Russian friends said that they generally use Estonian when their company includes both Estonians and Russians. As her Russian friends also attend Estonian schools it is easy to switch to Estonian. At the same time, it is also complicated for Estonians to use Russian as their skills in Russian are very poor. In contrast, in the North Eastern region, it is common that in mixed companies Estonians switch to Russian as Russians generally have rather poor Estonian.

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<sup>7</sup> Masso, A., and Vihalemm, T. 2005. "Võõrkeelte oskus ja kasutamine, seos sotsiaalse integratsiooni ja mobiilsusega Eesti ühiskonnas 2002-2003" [The skills and use of foreign language, links with social integration and mobility in Estonian society 2002-2003]. A report to the Ministry of Education and Research

### **3.2 Use of Estonian with family members**

Again, for students from Estonian backgrounds it is natural to use Estonian among their family members. Estonian is not used when parents or one parent is of different backgrounds. Therefore, students from Russian backgrounds use Russian with their family members. Students having parents from different ethnic backgrounds use languages interchangeably. For instance, a male student from Narva uses Russian with his mother and Estonian with his father. Or a female student from Tartu uses Finnish with her mother and Estonian with her father.

It can also be that Russian background students opt for Estonian occasionally when communicating with family members. For instance, a male student whose home language is Russian said that sometimes it can happen that Estonian is used when the son needs to talk to his mother so that the father would not understand. In this case, Estonian is used as a secret language.

It can also happen that students from Estonian backgrounds decide to use non-native language in the family. For example, in order to practice English, one of the participants in Tallinn made an agreement with his brother that they use only English when talking to each other during one month.

Some Estonian students also pointed out that they use English in extended family circles. Having relatives in the USA, Finland or Sweden requires using English as the relatives generally have forgotten their Estonian.

### **3.3 Use of Estonian in sport activities**

When engaging in various sports activities, students in majority Estonian regions do use Estonian. The language of sports groups tends to be Estonian. In the North Eastern region it is common that Russian is also used besides Estonian. The composition of sports groups influences the use of languages. When Russian background students dominate it is necessary for Estonian students to switch to Russian.

English could also be sometimes used in majority Estonian regions when training partners include Russians. A male student in Tallinn had Russians in his training group and when necessary they talked in English as the Estonians cannot speak Russian and the particular Russians were bad at Estonian. A female participant in Tartu also brought out that sometimes she has to use English to communicate with one of her Russian practice partners.

Even though the communication takes place in Estonian or in Ida-Viru region also Russian, it is rather common that English is occasionally used as well. This is the case especially for the modern sports activities (e.g BMX, skating, roller skating, modern dancing). Those sports activities have a lot of terminology in English that has not been translated into Estonian. Therefore English terms have been accepted and are used. Translated terms would look weird and sound clumsy, think the students. This would in turn complicate accepting them. The students in Tallinn provided an example: 'moonwalk' would sound really funny in Estonian and would create confusion. In general, students were rather sceptical about translating the terms into Estonian.

Foreign languages are also used in sports when watching TV programmes or using the internet. Besides Estonian programmes, several English language programmes are followed. Russian students do also watch Russian programmes.

### **3.4 Use of Estonian with music**

Naturally, young people listen to a lot of English language music besides local Estonian music. Russian students also follow Russian music. A few students occasionally listen to German music.

Everyday communication occurs in Estonian for Estonian students, of course. A male student from Tallinn, who plays in a popular rock band, said that a lot of English terminology is used in music. The reasons behind that are similar to those outlined by the sports section. There are no Estonian equivalents for many terms and because of that English terms have been quickly accepted. That student also uses English when travelling abroad with the band to perform in concerts or record their music. The support staff of his band consists of foreigners therefore English as to be used.

### **3.5 Use of Estonian for technology and the internet**

As pointed out in a study mentioned earlier, young people use English a lot with technology and the internet. The same was outlined in the focus groups. Young people read and use a lot of English language sites, menus, and programs in English. Using social network environments (e.g Facebook, Orkut), Youtube, various forums, music and film downloading sites, etc requires knowledge of English. Comments and discussions are written in Estonian but also in English and Russian (in the case of Russian students).

While using chat programs like MSN, students admit that they use Estonian but this is very much mixed with slang, English, Russian and various abbreviations. Older students seem to pay more attention to correct language use than younger ones. Students in Narva admit to using a very mixed language while using chat programs. They mix a lot of Estonian, Russian and English and call it Narva-style Estonian.

It seems that using English is very natural to students of various ages. As a student in Tallinn pointed out, there are very few materials on the internet in Estonian and if one needs to do some research on any issue you have to use English to acquire any information. Information in Estonian is rather scarce. It is inevitable to use English.

The fact that a lot of programs are in English has accustomed students to using them in that language. And due to that, they do not see a need for Estonian programs. They are also rather skeptical about translating programs into Estonian because their contacts with, for instance, MS Office in Estonian have been negative. For people, who have learned to use MS Office in English, the Estonian version was strange and uncomfortable to use because things were hard to find. Students thought that had they started using the Estonian version of the program in the first place, may be it would not have felt so strange. Some students thought that maybe it would look more natural to their children.

### **3.6 Use of Estonian in the labor market**

The youngest students (13-14) had not had any contacts with work yet. Therefore they could not discuss the issue. Some of the older students had summer work experience. In Tallinn, a female girl student had experience in working as a bank teller. She had to use Estonian as well as Russian because the bank office was located in a Russian area in Tallinn. She had experienced how important it is to know the professional terminology to be able to work successfully. She did not know a lot of banking terminology in Russian and therefore had problems communicating with Russian customers.

A Russian male student in Tallinn had summer work experience in construction. He said that during summer work he used Estonian very rarely and had used Russian and English instead. The work was in a Russian-speaking environment. In addition, English was used to cooperate with partners from Finland and Sweden. He acted as a translator translating English to Russian and the other way round. He also brought out that sometimes he also used German when he could not find a word in English.

In Narva, the North Eastern Region, students that had worked had used Estonian, Russian and English. Communicating with foreign tourists (e.g. from Finland, Germany, even Spain) requires using other languages besides Estonian and Russian. English is most commonly used then. In a few cases, German has proved to be useful – it is good to know at least a few words.

### **3.7 Use of Estonian in education and studies**

Previous research has outlined that young people place high value on English language education and many would prefer English language education for their children. As researchers have pointed out, this could have serious implications on the vitality of Estonian language. The focus groups also demonstrated that students value English language education very highly. Most students said they prefer to acquire further education in English rather than Estonian. Some students said that if they stay in Estonia then it would be natural to study in Estonian. Still, the value placed on English language education is great. Students seem to prefer English language education because they acknowledge the importance of English in today's globalized world. Mastering English is vital in order to participate in the world. Having good English provides access to wider future opportunities. Furthermore, as some students in Tallinn claimed they know Estonian already very well compared to English and therefore would like to concentrate on the latter more in the future.

At the same time the students could not see what would be the implications of English language education on Estonian and its survival. The female student who had experience in working in banking could appreciate the importance of knowing the professional vocabulary of the field. All the others (18-19 year olds) did not think that studying in English would have any negative effects on their Estonian. For instance, a student claimed: you cannot forget Estonian. Students tend to think that it is natural to know Estonian vocabulary by default regardless of professional area. On a more general level, students seem not to have an idea of how diminishing the scope of Estonian education could affect the survival of the language.

## **4. Priorities for future action**

In general, the impressions from the focus groups outline that students tend to consider the existence of Estonian language very natural. The language has been here and it will be here in the future. It seems that on one hand students do not realize their key role in the survival of the language – they do not acknowledge that the issue of whether Estonian would be around in the future does depend on how they act today and in the future. On the other hand, the students seem not to be aware of the factors that might endanger the survival of the language (e.g. education in foreign language, fast acceptance of foreign language terms). The school and families definitely have a role to play here in order to raise the overall awareness in these aspects.

Estonian is still very much part of the everyday life of students. Although English comes in many forms and ways, the students live in Estonian language environments (except for the North Eastern region). This fact and the prevailing overall attitudes presented above make it complicated to come up with ideas on encouraging young people to make more use of Estonian. Therefore, the focus groups were not very fruitful in providing ideas. In Narva, the North Eastern region, the discussion did bring out some ideas. Even though the students were at first sceptical about the possibility of increasing the use of Estonian in the fields where English dominates (e.g. extreme sports, computer programs) finally they did bring out a few issues. It turned out that when particular motivators are in place the use of Estonian could be encouraged. Taking the example of roller-skating, the students had the opinion that it could be possible to start developing Estonian terms and phrases for the field. The prerequisites for a possible project would be:

- the project would be lead by a person who has a good reputation and some sort of recognition in the particular community;
- there has to be a person who would want to do a project and would have interest in it;
- the project would provide further recognition and publicity for the person (or the field in general), e.g. articles in youth media;
- the project would provide financial benefits for doing the job.



Taking into account the large social networks that today's students are connected to through ICT it would be possible to arrange large scope discussions on the project and disseminate and test results among a lot of people across Estonia. Besides, it would in general facilitate contacts between youth across Estonia.

The stakeholder workshop gave further support for a potential terminology development project. A students' union representative studying car mechanics also admitted that a project on developing Estonian terminology for mechanics (mostly data analysis programs) would be feasible if the project would bring together specialists from the mechanics sector (the users), terminology specialists (language experts) and ICT experts to put the program together.

The stakeholder workshop was also very productive in the aspect of how to raise overall awareness of correct Estonian language. The stakeholder workshop brought out the problem that the promotion of Estonian language as such is very much limited to academic circles (researchers, language experts, and teachers). Due to that, the discussions on language issues are very academically centred and generally appear only in professional publications. Even though articles on language issues are sometimes published in daily newspapers or weeklies, the articles tend to be too academically oriented. Therefore, it is complicated for the general public to be included in the discussions. Consequently, it was outlined that it is important to widen the discussion on language issues and include the general public more in this discussion.

Secondly, an idea on creating campaigns on Estonian language use was put forward. Campaigns would be suitable instruments for popularizing correct use of Estonian as language is something you can act on or change immediately at any time or place. In contrast to other youth campaigns (e.g. safe sex, etc) which do not make an immediate connection to behaviour, language campaigns would have an instant effect as we use language all the time.

Thirdly, youth organizations brought out that there is room in every organization to raise overall awareness about their correct Estonian use. Even though some organizations, e.g. students' union, have already placed clear emphasis on following correct Estonian in all official documents, there is still a lot that can be done.

Fourthly, workshop participants also thought that it would be a good idea to initiate projects centred on Estonian, e.g. music festivals, etc.

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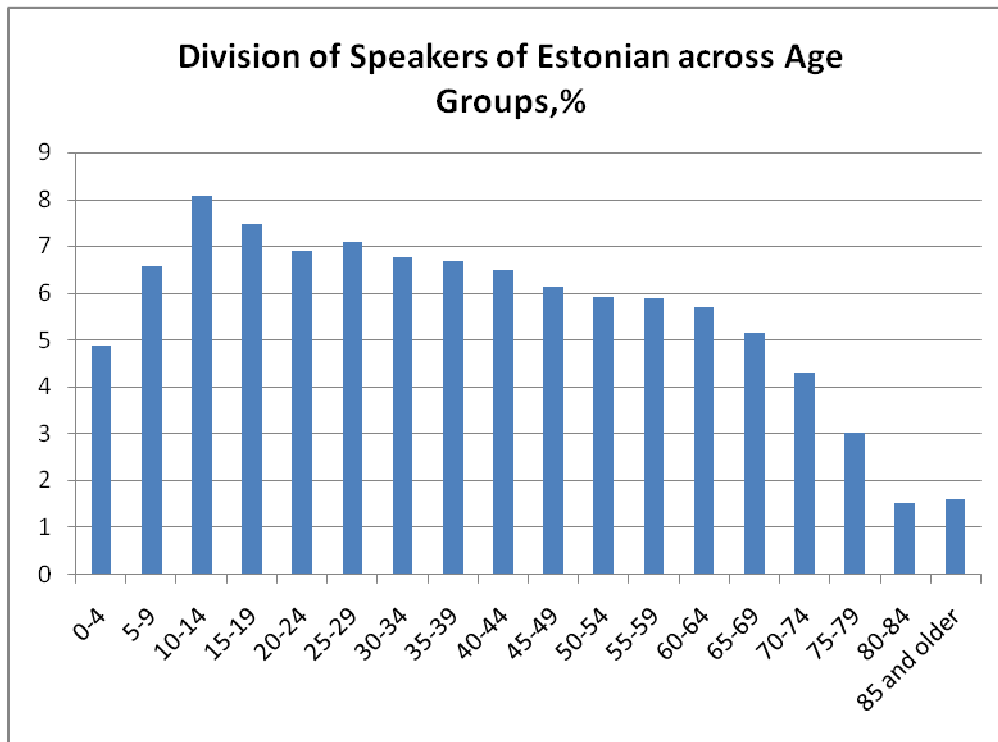
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**Annex 1**

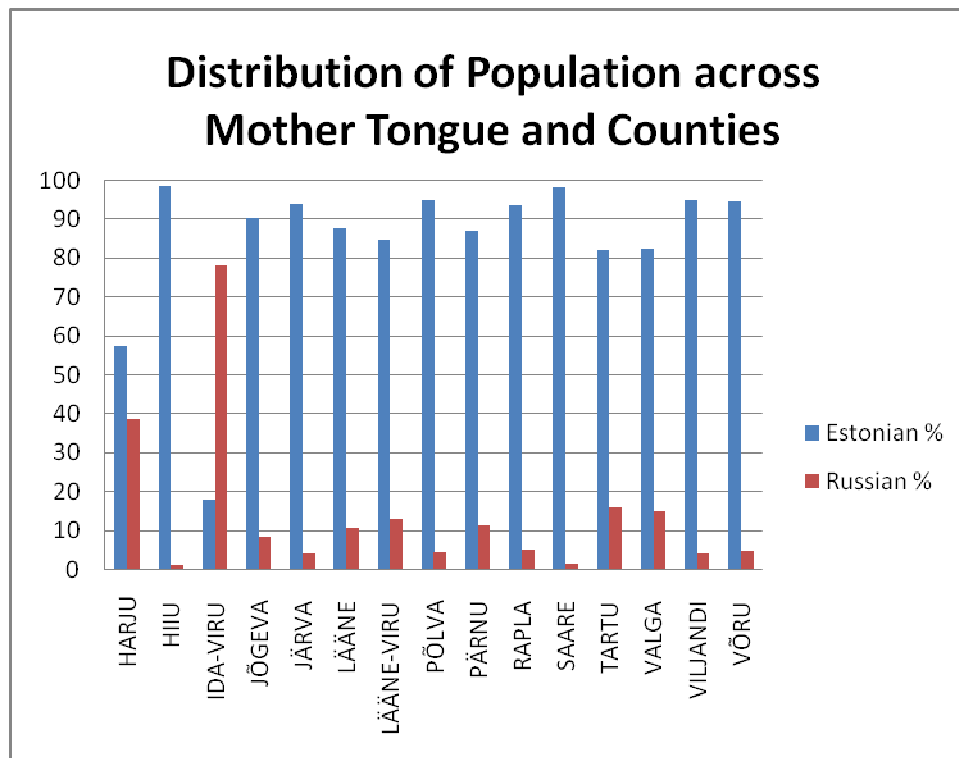


Source: Census Data, March 31, 2000.



Source: Census Data, March 31, 2000.

## Annex 2



Source: Census Data, March 31, 2000.

### **Annex 3: Institutions and organizations ensuring development and implementation of Estonian language policy and language teaching policy**

- **The Language Inspectorate** is a government body in the area of government of the MER. Its main tasks include supervision of the observance of the Language Act and other legal acts regulating the use of language, issuance of warnings and injunctions, and imposition of fines where necessary.
- **The Institute of Estonian Language** is a state research and development institution administered by the MER, whose task is research into standard Estonian, Estonian dialects and languages related to Estonian, and the compilation of academic dictionaries. Its activities also include language planning and development of practical language planning.
- **The universities** (the University of Tartu and Tallinn University) provide postgraduate education and conduct linguistic research.
- **The Estonian Language Foundation** aims to support and enhance the study of Estonian language and culture and to assist in comprehensive research and preservation of Estonian as the official language and a medium of identity.
- **The Legislative Drafting and Legal Language Division** of the Legislative Policy Department of the Ministry of Justice engages with legal language planning which includes harmonizing language use in draft legislation and systematizing legal terminology and translating Estonian legislation into English and Russian.
- **The Estonian Terminology Association** (Eter) is a non-profit organization whose aim is to coordinate terminology work in cooperation with the Institute of the Estonian Language. It also organizes international cooperation in the field.
- **The National Examinations and Qualifications Centre** is an institution administered by the MER that prepares assignments for national examinations in Estonian and conducts the examinations.
- **The Võru Institute** is a R&D institution administered by the Ministry of Culture, whose activities cover the historical area of Võrumaa and help to record and develop the local dialect and culture.
- **The Integration Foundation** functions with the aim of initiating, supporting and coordinating projects targeted at the integration of Estonian society. It is implementing the Estonian Integration programs.
- **The Association of Estonian Language Teachers** is a non-profit organization that brings together teachers of Estonian language and literature as well as other people interested in the teaching of the mother tongue, practical language planning and literature. The aims of the association are to promote and value the study and teaching of Estonian language and literature; to raise the level of knowledge of the mother tongue among its members; and to improve their professional knowledge and skills.
- **The Association of Teachers of Estonian as a Second Language** provides training and counseling regarding the methodology of teaching Estonian as a second language; it also prepares and distributes printed matter and materials for its members.
- **The Mother Tongue Society** functions as a non-profit organization and is associated with the Estonian Academy of Sciences. The aims of the society are to contribute to the research and planning of the Estonian language and to generate public interest in Estonian. The Language Committee of the

Mother Tongue Society provides recommendations and norms concerning standard language.

- **The Estonian Youth Language Association** was established in cooperation with MER and the Association of Estonian Language Teachers to carry out research on language environments in schools, use of language and language attitudes among youth; provide advice and consultation on issues regarding student language competitions; and popularize Estonian and its correct usage.

This section is based on the Estonian Language Policy Profile Report 2008.