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**‘Towards A Common Identity? A Comparative Analysis of Estonian Integration
Policy’**

Master’s thesis for International Masters Programme in Russian, Central and East
European Studies

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ABSTRACT

This thesis looks into the Estonian policies towards its Russian-speaking population within the framework of ethno-political regimes. It engages into a meta-analysis of major integration documents, namely, the State Integration Programme ‘Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007’, the Development Plan ‘Estonian Integration Strategy 2008-2013’, and the Strategy of Integration and Social Cohesion in Estonia ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’. By focusing on the development of the ‘state identity’ concept in these documents, it evaluates changes of the ethno-political regime in Estonia. A thorough analysis of the most recent integration Programme ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ demonstrates that Estonia is slowly moving towards more liberal vision of state identity in particular and its policies towards Russian-speakers in general.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Collapse of the Soviet Union posed a number of serious challenges to Estonia. Along with the need of democratic reforms and economic transformation, Estonia had to respond to the highly question of Russian-speaking minority which retains its position as one of the most important issues which shapes the public discourse and internal politics in the country. Large – scale labor migration during the Soviet times created the situation when a previously relatively homogeneous country turned into an ethnically diverse state. In 1934 Estonians constituted 88% of the whole population, however, in 1990 their part in the population decreased to 61.5 %. (Statistical Office of Estonia) The majority of newcomers were ethnic Russians, as well as representatives of other nationalities of former Soviet Union, often named as ‘Russian-speakers’. Thus, after it regained its independence, Estonia became an example of an ‘ethnically divided society’. (Lustick, 1979:325)

Estonian policies towards Soviet-era immigrants has experienced different transformations, changing from an ethnic control regime based on segmentation, dependence and co-optation (Pettai & Hallik, 2002) to a more democratic regime of ‘ethnic democracy’ based on strong democratic institutions, however, preserving the exclusionist nature of Estonian nation. (Järve, 2005). Over the time, ‘control’ mechanisms’ have been changed to more inclusive strategies to promote integration. This shift prompted Priit Järve to predict that in Estonia regime of ethnic democracy will give place to liberal democracy. (Ibid, p.78)

However, with the development of policies towards Russian – speakers, this assumption requires thorough assessment. Here, I analyze Estonian integration strategies in order to find out whether the change in ethno-political regime in Estonia occurred. A special attention is paid to the concept of state identity presented in all three successive integration documents adopted in 2000, 2008 and 2014¹. While the first two integration

¹The most recent integration Programme ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ is going to be adopted in the forthcoming months.

Programmes have already become a subject of a thorough analysis (Pettai & Hallik, 2002; Vetik, 2002, 2008; Malloy, 2009), the strategic document ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ has only recently been published and its analysis in this study may contribute to the discussion on the possibilities of Estonia’s transformation into the liberal democracy.² Here, I view liberal democracy as the regime offering equal opportunities for participation in social and political life, regardless one’s ethnic or religious background.

Thus, the main aim of this thesis is to evaluate Estonia’s changing attitudes towards the concept of state identity within the broader process of ethno-political regime change. Here, I look at Estonia’s different definitions of state identity, instruments designed to achieve it and target groups of state policies, framing it within the theory of different ethno-political regimes, namely ‘control’ and ‘integration’.

The main research question of the work is the following: *did the concept of state identity undergo any substantial changes with regard to the multiethnic reality of Estonia’s citizenry? And if yes, may it signify the move away from the hegemonic control to more liberal ethno-political regime of integration.*

In order to answer this question, the following sub-questions will be answered:

- 1) What are the main instruments employed by the Estonian state aimed at the creation of state identity, and how did they change since the introduction of the first integration Programme?
- 2) Why did the concept undergo these changes?
- 3) How was this change achieved?
- 4) What were the outcomes of the changed approach for the concept of ‘state identity’?

There are six main chapters in the thesis. The first chapter presents the research design of the study as well as informs the reader about the particular ethno-political situation in

²‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ and its socio-economic dimension has been recently analyzed by Licia Cianetti in the conference paper ‘Integrating Minorities in Times of Crisis: The Estonian and Latvian Integration Programmes and their socio-economic dimension’, available at: https://www.academia.edu/7505078/Integrating_Minorities_in_Times_of_Crisis_The_Estonian_and_Latvian_Integration_Programmes_and_their_socio-economic_dimension, last accessed 19/08/2014

Estonia. The second chapter conceptualizes the field of research outlining the categories of immigrants and ethno-political regimes, concentrating on the ethnic control and integration, which are defined as the most applicable for the ethno-political situation caused by a large-scale immigration to Estonia during the Soviet period. Ethnic control regime is being conceptualized within the Ian Lustick's and Sammi Smootha's models. Integration regime is discussed within the four dimensions of integration.

The third chapter provides a brief overview of the main findings dealing with the ethno-political regimes in Estonia. Mainly, the literature reviewed presents works applying Lustick's and Smootha's models to the Estonia's case. Also, the works dealing with the integration processes in Estonia within the broader context of integration as an ethno-political regime are presented. Moreover, the chapter includes the application of Kymlicka's model to the Estonian case, as developed by Vello Pettai, setting the ground for the empirical part of the study.

The fourth chapter provides the empirical data of the integration programmes starting from the first integration document and focusing on the most recent draft of the 'Integrating Estonia 2020' programme and supporting documents. The special attention is paid to the issue of state identity, instruments for its promotion, target groups and the participation of minority groups in the drafting process. Each section describing the main empirical findings is followed by the subsection of analysis. Lastly, the chapter ends with the comparative analysis of three integration documents.

The fifth chapter outlines the main factors which contributed to the change in the state's approach towards the state identity. As it is argued in the previous chapter, this change informs about the gradual shift in the ethno-political regime in Estonia. However, the recent programme, as well as other documents and institutional settings in Estonia, still bear some elements of the ethnic control regime which hampers the liberalization of the Estonian policies towards Russian-speaking population. Finally, the conclusions are made in the sixth chapter.

1.1. Research design and methodology

Qualitative research method: case study

The thesis follows the classic research method of the case study. Robert K. Yin mentions that 'as a research strategy the case study is used in many situations to contribute to our knowledge of individual, social, political, and related phenomena'. (Yin, 2003:1) Case study method provides us with the instrument of analyzing the context and better understanding the theoretical framework which is being employed. (Hartley, 2004:323)

The case study method allows us to approach the question in a more comprehensive way, to study particular objects, their relations with each other and with the environment. (Gummesson, 1988:76) This quality of the case study research tool makes it indispensable while researching new or emerging processes, behaviors, organizational patterns, as well as everyday practices. (Hartley, 2004: 325) Taking into account that the primary aim of this thesis is to study the evolution of the 'state identity' concept within the process of ethnpolitical regime change, a case study is being used as a main research method.

Estonia was selected as a case study because it presents itself an interesting example of a deeply divided society. Being originally a rather ethnically homogenous state, Estonia witnessed a large - scale migration from within the whole territory of the former Soviet Union after WWII. It led to a rapid diversification of ethnical outlook of Estonia. Those people who migrated to Estonia during the Soviet time, are often addressed as 'Russian-speakers', although this group is comprised from the representatives of different ethnicities. Most numerous of which are Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians who together form one third of the permanent population of Estonia. (Statistics Office of Estonia, Population and Housing Census, 2011)

After reestablishing of Estonian independence, a substantial part of Soviet-era immigrants were not granted Estonian citizenship and in this way excluded from active participation in state's life. However, in late 1990s, Estonian authorities soften its citizenship legislation and started to develop integration strategies aimed at the gradual

incorporation of Russian-speakers into social and political spheres. This process is still in place.

In this respect, common identity formation is being viewed through the prism of an ongoing integration process. On the other hand, what makes this case interesting is the fact that Estonian policies towards its Russian-speaking population are undergoing continuous transformations. In this respect, the way, in which authorities defined the concept of state identity, has also been changing. This thesis aims at the research of the changing concepts of state identity framing it into a broader process of ethno-political regime change.

The main *research question of the* thesis deals with the current nature of ethno-political regime in Estonia by looking at the main developments in the concept of state identity presented in the country's integration strategies and related documents. These documents are the main *the main sources of data* in this study.

Thus, the State Integration Programme 'Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007', Development Plan 'Estonian Integration Strategy 2008-2013, Proposal to the Government of the Republic to draft a development plan for the field and the Strategy of Integration and Social Cohesion in Estonia 'Integrating Estonia.2020' are analysed as primary sources of data. Additionally, the following laws: Constitution of Estonia, Estonian Public Broadcasting Act, Estonian sustainable development national strategy 'Sustainable Estonia 21', The Fundamentals of Estonian Cultural Policy will be analysed as secondary sources. Also, the materials of the thematic working group discussions, the summary of the discussion clubs with third country nationals, summaries of the 'A Study of Social Groups in Integration', 'Equal Treatment Promotion and Awareness in Estonia' projects, and the results of the Integration Monitoring 2011 will be used for supporting the main findings.

While analysing the text of the Integration Programmes, special attention will be given to the concept of 'state identity' which for the first time appears in the integration Programme 'Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007' and is used in all further integration documents. Definitions of state identity and values on which state identity

is built will be analyzed with respect to the balance of ethnic and civic factors which they contain.

Additionally, the measures and actions listed in the documents aimed at achieving of a 'state identity' will be analyzed according to the conceptualization of integration as a multidimensional process. Also, the process of elaboration of the programme and involvement of the minority groups is addressed in the analysis.

Also, as another primary source, *interviews* with state officials directly involved in the drafting process of the third integration Programme, some of the group leaders who participated in thematic group discussions, and representative of the Migration and Integration Foundation (MISA). The expert interviews were conducted mainly because of the need to clarify certain points which aroused during the analysis of the documents, especially The Strategy of Integration and Social Cohesion in Estonia 'Integrating Estonia 2020'.

It should be pointed out that the final draft of the '*Integrating Estonia 2020*' Programme was released with a five-month delay on 30 April 2014. *The Programme* was published only in Estonian, so the author was using an unofficial translation. Due to this, it was necessary to specify certain points with the officials of the Ministry who were directly involved in the drafting process of the Programme.

During the interviews with Anna-Ly Reimaa and Liana Roosmaa the wording of the text of the recent Programme and other concepts used in the related documents were specified. In this way, although an unofficial translation of the 'Integrating Estonia 2020' is used for the analysis; all the terms were specified with the authors of the document. Although the Programme will be officially approved in the upcoming months, the officials assured that the text would not undergo any substantial changes.

The experts Igor Kopõtin, Marianne Meiorig and Aune Valk and were selected as the leaders of the expert groups ('State Identity', 'Cultural diversity' and 'Tolerance in the society' respectively) conducted within the process of preparation of the most recent programme. Kristina Kallas was involved into the organization of the discussion clubs, and into the discussion of the earlier drafts of *the Programme*. The representative of the Migration and Integration Foundation (MISA) was selected because of the MISA's

activities and direct involvement in the implementation of the state integration Programmes.

All respondents, except for one, agreed being named in the thesis. That is why, in the text of the thesis this respondent would be addressed as ‘Expert 1’. All of them gave their permission to be cited.

Despite the fact the study attempts at the comprehensive evaluation of the existing ethno-political regime, yet there are a number of *limitations* which should be taken into account while assessing the main findings. First of all, the author does not possess sufficient Estonian language skills. This is particularly the issue with the final draft of the third integration programme. The text analyzed was the translation prepared by the translator, not the Ministry of Culture. Although the key terms used in the document were specified with the officials responsible for the drafting process, the author was unable to access the original data.

Moreover, since the thesis operates mainly with the documents named above, it pays a considerably smaller attention to the actual implementation of the integration programmes. In case of the most recent integration Programme which is yet to be adopted, it is impossible to study its implementation. Thus, it remains unclear whether conclusions made on the basis of this kind of analysis will be confirmed during the implementation of ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’.

Although it was mentioned above that Estonia witnessed big changes in its ethnic structure, a more detailed elaboration of Estonian case is needed in order to set the ground for theoretical discussion and findings of the thesis.

1.2. Estonia: outlining the case

Since the years of the first Estonian independence (1918-1940), the ethnic makeup of its population changed dramatically, transforming it from a relatively homogeneous to an ethnically diverse state. Before WWII, minorities constituted only 12% of Estonia’s

population. The largest minority groups in 1934 were Russians, Germans, Swedes and Jews (Estonia.EU) Mostly, such ethnical composition was the result of a historic migration which was occurring gradually while Estonian territories were the part of different states.

Taking into account different lifestyles and circumstances under which these minority groups arrived to the territory of Estonia, they might be separated into two distinct groups. The first one is represented by territorially dispersed Germans (16,000), Jews (4,500) who lived mostly in urban areas, Russians (92,000) who were residing compactly in the North-East of the country, along with Swedish people (9,000) living in on the islands of Western Estonia. (Estonica. National Minorities in Estonian Republic before WWII)

After 1945, due to Soviet migration policies, the ethnic composition of Estonia started to change radically. Like others Soviet republics, the country received an inflow of labor migrants from all over the Soviet Union. Already in 1959 the percentage of Estonians decreased to 75% (in comparison to 88% in the prewar period). In 1990 Estonians comprised only 61.5 % of population. (Ministry of Culture, 2008:6)

Although those immigrants who arrived to Estonia during the Soviet period represented almost all nationalities of the Soviet Union, Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians constituted the largest groups of the Soviet - era immigrants.

Table 1. Change in population in Estonia during the Soviet period by ethnic group (Sokolova, 2008:28)

Census year	Estonians	Russians	Ukrainians	Belarusians	Population in total
1934	992, 520	92 656	92	No data.	1, 126 413
1959	892,653	240, 227	15,769	10,930	1, 196,791
1970	925,157	334,620	28,086	18,732	1,365,079

1979	947,812	408,778	36,044	23,461	1,464,476
1989	963,281	474,836	48,271	27,711	1,565,662

Source: Population of Estonia by population census, Statistical Office of Estonia 1995)

Rapid industrialization and urbanization of Estonia during the Soviet period led to a situation where the majority of those who arrived to the country during 1945-1990 settled in urban and highly industrialized areas. Thus, the majority of the Soviet - era immigrants settled in Tallinn and in the north-east of the country, in Ida-Virumaa County. (Sokolova, 2008:29)

Since the reestablishment of Estonian independence in 1991 Estonia witnessed a new wave of immigrants. This new inflow of immigrants resulted in the formation of more diverse ethnical makeup of Estonia. According to the latest census, representatives of 192 nationalities live in Estonia. Estonians, Russians, Ukrainians and Belarusians constitute the largest ethnic groups in Estonia. 68.7% of Estonia's permanent population are Estonians (889,770), 24.8% are Russians (321,198) and 1.7% are Ukrainians (22,302). The share of Belarusians (12,419) and Finns (7,423) is less than 1%. 37 ethnic nationalities have more than a hundred representatives in the country. Interestingly, according to 2000 census, Estonia was a home to 142 nationalities. (Statistics Office of Estonia, 2011) In more than ten years period, representatives of 50 nationalities immigrated to the country.

A Comparison of the 2000 and 2011 census results reveal the tendency of a growing diversity of Estonian population. Thus, the number of Georgians, Azerbaijanis, Swedes, Englishmen, US Americans, Italians, Frenchmen, Dutch and Chinese has increased, compared to the previous population census. (Statistics Office of Estonia, 2011)

Taking into account the mentioned above information, one can distinguish between several types of minority groups currently residing in Estonia: first of all, minorities historically residing in Estonia (Germans, Jews, and Russians who arrived to the country prior WWII, Swedish people, etc.); secondly, those minorities who immigrated to the country after WWII as the result of Soviet-era labor and migration policies during 1945-1990 (Russian, Ukrainians, Belarusians are the most numerous); and minorities

who arrived to Estonia after the restoration of independence under official Estonian immigration legislation and, which after the Estonian accession to the EU, is regulated by the EU immigration policies. This category includes both labor immigrants and refugees

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTUALISING THE FIELD: FROM ETHNIC CONTROL TO LIBERAL INTEGRATION

2.1 Ethno-political situations: categories of migrants

Over the last centuries, migration led to big shifts in population across the world. On the national level, states were supposed to react to these changes by developing different policies towards newcomers. In most cases, these policies were dependent on the particular circumstances under which newcomers arrived at the state and identified themselves within it. Will Kymlicka classifies different groups of newcomers (ethno-cultural groups) according to the rights they claim in the state. He distinguishes among national minorities, immigrants, metics, racial caste groups and isolationist ethno religious groups. (Kymlicka, 2002:23)

National minorities represent those groups of minorities ‘that formed complete and functioning societies on their historic homeland prior to being incorporated into a larger state’. (Ibid.) In this category, Kymlicka distinguishes between ‘substate nations’ and ‘indigenous people’. The first minority group, although having aspirations for its own statehood, failed to build it and was supposed to exist within the other state unit, like Flemish, Scots, and Welsh. Indigenous people are those who have been traditionally residing at the territory which later was incorporated within the other state (Seto people, American Indians). Their primary aim is to preserve their traditions and beliefs. (Ibid., p. 23-24)

Although substate nations and indigenous people pursue rather different goals (the former – to become independent, the latter – to preserve their cultural distinctiveness), they have been opposing the process of majority – nation-building. At first, majority nation-states were oppressing any forms of minority nationalism; however, recently, due to the development of the human rights regime, this approach was recognized as unacceptable. (Ibid.) As the result, national minorities were not only recognized as citizens along with majority population, but are usually granted political autonomy, broad group rights and material resources (e.g. the lands of their historical settlement).

Under immigrant category Will Kymlicka understands those people who decided to move to the host country voluntarily. They arrive to the country under the immigration law, which allows them to acquire citizenship after some time. Large flows of immigrants significantly challenged the very idea of nation-state as they started to demand more rights which were exclusively granted to the ethnic majority group. (Kymlicka, 2002:32-33)

Intensified migration flows have put a lot of pressure on states and the policies they apply towards the immigrants. It even led to the discussion whether immigrants could be seen as a potential danger to the nation states. However, Will Kymlicka understands these processes in a way that immigrants simply want to 're-negotiate' the terms of the policies states apply towards them and actively participate in them (in the policies). (Kymlicka, 2002:33) In this way, he underlines the fact that immigrant minorities from being solely an object of integration policies turns into their subject.

Unlike 'immigrants', 'metics' have entered the country illegally or under the circumstances which do not allow them to acquire citizenship. For example, irregular or temporary immigrants like Turkish guest workers in Germany. The main point of contradiction here is the fact that metics claim for themselves the right to acquire the citizenship, but the state and general public does not view them as being eligible to do so. Although different states responded to this challenge in different ways, more and more states granted 'metics' the right to follow the 'immigrant' path and integrate into the host society. (Ibid. pp. 38-41)

African-Americans are being distinguished by Kymlicka as a separate ethno-cultural group. Brought as slaves to the United States, this group was discriminated for a long time. They were denied American citizenship and equal rights not because they belonged to other nation, but because of their race. In this way, state policies towards them cannot be limited to mere integration and require a more careful approach. (Ibid., 46-47)

If all the groups discussed above aim at a some degree of participation in the societal life, and, thus, acquiring some legal status, Kymlicka distinguishes a minority category which is voluntary avoiding any kind of affiliation with the state, for example,

Hutterites, Amish or Hasidic Jews. They are not concerned with their marginalization. In most cases, states are responding liberally, and not trying to integrate those people into the larger society, in this way, respecting their rights. (Ibid., pp.37-38)

Additionally, Will Kymlicka points at the existence of some exceptional minorities which do not fit into any of the mentioned above categories, for example, Roma, Russian settlers in the Baltics, the Crimean Tatars and the Cossacks. (Ibid., p. 73) The case of Russian – speaking population in Estonia in the context of integration will be discussed in this thesis.

This classification of ethno-cultural groups was re-considered by Vello Pettai who argued that it could be extended to a much comprehensive concept which goes beyond a mere classification of minority groups and provides the ways in which state responds to ethnic diversity within its borders. Pettai calls them ‘ethno-political situations’ which ‘represent the different patterns of how the modern state as a form of political organization spread across the societies of the world and of how it came to be imposed on ethno-cultural groups in different ways and in different sequences’. (Pettai, 2002:261-262)

Unlike ethno-cultural groups, the concept of ethno-political situation takes into account not only different circumstances under which minorities arrived at the host state, but also accounts for the state willingness to grant ethno-cultural groups certain rights. Thus, Pettai suggests to distinguish between ‘national minorities’ and ‘African-Americans’ on the one hand, and ‘immigrants’, ‘metics’ and ‘isolationist ethno-religious groups’ on the other. In the former case, the state takes some degree of responsibility for these groups and tries to accommodate their rights, while in the latter – it attempts to subject them to its ‘ethno-cultural power’. (Pettai, 2002:262)

Pettai points at the fact that while exercising their ‘ethno-cultural power’, state controlled by the ethnic majority group may treat minority groups in a discriminatory way, not accounting for their rights. For example, the state may treat immigrants as metics limiting them in their rights and access to power. (Ibid.) In this way, in order to distribute its ethno-cultural power and manage the existing ‘ethno-political’ situation,

state engages in a process of constructing different 'ethno-political' regimes, i. e. different modes of power-sharing relations in ethnically diverse states.

In order to conceptualize the ways in which state exercise its ethno-cultural power, here, I will use the classification developed by McGarry and O'Leary who in their 'taxonomy of the macro-political forms of ethnic conflict regulation' distinguish among 8 ethno-political regimes (genocide, forced mass-population transfers, partition, integration, hegemonic control, arbitration, federalization and consociationalism. (McGarry & O'Leary, 1993:4)

Bearing in mind the state's interpretation of different migrant categories might be very subjective and discriminatory (as highlighted by Pettai), below I will proceed with the elaboration hegemonic control and integration regimes as they are the most applicable to the managing ethno-political situations involving immigrants and metics. On the one hand, immigrants' claims for the incorporation into state structures are perceived legitimate by majority group, and state aims at their integration into society applying integration regime. On the other hand, metics are perceived as non-eligible for integration and further participation in social and political life in the host country, thus, they are the subject of the control regime.

2.2. Different types of control regime

While researching the causes of the stability in the societies characterized by a high degree of divergence and fragmentation, Ian Lustick offers the explanatory framework of 'ethnic control' regime, which will be elaborated below. According to Lustick, societies where 'ascriptive ties generate an antagonistic segmentation, based on terminal identities with high political salience, sustained over a substantial period of time and a wide variety of issues', could be called 'deeply divided'. (Lustick, 1979:326) If the society is so polarized, 'ethnic control' is exercised by the state represented by the dominant majority through political and economic instruments, institutions, legal frameworks and socioeconomic arrangements. (Ibid.342)

In this way, Lustick offers an alternative to consociational democracy conceptual explanation of stability in ethnically polarized societies. While comparing these two regimes, he highlights the main features of control regime which substantially differ from the consociationalism where different ethnic groups engage in equal or near equal power sharing. On the contrary, in an ethnic control regime, only the dominant group decides on the allocation of resources in the state. This decision is being made without consultation with the minority group, as this seems to be unnecessary.

This logic also influences policy-making process in control regimes: majority elites secure dominant positions in state structures as there no quotas for minority representatives. Instead, the system is designed in way which prevents minority representatives to hold state offices. Thus, majority group exercise necessary powers to control minority through official instruments and state institutions.

Unlike in a consociational democracy, in hegemonic control regime state system does not attempt at balancing of majority-minority interests and rights, on the contrary, it bears the features of domination of majority over minority group. Prevalence of one group over another is institutionalized in laws and regime's ideology which reflects values, history and culture of the dominant group only. (Ibid, p. 331-332)

The hegemonic control concept eliminates the explanatory 'vacuum' which reduces the possibilities to categorize majority-minority relations in ethnically diverse states. By establishing 'the conceptual boundaries of the consociational approach' (Ibid., 335), hegemonic control concept, at the same time, opens further possibilities for categorization, which reflect particular socio-economic and political circumstances of a given state, and have different implications on the society.(Ibid., 334) However, Lustick himself does not elaborate on the possible sub-types of hegemonic control. This regime was elaborated by Sammi Smootha within the ethnic democracy framework.

The *ethnic democracy* concept continues theoretical discussion of the hegemonic control regime which is established in the democratic state polarized by ethnic cleavages. Smootha defines ethnic democracy as 'a system that combines the extension of civil and political rights to individuals and some collective rights to minorities, with institutionalization of majority control over the state'. (Smootha, 1997:199-200) In this

way, the state is being identified with the 'core nation', not the citizens. The state is developing policies aiming at the fostering a sense of unity among those who belong to the 'core nation' by promoting its language, culture, history, and defending political interests of the majority group. At the same time, all citizens have equal rights (for example voting rights). However, this fact does not prevent ethnic-(or religious) discrimination which is evident in power structure, portrayal of minority as the threat to the core nation, etc. (Ibid., p. 200)

Ethnic democracy differs from Lustick's 'ethnic control' model, as it contains the elements of liberal democracy: free democratic elections, minority organizations and even limited representation in the government. At the same time, this model is neither completely liberal, nor democratic, as it does not question the ethno-centric nature of the state. The state and ethnicity are closely interlinked which does not allow for the equal treatment of other ethnic groups.

Smootha lists a number of preconditions for the emergence of ethnic democracy: the precedence of ethnic nation to the state-formation; existence of a threat to the ethnic nation, majority's commitment to democracy and existence of a 'manageable size of national minority'. As conditions for stability of this regime he names a numerical and political majority of the ethnic nation, continued sense of threat among the members of the majority group, non-interference from the 'external homeland' and 'non-intervention against' or even support of ethnic democracy regime by the international community. (Smootha, 2002: 478-479)

Combining some elements of the describes above models, Rogers Brubaker develops an interesting conceptual framework of 'triadic nexus' where the nationalizing state, national minorities and the external homelands present the three poles of one system. (Brubaker, 1996) The nationalizing state in the Rogers Brubaker's model resembles the state representing the interests of a core national group in Lustick's 'control regime' and Smootha's concept of ethnic democracy. However, Brubaker goes further in conceptualizing the 'threat' which is an essential part of control regime or ethnic democracy. In his concept, 'threat' is represented not only by the national minority, but also by the 'external homeland'.

Another element of ethnic democracy' stability, namely, international community was discussed by David J. Smith in the context of Brubacker's theory. In his critique of the 'triadic nexus' Smith adds the fourth pole of the nexus, namely, international organizations which might influence the ethno-political situation in the country. (Smith, D. J., 2002)

Existence of these factors (external homeland, international organizations, etc.) influences the balance of ethnic and civic elements in ethnic democracy. As the result, Smooha leaves open the question of further classification of ethnic democracy, admitting that there could be different versions of this regime, varying in their degree of ethnic control. (Smooha, 2002:480) At the same time, this hints at the fact that control system (or ethnic democracy as its more liberal version) is responsive to both external and internal factors which may (or may not) lead to the shift to integration as another ethno-political regime.

Below, I discuss integration as another ethno-political regime applied to 'immigrants' as the minority group which state perceives eligible for incorporation. Unlike the hegemonic control applied to 'metics', integration is viewed not as exercise of ethno-political power by the dominant majority, but as a two-way process of mutual cooperation towards the formation of a more coherent society.

2.3. The concept of integration in a liberal democratic state

Integration as another method of managing diversity in societies, primary aims at the reduction of differences, which polarize society and might lead to a conflict. It can be argued that integration does not differ much from the ethnic democracy, as both regimes presuppose existence of democratic institutions. However, as it was discussed above, ethnic democracy is neither completely democratic, nor liberal regime as majority group secures a dominant position which is institutionalized in laws, regulations, etc. On the contrary, integration pursued by a liberal democratic state aims at the incorporation of

minorities in host state and society structures without discriminating against them on the basis of their ethnicity.

In the context of immigration studies, terms 'integration' and 'assimilation' are causing much confusion as sometimes they are regarded to have the same meaning, however, these are two distinct concepts. The primary motivation for this distinction is that 'assimilation' is mostly viewed as a 'one-way process', while 'integration' is considered to represent 'a two-way process' of mutual rapprochement between the minority and majority groups. (Bosswick & Heckmann, 2006:4) Moreover, integration is aimed at the creation of civic unity among people with different ethnic backgrounds, whereas assimilation aims at the elimination of ethnic differences for the sake of creation of one single ethnic identity. (McGarry & O'Leary, 1993: 17)

For example, Milton Gordon (1964:70) views assimilation as the process which if successful has to end up with the situation when the minority group changes its cultural patterns in favor of the host culture; develop a host sense of peoplehood or ethnicity; and not raise any demands regarding the host society's public or civic life. This definition does not only view assimilation as 'one-way' process, but underlines the necessity of quitting minority's ethnicity.

Although there a number of studies arguing that assimilation is not wholly one-sided process as it might lead to the changes in both minority and majority groups. (Alba, 1999); in the European context assimilation mainly associates with the oppression of minorities, and bears predominantly negative connotations. This led to the situation when the term 'assimilation' became almost a 'taboo'. Based on this kind of argumentation, Bosswick & Heckmann (2006:4-5) conclude that 'for pragmatic and communicative reasons', integration is considered to be a better term to use, both in academic literature and for general public.

However, while arguing that assimilation concept is less useful as a term in describing state policies aiming at managing difference in the multiethnic society, it still maintains its value while analyzing 'a social process that occurs spontaneously and often unintendedly in the course of interaction between majority and minority groups' (Alba & Nee, 1997:827). It is undeniable that a voluntary assimilation occurs and should not

be neglected by the scholarly work, however, here, while focusing at the state policies aiming at fostering some degree of unity in a diverse society, I use the term ‘integration’.

As a general term, integration might be defined as a process aimed at ‘forming a new structure out of single elements; ‘improving’ relations with a structure; and as ‘adding single elements or partial structures and joining these to an ‘interconnected whole’. Integration refers both to the process of connecting the elements as well as the resulting degree of interconnectedness within the whole.’ (Heckmann, 2003:46) In this thesis, I focus on the integration which is being understood ‘as a process by which immigrants are incorporated into both the structures and the society of the receiving state’. (Nimmerfeldt, Schulze & Taru, 2011:77)

This definition points at the further duality of integration as a process: ‘the interaction between individual members of the immigrant group and the ethnic majority group, as well as between those groups and the institutions and policies of the receiving state’. (Ibid.) Here, my particular interest is at the latter process: the policies which state uses in its interaction with both majority and minority groups in order to achieve a desired degree of ‘interconnectedness’. In contrast to the ethnic democracy regime, integration as a two-way process presupposes the existence of the liberal democracy.

The discussion on how liberal democracies should respond to the challenges of ethnic diversity was largely concerned with the question of ‘ethnic neutrality’ in its policies towards people with different ethnic backgrounds. It seems logical that liberal democracies should avoid ethnic bias in their treatment of citizens; otherwise, they will not differ from ethnic democracies in this respect. Answering this question, Will Kymlicka argues that the liberal democracies could not remain neutral with respect to ethnic diversity if its citizens. As example he provides the experience of the United States which is considered to be a ‘prototype’ of an ethnically neutral state. According to Kymlicka, the USA is not ‘neutral’, as English language is recognized as a state language, children learn English in the schools across the country, etc. (Kymlicka, 2002:17)

The dominance of English language in the USA provides the opportunity to integrate immigrants into the 'societal culture', i. e. 'a territorially concentrated culture, centered on shared language which is used in a wide range of societal institutions, in both public and private life – schools, media, law, economy, government, etc. – covering the full range of human activities, including social, educational, religious, recreational and economic life'. (Ibid., p. 17-18) Societal culture is much 'thinner' construct than culture in its traditional understanding (traditions, family and religious rituals). It attempts to create the set of institutions united by a common language providing opportunities for 'mutual identification and acceptance' (Kymlicka, 2010:18). In this respect, liberal democracy promoting integration into societal culture substantially differs from the ethnic democracy where ethnic background prevents people from being fully accepted into the social and political life.

Common societal culture aims at the creation of 'binding ties' between majority and minority groups which make people of different ethnic, religious, etc. background stay together within one state. Integration, as ethno-political regime, attempts at the incorporation of minorities in societal culture allowing them retaining their ethnic background, at the same time, offering equal possibilities of participation in different spheres and not favoring one ethnic group over another.

As for the measures used for pursuing integration through the creation of societal culture, citizenship has a primary role in establishing a long-standing contact between a host state and an immigrant. However, Kymlicka adds, that citizenship and the existence of democratic state institutions are not enough for achieving a successful integration. What is needed is the common desire to tolerate each other and work for a 'common public good'. (Kymlicka, 1995:175)

Concerning the measures used by the state while exercising integration as the ethno-political regime I will use the framework developed by Heckmann & Schnapper (2003:10) where they differentiate between various 'dimensions of integration', namely, structural, cultural, social or interactive, and identificational dimensions of integration. The following subsections will provide a more thorough discussion of Heckman and his colleagues' framework, focusing on the identificational dimension in particular.

Dimensions of integration

According to Bosswick and Heckmann, *cultural integration* presents itself a ‘cognitive, behavioral and attitudinal change’ (Bosswick & Heckmann, 2006:10) which presupposes acquiring knowledge of language and culture of the majority group. At the same time, understanding of integration as a two-way process implies that cultural integration also leads to the changes in the majority culture which by including elements of the minority cultures reflects the shifts in the structure of population.

Cultural integration sets the ground for deeper integration; however, it does not automatically lead to formation of coherent society, as knowledge of language itself does not create a sense of belonging to the state. In order to develop this sense, people need to interact and establish connections with each other. Thus, cultural dimension needs to be accompanied or closely followed by the interactive dimension of integration.

Social or interactive integration means the ‘acceptance and inclusion of immigrants in the primary relationships and social networks of the host society’. Social integration is usually operationalized through social networks, friendships, partnerships, marriages and membership in voluntary organizations. (Bosswick & Heckmann, 2006:10) What Heckmann and Schnapper (2003) call social or interactive integration Milton Gordon (1964) splits into two different dimensions: ‘structural’ and ‘marital’. In Gordon’s classification ‘structural’ integration means ‘entrance of the minority group into the social cliques, clubs, and institutions of the core society’. It leads to ‘marital integration’ which is considered to be a ‘by-product’ of structural integration. (Gordon, 1964:80)

According to the contact thesis, if people representing different groups are interacting with each other, existing stereotypes and prejudices tend to lessen. Following this logic, closer interaction between the representatives of minority and majority groups could lead to the creation of one common ‘social-political’ community and diminish the possibility of potential conflict. (Schulze, 2008:94)

Structural integration means ‘the acquisition of rights and the access to position and status in the core institutions of the host society’ (Bosswick & Heckmann, 2006:9). It includes education, position at the job market and public life, citizenship and voting

rights. Each country has its own 'core' institutions, participation in which defines the person's, both newcomer's or majority group member's, position within the society. In order to stay in a 'host' country, immigrants need to acquire a certain legal status (citizenship, permanent or temporary residence permit), which provides them with an opportunity to participate in a social and political life of the 'host country'. In a same way, in order to secure their social-economic wellbeing, immigrants enter the job market, which is also framed by the national or 'core' institutions.

Bosswick & Heckmann's definition of structural integration is very complex and envisages incorporation of minority members in political, social and economic processes of the host country. However, it should be pointed out that the incorporation into political, economic social structures presents different levels of structural integration, as it often requires different legal status, and guarantees different scope of rights. Following this logic, incorporation into political institutions, when the immigrants contribute to the decision-making process in a host society, could be named as the highest level of structural integration. While incorporation in social (NGOs) and economic (acquiring a job) structures provide the immigrants with limited rights.

Identificational integration could be defined as 'feelings of belonging to, and identification with, groups, particularly in ethnic, local, regional and/or national terms'. (Bosswick & Heckmann, 2006:10) Mostly, studies dealing with identity in the context of migration were concerned with the ethnicity of minority and majority groups where identificational integration was perceived only in ethnic terms, as a gradual replacement of minority's ethnic identity by the ethnic identity of majority group. However, recently, identity studies became concerned with other aspects of possible identification. Thus, in addition to the ethnic identification, scholars started to conceptualize identification as a process which 'does not assume that identification with one's ethnic group and heritage and identification with the majority group in the host society are averse in their nature'. (Nimmerfeldt, 2009:28)

If ethnic identification implies assimilation of minority group into the majority ethnic group, the concept of national identification suggests that it is possible to develop a common identity which is based on the commonalities shared both by minority and majority groups. At the same time, ethnic identity (as a feeling of belonging to an ethnic

group) of majority and minority groups remains intact. (Ibid.) Formation of regional identity also presupposes the preservation of ethnic and national identity, and relies on common characteristics present across the national identities of particular region.

The main difference between ethnic and common (national) identities is that ethnic identity aims at fostering a sense of belonging based on ethnicity, whereas common identity looks for a broader marker of belonging. In a multicultural society, the difference between ethnic and common (national or state) identity becomes stark, as a growing number of ethnicities represented in one state may find it difficult to coexist in the society polarized by the ethnic marker. At the same time, common identity aims at the gradual eliminations of tensions caused by ethnic differences as it emphasizes commonalities shared by minority and majority groups, preserving their ethnic identity.

Having elaborated above the two ethno-political regimes, hegemonic control and integration, I will proceed with the discussion of the literature dealing with the nature of ethno-political regime in Estonia.

CHAPTER THREE

ETHNO-POLITICAL REGIMES IN ESTONIA: REVIEWING PREVIOUS FINDINGS

3.1 Estonia – an ethnic democracy?

The issue of the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia and state policies related to it received a lot of scholarly attention. Studies researching Russian-speaking minority in Estonia have approached this issue from different perspectives.

A number of studies look into the role of the external institutions (EU, OSCE and Council of Europe) in the process of liberalization of Estonian internal legislation towards its Russian-speaking population, especially those who remained without citizenship status. For example, Elena Jurado (2003, 2008) and Jennie Schulze (2010) looked at the Estonian integration policies through the lances of the minority human rights regime and Estonia's compliance with them in terms of its accession process to the EU. On the contrary, there are scholars (Agarin & Regelmann, 2012; Feldman, 2005; Pettai & Kallas, 2009) who oppose the 'external influence' thesis, arguing that the shift in the official approach occurred because of the internal developments in the country.

Another important aspect covered in the academic literature addresses the dynamics of identity formation among Estonian Russian-speakers. The earlier studies were arguing about the lack of the distinct identity among the Russian-speaking population in Estonia, the prevalence of the 'Soviet' identity among them (Vihalemm, 2002a), and lack of homogeny in their preferences, future plans and identification (Vihalemm & Masso: 2002). With some time, the salience of the category of 'Russian-speakers' strengthened among them, while lacking the linkage to Estonia and Estonian-speaking people. (Vihalemm, 2002b) Among the factors which contributed to the slow patters of identification with Estonia scholars listed the media which influenced the formation of hostile attitude towards Estonian Russian speakers (Kõuts and Tammpuu, 2002); school curricula (Asser, Trasberg & Vassilchenko, 2004), and diverging views on history (Golubeva, 2010).

However, taking into account the particular focus of this MA thesis on the meta-analysis of the integration documents and the regime change they imply, I will proceed with the introduction of the academic literature dedicated to the Estonian policies towards Russian-speaking population and previous analysis of the integration documents. This will help to synthesize the already obtained knowledge about the changing nature of ethno-political regime in Estonia, and will be used later in order to demonstrate the novelties introduced by the third integration Programme.

While applying Smootha's ethnic democracy model to Estonia, Priit Järve comes to the conclusion that Estonia resembles almost all features of this regime. He argues that Estonia combines the elements of ethnic democracy and control system. (Järve, 2000:31) However, later, in his consequent analysis of the existing ethnic regime in Estonia Järve (2005) argues that Estonian state moved from a 'control' system towards the 'ethnic democracy' regime while started liberalization of its citizenship legislation. According to him, further liberalization of the legislation and implementation of the Integration Programmes signify a shift in the state's approach to the Russian-speaking population. Järve predicts that in the future Estonian ethnic democracy will be transformed into liberal democracy. (Järve, 2005:78)

Like Priit Järve, Graham Smith (1996) also applies the ethnic democracy concept to the Estonian case focusing on the conditions for the stability of this regime in the country. Firstly, he lists the poor access of Estonian Russian – speaking population to the politico-administrative system as the factor preventing their massive mobilization. Secondly, he argues that the state contributed to the so-called 'political factionalism' within the Russian-speaking community as it is divided into two fractions: supporters of integration who decided to defend their rights within the state institutions, and those who preferred to stay outside them. Thirdly, by opening the possibility to obtain the citizenship, state also encourages people to improve their economic and social status. (Smith, 1996:208-9) However, Smith admits that, even despite these conditions, ethnic democracy will be not stable in a longer run.

Both authors agree that ethnic democracy in Estonia is a subject to a gradual change. However, unlike Järve, Smith remains more skeptical about the prospects of

establishing a liberal democratic regime in Estonia warning that ethnic politics will continue playing a substantial role in society. (Ibid., 212)

If Järve and Smith agree on the fact that Estonian policies towards its Russian – speaking population could be conceptualized within the ethnic democracy concept, Vello Pettai and Klara Hallik (2002) argue that Estonia represent the example of the ethnic control regime. They operationalize Lustick’s model along three elements, namely, segmentation, dependence and co-optation. Thus, they argue that segmentation was achieved by applying the legal restorationist doctrine. Social – economic stratification among Estonian and Russian-speaking population led to the establishment of dependency. Co-optation was achieved through the adoption of the first integration documents in 1998-1999.

Unlike Järve, Pettai and Hallik take more skeptical position towards the possible regime change in Estonia. In their opinion, the introduction of the first integration Programme does signify a big shift in Estonian policies towards Russian-speakers, as its aim is ‘to adapt³ non-Estonians to a pre-set Estonian world, not to alter that world’. (Pettai & Hallik, 2002:520)

Contrary to the studies discussed above which focus on political sphere, Micelle Commercio in his study of Estonian ethnopolitics focuses on its economic side. In his analysis he questions the applicability of the control system to Estonia. Instead, he argues that in order to secure the stability in a deeply divided Estonian society local elites constructed the system of partial control. Commercio explains that in Estonia (and Latvia) regime of control is restricted to the political sphere, but control in the economic sphere is shared together with the country’s Russian-speaking population. This system of partial control ensures the stability in the country and encourages Estonian Russian-speakers ‘to invest in Estonian future’. (Commercio, 2008:91-94) However, Commercio’s thesis that Russian-speakers secured their niche in the economic sphere in Estonia is quite contested.

First of all, it should be pointed out that the issues of socio-economic well-being of Russian-speaking population in Estonia remain rather understudied topic and need a

³‘the adaptation of non-Estonians’ in the original.

closer study in order to research on the possible discrimination based on the ethnic principle in Estonia. (Helemäe & Saar, 2012) Already existing studies focusing on socio-economic differences between Estonians and Russian – speakers underline the fact that the wellbeing of people in Estonia is very often affected by their ethnic background. (Leping & Toomet, 2008:614) That is why, the thesis of ‘partial control’ requires a deeper analysis and more substantial argumentation.

By large, studies dealing with the Estonian ethnopolitics agree that the regime established after 1991 had a tendency to gradually weaken and transform into a more liberal form. Mostly, scholars carefully suggest that this transition will take a long time and will require commitment from both sides. However, Magdalena Solska, for example, states that ‘ethnicity is not politicized in Estonia any more’, as the country is a front-runner in economic transformation, and the public debate has shifted away from the ethnicity-based discourse. (Solska, 2011: 1106) Further studies dealing with Estonia show that her thesis could be quite contradictory.

Indeed, Estonian political debate is not polarized across the ethnic lines. As Rye Nakai demonstrates, Estonian moderate parties have succeeded to incorporate interests of Russian-speakers into their agendas. Moreover, in Estonia there are no influential radical parties which might mobilize the Russophone minority, and create possible political instability in the country. (Nakai, 2014:78)

On the other hand, the absence of extensive politization of the issue of Russian-speaking minority could also mean that the ethnically-motivated claims of Estonian Russian-speaking minority do not have channels for representation in the political sphere. This could lead to the situation when the demands of Estonian Russophones could be potentially expressed in other, less peaceful ways, (Cianetti, 2014a:103) repeating the 2007 riots caused by the decision to displace the Bronze Soldier monument.

On her part, Jennie Schulze links the fact that Estonian Russian-speakers have limited channels for expression of their political views to the restrictive citizenship policies applied by Estonian state in 1990s. In this way, she argues that the elements of control regime yet maintain their influence which is particularly visible in the voting in the

local elections and participation of youth in political and civil activities which is higher among young Estonians. (Schulze, 2014)

Other elements of control regime could be found in state policies towards cultural societies. Elo-Hanna Seljamaa argues that state engages in the process of ‘minority-building’ as it strictly regulates the activities of cultural societies limiting them to a mere celebration of their cultural distinctiveness. (Kuutma, Seljamaa, Hart Västriik, 2012:57) This approach, in a way, resembles Soviet practices in resolving the ‘nationalities question’ as Estonia continues using the concept of nationality which is ‘essentialist’. These Soviet legacies contribute to the gradual marginalization of national minorities (Seljamaa, 2013:195). In this way, the state aims at control of ethnic minority activities, restricting them to cultural domain.

Academic literature that deals with the state efforts aimed at the integration of Russian-speakers remains yet very skeptical concerning the ways in which the shift towards integration as ethno-political regime occurs. For example, Tove Malloy while looking at state efforts aimed at the promotion of common state identity comes to the conclusion that pluralism promoted by Estonia is ‘fictive’ as public sphere reflects Estonian dominance. (Malloy, 2009) Additionally, the channels aiming at fostering unity and active participation remain strictly formalized (Toots, 2003), and does not allow for creation of an ‘open identity’ (Valk, Karu-Kletter, Drozdova, 2011) which might signify a lack of genuine desire for ethno-political regime change in the country.

The studies discussed above, point at diverge on the issue of integration in Estonia: while some of them predict a final liberalization of Estonian policies towards its Russian-speaking community (Solska, 2011, for example), other are more skeptical about them (Malloy, 2009; Seljamaa, 2013; Cianetti, 2014a; etc.). In most cases, studies agree that Estonian policies towards Russian-speakers undergo a change; however, they also highlight the main challenges to the complete liberalization of integration in the country. In this way, after more than two decades of studies, the question about the nature of ethno-political regime in Estonia remains open for discussion and further research.

While the studies discussed above were dealing with the ethno-political regimes in Estonia, it is worth discussing the ethno-political situation which, in many respects, influenced the majority- minority relations in the country. Building on the case study description, I will present the application of Kymlicka's model elaborated by Vello Pettai and applied to the Estonian case.

3.2 Minority rights regime in Estonia: application of Kymlicka's model

As it was mentioned above in the discussion of different types of minorities, Will Kymlicka distinguishes among national minorities, immigrants, isolationist ethno-religious groups, metics and African-Americans (Kymlicka, 2002). Each of these groups is granted a certain degree of rights by the host state which depends on the historical and legal circumstances of their arrival to the country. Below, I will proceed with the application of this categorization to the Estonian case.

Such historical minorities as Germans, Jews, Russians, Swedish people, etc. could be easily categorized as 'national minorities' according to Kymlicka's model. They were residing at the Estonian territory prior to the establishment of the Estonian state, not pursuing any state-building projects.⁴ Taking this into account, the Estonian state provided them with a possibility of cultural autonomy, which was envisaged in The Law on Cultural Autonomy adopted in 1925. More than 3000 people were regarded eligible to opt for a cultural autonomy. (Estonica. Ethnic minorities in Estonian Republic prior to WWII)

Those minorities who arrived to Estonia after 1991 duly under the immigration legislation could be classified as 'immigrants'. After naturalization period they are eligible to apply for Estonian citizenship (if applicable). Refugees who entered the country legally could also be qualified as 'immigrants' and at some point might opt for the Estonian citizenship.

⁴Since here I am discussing the period starting from the establishment of the Estonian state in 1918, Germans and Swedish people residing in the country are considered as minority group not pursuing any state – building idea within Estonia.

Labor immigrants who arrived to Estonia during the Soviet time present an interesting case which deserves a closer elaboration. Soviet-era settlers in the Baltics in general (majority of whom were ethnic Russians) and Estonia in particular did not consider themselves as ‘minority’ or ‘immigrants’ as they were moving within the territory of the Soviet Union. (Kymlicka, 2002:76) Although the Soviet Union was ethnically a very diverse country, domination of the Russian language was secured at the state level and established as *lingua franca*. This enabled a large-scale migration within the Soviet Union. So, wherever Russians or Russian – speakers went, they found institutions functioning in Russian language which could easily accommodate their cultural demands. In this way, there was a small motivation for the Soviet-era labor migrants to learn a local language. However, this situation changed with the collapse of the Soviet Union.

After the re-establishment of its independence, Estonia, like other Baltic states, engaged in an active nation-building process, which presupposed the de-Sovietization and de-Russification of its public institutions. As the result, Soviet-era settlers, whose primary language of communication in Estonia was Russian, found themselves in a position of a minority within the Estonian state. Will Kymlicka himself classifies them as an immigrant minority, however, mentioning that this point of view was not shared by the majority of dominant group. (Ibid., p. 77) Indeed, those people who resettled to Estonia under Soviet policies were mostly viewed as occupants.

When the Estonian independence was restored on the principle of ‘legal restorationism’ claiming the legal continuity of the Estonian state since its establishment in 1918, the same principle was applied to the citizenship of Estonia. The Congress of the Citizens Committees decided that Estonian citizenship could be granted only to the citizens of the pre-occupation republic and their descendants. Soviet-era settlers were supposed to go through naturalization process in order to secure their legal status in the country. (Pettai & Hallik, 2002:512)

In Estonia with the adoption of the ‘Citizenship Act’ (1992) the state automatically recognized as the citizens of the restored Estonian Republic only pre-war settlers and their descendants. This decision led to the situation when 32% of Estonian population became ‘people with undetermined citizenship’ (Official Gateway to Estonia). This

meant that those people were deprived of the right of participation in elections (active and passive) and referendums at the national level.

Evaluating the mentioned above developments which happened in Estonia and Latvia in early 1990s, Pettai comes to the conclusion that Estonian and Latvian authorities were treating Soviet-time settlers not as 'national minorities' or 'immigrants', but as 'metics'. (Pettai, 2002: 264) Decision to apply 'legal restorationist' approach to those people who migrated to Estonia during the Soviet occupation dramatically changed their status within the Estonian state. They were considered as being 'illegal immigrants' putting them in the position similar to the 'guestworkers' in Germany. (Ibid., 266) This kind of treatment presupposed that Estonian state did not deem necessary to integrate them into society. They could come back to their home republics or adjust to the policies pursued by the Estonian dominated state.

Both Kymlicka and Pettai acknowledge the fact that with the decision to implement the full – scale integration programme Estonian state started to change their attitudes towards Russian-speaking population and treat them more like 'immigrants', rather than 'metics', in this way, moving to a full - scale integration as ethno-political regime. However, the discussion in the academic literature hints at the fact that still Estonian ethno-political regime bears the element of control which doubts the full recognition of Russian-speakers as legal immigrants.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMPARING ESTONIA'S INTEGRATION STRATEGIES

4.1. Criteria of analysis

In order to analyze the dynamics of ethno-political regime change in Estonia in this thesis I apply the method of textual analysis of the integration documents developed by the Estonian government since late nineties till present moment. For this purpose, I develop the following criteria which will inform the analysis.

First of all, I look into the circumstances and preconditions for the emergence of integration programmes, outlining the factors (external or internal) which contributed to this process. Secondly, I analyze the parties involved into the drafting process, paying particular attention to the involvement of the representatives of the Russian-speaking minority in it. Thirdly, I attempt to assess the degree of Russophones' involvement in the drafting process and degree to which their opinion was reflected in the documents.

Additionally, in order to trace the patterns of state approaches towards Russian-speaking minority, the concept of state identity is being analyzed. In particular, the way in which the balance of its ethnic and civic elements is preserved is being discussed. Moreover, the instruments aimed at the state identity promotion grouped as structural (citizenship), cultural (language promotion and culture development) and societal (interaction and voluntary participation) are being analyzed.

The analysis starts with the first integration Programme and proceeds to the second and the most recent one. Since the first two integration programmes have already been a subject of thorough scholarly attention, I concentrate on the draft of the most recent one. This kind of analysis will inform about the possible changes of the nature of ethno-political regime in Estonia.

4.2. The First Integration Programme and the concept of ‘state identity’

It took some time for Estonian state to redefine its attitudes towards the Russian-speaking minority. Gradual shift from understanding and treating Russian – speakers as ‘metics’ was accompanied with the need to develop state policies aimed at their accommodation as ‘immigrants’ within the Estonian society. The first steps in this direction were made in 1997 when ‘the first debates in Estonian government, press and academic circles on how the ‘integration’ of Russian – speakers could be brought about’ took place. (Jurado, 2008:23) Before that time, Estonian elites mostly perceived the issue of Russian-speaking minority as solved. (Pettai & Hallik, 2002:519)

Recognition of the need of developing a complex approach towards Russian-speakers was the result of multiple factors. (Pettai & Hallik, 2002:520) First of all, the pressure from the international community contributed to the liberalization of the citizenship law and consecutive elaboration of the integration documents. Estonia, at that time, was quite vulnerable to the international pressure as it was going through the accession process to the EU. Although Copenhagen criteria were not precise enough with respect to minority treatment, EU largely relied on the assessment criteria of Council of Europe (COE) and OSCE. Several international NGO’s, countries and international organizations provided an expert and financial support in the elaboration of the first integration documents. (Järve & Poleschchuk, 2010:6) Recommendations from the COE turned out to be the most helpful and precise during the drafting process, while EU and OSCE remained less involved. (Jurado, 2008:25)

Secondly, the idea of the complex strategy towards Estonian Russian-speakers was pushed by the group of researches (‘VERA group’) aiming at the more detailed assessment of the integration patterns of the Russian-speaking community in Estonia. (Pettai & Hallik, 2002: 520). And thirdly, the changes in the Estonian government led to the establishment of a position for a Minister on population and ethnic affairs in 1997 which was offered to Andra Veidemann. (Pettai & Hallik, 2002: 520)

Shortly after the establishment of the Bureau on population and ethnic affairs, the group of officials and researchers which consisted mainly of Estonians (Ibid.) started working

on the first complex integration document. As the result, in 1998 the Government adopted the 'The bases of the Estonian state integration policy for the integration of non-Estonians into Estonian Society' which was followed by the Action Plan 'The integration of non-Estonians into Estonian society'. The main achievement of the plan was that it 'for the first time on a state level, the nature of the Estonian multicultural society to be created as the outcome of integration was also defined in the action plan.' (Estonian Governemnt, 2000:14) The Action Plan was followed by the adoption of the State Programme 'Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007' in 2000. Involvement of Estonian Russian-speakers in the discussion of the documents was very superficial. Thus, minority representatives were invited for the discussion, but had no influence on the content and wording of the documents. (Brosig, 2008:6)

All in all, the first documents in the field of integration were developed largely by the governmental officials and researchers without an active participation of a wider public, namely the Russian-speaking community. In this way, early attempts of the Estonian government in the elaboration of comprehensive integration strategy did not account for Estonian Russian-speakers as a stake-holder in the process, but rather addressed them as a target audience.

Regarding the wording of the Programme, the document provided the next explanation of integration concept in the Estonian context:

'Integration in Estonian society means on the one hand the harmonization of society – the creation and promotion of that which unites all members of society – and on the other hand the opportunity to preserve ethnic differences – the offering to ethnic minorities of opportunities for the preservation of their cultural and ethnic distinctiveness. What is of significance here is that integration is a clearly bilateral process - both Estonians and non-Estonians participate equally in the harmonization of society.' (Estonian Government, 2000:5)

Integration was subdivided into three subareas: linguistic-communicative, legal-political, and socio-economic integration. Linguistic-communicative integration meant that a common information sphere and an Estonian-language environment will be created 'under conditions of cultural diversity and mutual tolerance'. Legal-political

integration envisaged that the population loyal to the Estonian State will be formed, and, additionally, the number of stateless people will be reduced. Socio-economic integration aimed at the achievement of greater competitiveness and social mobility for all people residing in Estonia. (Ibid., p. 18)

The integration Programme did not pay much attention to the ‘identity’, however, it mentioned briefly the need to build a state identity as one of the objectives of the legal-political integration, along with the necessity *‘to increase the number of persons with Estonian citizenship, the common sphere of information of Estonians and non-Estonians’*. (Ibid., p.19)

The Programme did not elaborate on the definition of the ‘state identity’; however, it envisaged the next indicators of integration in the legal-political sphere, which could provide us with the rough idea of how the state identity could be achieved: citizenship, participation in political structures, and loyalty (which was defined as *‘non-Estonians sense that they are full and equal members of Estonian society and perceive their responsibility for the welfare of the Estonian state’*). (Ibid., p. 19) It was mentioned that the state identity should be based ‘on respect to Estonian multiculturalism’.

The notion of ‘Estonian multiculturalism’ or ‘Estonian model of multicultural society’ was explained in the Programme as an ‘outlet of the integration process’ and was characterized by the principles of cultural pluralism, strong common core, and the preservation and development of Estonian cultural domain. (Ibid., p. 18)

In its respect, the idea of a common core was defined as following:

‘The common core connecting members of society consists of general human and democratic values, a common sphere of information and Estonian-language environment, as well as common state institutions and values based on the knowledge of Estonian history and awareness of the nature of Estonian citizenship and the multicultural nature of Estonian society.’ (Ibid.)

The notion of the ‘common core’, which hardly reflected the idea expressed above of the integration as a ‘bilateral process’, was expected to be implemented in the public domain, whereas the private sphere remained open to any kind of ethnic/cultural

pluralism. The document clearly stated that each individual residing in Estonia has a right to sustain her/his traditions, language, religious beliefs, but ‘the opportunities for their advancement’ should be found within the private domain. The Programme emphasized that *‘the phenomena of the private sphere... are not treated as part of the strong common core of Estonian society’*. (Ibid., p. 22)

As the outcome, the Programme envisaged the formation of *‘the Estonian model of a multicultural society, which is characterized by the principles of cultural pluralism, a strong common core and the preservation and development of the Estonian cultural domain’*. Linguistic – communicative integration, i.e. learning of Estonian language and emphasize on the schooling system was recognized as the main tool in the achieving integration goals. (Ibid.)

In this respect, the idea of ‘state identity’ mentioned in the Programme could be summarized to the following points. The state identity should be based on the respect to the Estonian multiculturalism, i.e. cultural pluralism, strong common core, and preservation & development of Estonian culture. In its turn, Estonian common core, territorially defined by Estonia, institutionalized in the public sphere, does not include the cultures of other nationalities living in Estonia, leaving them within the private domain of each individual. State identity was to be promoted by mainly cultural integration, namely, learning of the Estonian language, accompanied by the structural integration (acquisition of Estonian citizenship) and developing loyalty to the Estonian state.

First Integration Programme. Discussion of main findings. Assimilatory ‘common core’

The process of elaboration of the first integration Programme was heavily influenced by the international community. As the result, the document, to a large extent, was an answer to external criticism, rather than a coherent strategy. It was elaborated without extensive public discussion and in-depth integration analysis. Moreover, Estonian

Russian-speakers, as well as other minorities had almost no influence in its composition.

One of the most central features of the concept of state identity proposed by the Programme was the existence of the ‘common core’ based on Estonian language and history. Although it is undeniable that Estonian language should form the core of the commonly shared characteristics of all people in Estonia, inclusion of ‘Estonian history’ to the proposed set of common values was quite questionable as there was not (and still is not) a broad nation-wide consensus over the twentieth century history of Estonia - the majority of the Russian-speaking population perceive the Estonian historical narrative as unfair. (Golubeva, 2010)

Instead of balancing the dominant Estonian core with the elements of culture and history of other minorities, the SIP emphasized that they should be practiced outside the public sphere. This clear-cut separation of public and private domains created the situation that allowed for a formation and public expression of only one identity, based on Estonian language and history. Ethnic identities, other than Estonian were excluded from the public domain. In this way, minorities were not only excluded from the decision-making process, but restricted in the expression of their ethnic identity in public sphere. In other words, expression of their ethnic identity remained controlled by the state.

Although, Raivo Vetik argues that this ‘separation of spheres’ could lead to the formation of a ‘common ground’ in case of existence strong democratic institutions ensuring preservation of ethnic minorities (Vetik, 2008:52), the lack of ethnic pluralism questions the democratic basis of such state. This kind of exclusion of minorities from public sphere implies assimilationist way of incorporation, as does not presuppose the existence of essential for diverse society ‘plural ethos upon which to build its polity’. (Malloy, 2009: 245)

Even if not taking into account the existence of two separate ethnic – cultural communities as a problem (A Study of Social Groups in Integration, 2013:15), institutionalized superiority of one culture over another presented in the Programme, had little chances to create the prerequisites for a common belonging, especially, if it

was not envisaged any measures aimed at the promotion of respect towards minorities and their culture.

Despite a claim of viewing integration as a ‘two-way process’, the first integration Programme was promoting assimilatory model of integration, where the state identity based on the ethnic Estonian characteristics did not allow the existence and promotion of other identities, which were supposed to be cultivated in a private sphere. This clear subordination of one identity by another facilitated exclusion and mutual hostility, rather than integration and cohesion.

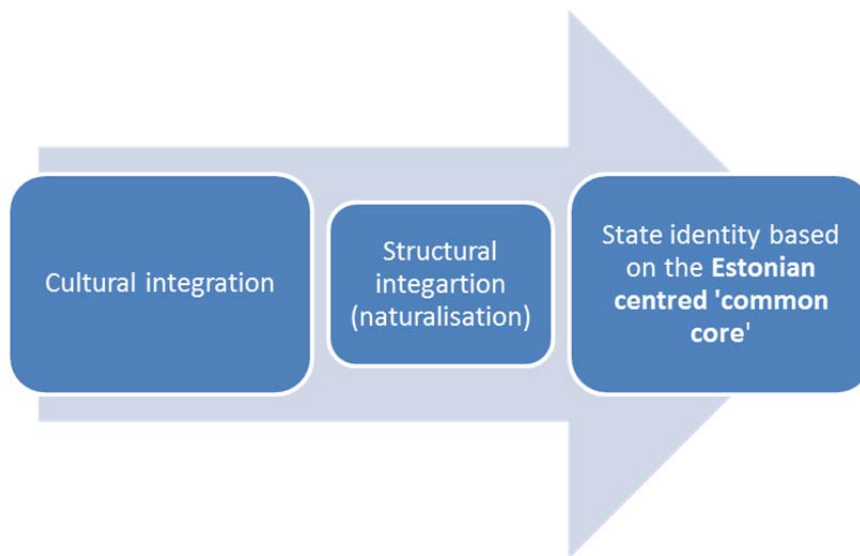
While speaking about the measures which were supposed to the formation of a state identity, the SIP prioritized Estonian language – learning, which, in its turn, was supposed to lead to the growth in the naturalization process. The measures in the field of socio-economic integration were not elaborated. Thus, the Programme made an emphasis on the cultural dimension of integration, which was supposed to create a ‘harmonized society’ with a clear domination of Estonian language and culture.

The emphasis on cultural dimension of integration aimed at the integration of Russian-speaking population into an ethnically defined ‘common core’, segmentation of spheres and formalized approach towards the integration, indicated that Estonian state was not ready to abandon ethnic control mechanisms. On the contrary, these measures were aimed at controlling Russian-speaking minority, rather than integrated them into state and society structures. Although Estonian state officially embarked on the process of integration, it employed the mechanisms which were underlining inferior position of Russian-speaking minority within the Estonian society.

In this way, the earliest attempts of the Estonian state in the field of integration were not only designed with a limited participation of minority representatives, but left almost no voice for its self-expression in the Estonian dominated public sphere. This kind of ‘space separation’ along with a highly institutionalized system of integration (schools, cultural societies, citizenship) left almost no room for a balanced public debate over common values or common identity formation. At that time, common identity was attempt being built by the subordination and control of Russophones to the Estonian state.

The SIP did not propose any broadly shared marker for common belonging to the Estonian state which could be used as a basis for formation of ‘societal culture’. Instead, it offered a ‘primordial’ (Alexander, 2006) reading of values, which envisaged subordination of ethnic minorities’ identities to the dominant ethnic Estonian identity.

Picture. 1. Integration measure in the first integration Programme



4.3. The Second Integration Programme and the concept of ‘state identity’

The preparation process for the drafting of the new integration Programme started in 2006 when the 26 experts committee was formed. It was comprised of members of Estonian Parliament, integration experts, representatives of employers, employees, research institutions, NGOs representing ethnic minorities. The primary task of the committee was to collect the initial information about the integration patterns in the country, to define main principles and goals of the integration process, assessment criteria and implementation mechanisms.

In addition to the committee, a seven – member working group was created. The group was collecting recommendations and opinions from the ministries and other involved

parties. Russian-speaking experts, along with international experts, (Malloy, 2009:240) were also involved in the discussion of the preliminary draft of the integration programme. (Ministry of Culture, 2008:37)

In May 2007, the consortium which consisted of the Centre for Policy Studies 'PRAXIS', Tartu University, the Institute of Baltic Studies, Hill & Knowlton Estonia Ltd, and Geomedia PLC, started its work on the final draft of the integration programme for the next six years. (Ministry of Culture, 2008:37) The elaboration of the new integration document was much influenced by the 'Bronze Soldier' crisis which took place in April 2007 and led to the additional consultations with experts as it was assumed that the preparation process could be substantially revised. (Cianetti, 2014b:12)

In response to the April events, Estonian Parliament attempted to be more closely involved in the drafting and evaluation of the integration Programme. However, the idea of establishing the committee on integration in the parliament proposed by the opposition MP was rejected, and the government continued playing a leading role in this process. At the final stage of the drafting process, the Programme named 'Estonian Integration Strategy 2008-2013' (EIS) was made public for suggestions and recommendations, and in August 2008 adopted by the government. (Ibid.)

In contrast to the previous programme, European institutions which triggered the drafting process in late 1990s, were almost not involved in the elaboration of the EIS. Moreover, OSCE and EU in the post-accession period paid a scarce attention to the Estonian policies towards its minorities. Even when the Parliament strengthened position of the Estonian language by introduction of a special clause to the Constitution and tightened the language requirements, these bodies refrained from major criticism. On the contrary, EU supported the actions of Estonian government regarding the April 2007 events. (Agarin & Regelman, 2012: 453-4)

With respect to the programme's content, EIS paid much more attention to the purpose of developing of a 'state identity', reaching of it was formulated as the 'ultimate goal' of the integration process. (Estonian government, 2007:3)

‘A common state identity’ was defined in the next way: *‘a common understanding of the state among permanent residents of Estonia based on the constitutional values of Estonia as a democratic state under the rule of law, valuing Estonian citizenship and appreciating the contribution of every person to the development of the society, at the same time accepting cultural differences’*. (Ibid., 4)

The Programme linked the development of a common identity to the naturalization process, arguing that 80% of Russian-speaking Estonian citizens consider themselves as part of Estonian people. However, it also admitted that naturalization process itself would not create a desired ‘sense of belonging’. As other important instruments of identity building the EIS envisaged active involvement of integrated Russian-speaking Estonian citizens in a public life and decision-making process. It was planned that ‘involvement’ would be achieved through the joint activities of citizens and the citizenship education in schools. (Ibid., 12)

The EIS envisaged achieving the mentioned-above goals through the citizenship education, which should be based on *‘the appreciation of the culturally diverse environment and advancing positive attitude towards other cultures’*, creation of a shared field of information, and promotion of joint activities of citizens. (Ibid., 19) As the main instruments aimed at the development of the civil activities among people the establishment of the ‘dialogue platforms’ aimed at the more active participation of people in the development of state integration policies. Another tool envisaged by the Programme was the involvement of those successfully integrated people in the process of promotion of naturalization process, rising awareness and civic activity among less integrated people, including ‘citizenship ceremonies’ (the solemn procedures of naturalized citizens’ presenting with the citizenship certificates).

Also, the new instruments included the promotion of the equal treatment and the ‘support for creation of a shared field of information in the society through culture, i.e. translating works by Estonian authors into other languages (most of all – in Russian) and supporting cooperation projects of Estonian and non-Estonian –language cultural institutions’. (Ibid., 25)

Thus, the idea of ‘state identity’ was supposed to foster a feeling of belonging to the Estonian state which was based on the Estonian citizenship, constitutional democratic values of the Estonian state, contribution of each person to the development of a society and the acceptance of cultural differences. In order to achieve these goals, state introduced new instruments, such as creation of a common information field, social dialogue and decision-making process, putting a special emphasis on the naturalization process.

Second Integration Programme. Discussion of main findings. Citizen-centric identity.

The second integration Programme proposed much more elaborated concept of state identity where it tended to broaden the marker of common belonging to the Estonian state, i. e. citizenship which was meant to secure stable connection between the Russian – speaking minority and Estonia. Establishing of such connection seemed quite problematic as the state itself remained strongly Estonian-centric. The very idea of common identity was supposed to be based on the acceptance of a nation-state principles’. (EIS, 2008:11) The reference to the constitutional norms of Estonia itself made impossible the formation of inclusive and broad state identity.

As it was mentioned before, the Constitution of Estonia, although guaranteeing the protection of minority rights, prioritizes Estonian language, nation and culture over other ethnic groups inhabiting Estonia.(Constitution of Estonia, Preamble) This contradiction between the democratic norms and prevalence of the Estonian nation expressed in the EIS made Tove Malloy to conclude that ‘the Estonian Integration Strategy is promoting pluralism in terms of multiculturalism whereas, on the other hand, the founding document of the state, the Constitution is decreasing ethnic dominance.’(Malloy, 2009: 245) In this way, although the concept of ‘state identity’ was based on the constitutional values, it did not eliminate the dominance of Estonian ethnic elements.

Unlike the first integration Programme, the EIS did create 'a place' for identities, other than Estonian, in a public domain. Incorporation of measures aimed at the creation of a 'shared public space' clearly indicated a positive shift in the state's approach towards Russian-speakers. Additionally, briefly introduced idea of 'dialogue platforms' aimed at the discussion of integration patterns also demonstrated a dynamics towards pluralism in state integration. Inclusion of these measures signified a modest departure from the control – like separation of spheres; instead it presupposed a consensus base approach which is characteristic to liberal democracies.

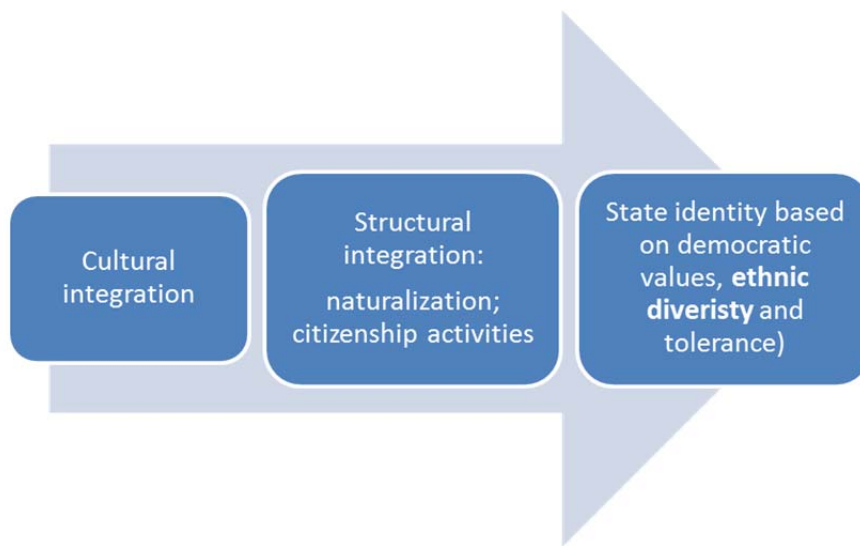
However, naturalization, citizenship practices and citizenship education in schools were indicted as the main channels for state identity promotion. The Programme established a clear-cut link between the process of acquisition of Estonian citizenship and fostering a state identity. By putting the emphasis on citizenship, the EIS underestimated other forms of possible participation, which do not require naturalization, but could unite people around common goals and purposes, like widespread social actions. By prioritizing structural integration over other dimensions, especially in the political sphere, the EIS was limiting the scope of its activities to non-citizens or third-country nationals. In this way, those Russian-speakers who gained Estonian citizenship were counted as integrated and not targeted by the Programme.

In addition to the naturalization, the EIS adopted 'values-based approach' in promotion of a state identity. Along with the democratic values the Programme embarked on promotion of ethnic diversity, equal treatment and tolerance which indicated an attempt to move away from hegemonic control and to form more liberal democratic ethno-political regime. However, domination of the structural dimension in a common identity promoted through the formal channels and state institutions which are not characterized by a high degree of trust among the Russian-speaking population narrowed the possibility of its acceptance by Estonian Russophones.

Overreliance on state institutions (when the state guarantees a preferential treatment to the Estonian language and culture) substantially limited the possibilities for a dialogue formalized in the citizenship category. Additionally, although the EIS highlighted the ethnic diversity of the state, it provided scarce opportunities for institutionalization of

diversity promotion. It casted a doubt on the viability of Estonia's strive for a creation of a 'social cohesion' in society.

Picture 2. Integration measures in the second integration Programme



EIS demonstrated a positive dynamics of ethno-political regime change in Estonia. The measures proposed by the Estonian state were aimed at the inclusion of Russian-speaking population into Estonian-dominated public space welcoming them to participate and contribute to the common identity building. Although the state abolished the idea of private/public domain separation, it continued using a highly institutionalized approach which was not reflecting the needs of vast majority of Russian-speakers. Their voice remained weak and state actions unidirectional targeting Russophones as passive recipients of policies designed mainly without their participation.

4.4. ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ and the concept of ‘state identity’

Taking into account that the EIS was going to expire in the end of 2013, the Ministry of Culture started to work on the third integration Programme in 2012. In October 2012 the Government approved the Development plan for the preparation of the Programme. The Programme itself was scheduled to be proposed to the government in December 2013; however, the draft of the Programme became available to the public only in late April 2014. The head of the Ethnic Diversity Department at the Ministry of Culture, explained the delay by a large number of parties involved in the drafting process, and the need to negotiate the draft with all the participants. (Interview with Anne-Ly Reimaa, 12/05/2014)

The drafting period could be claimed to be the longest one since Estonia engaged in the developing of the Integration Plan in 1997. In comparison to the previous integration programme, the current programme was drafted by the Ministry of Culture itself⁵, although the Ministry requested assistance and a wide expertise from the different institutions and experts. (Interview with Kristina Kallas, 17/06/2014)

The preparation consisted of various consultations at the ministerial level, where officials from the Ministry of Culture, Education and Research, Interior, Social Affairs, Finance, Foreign Affairs, Justice and other state institutions (like State Chancellery, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, MISA, etc.) were involved in the process of mapping out the problems and the methods of cooperation.

Moreover, meetings of 15 working groups comprised from experts, academicians, and civil society activists each covering a particular topic were conducted. There were no ethnic or language balance requirements for the formation of the expert groups. Experts coming from different fields were asked by the Ministry to conduct the working group based on their previous work experience. Then, the experts invited the participants to their working groups using the same selection criteria. In general, the participants' turnout was quite low, only around of 10-50 % of those invited actually participated in the discussions. (Interview with Igor Kopõtin, 07/07/2014).

⁵The previous Programme was developed by the Ministry for Population and ethnic diversity.

Also, discussion clubs ‘Shared future’ with the third country nationals and people without citizenship aimed at their involvement in the discussion process of the new integration Programme were organized. Discussion clubs were conducted within the instrument of ‘dialogue platforms’ envisaged by the EIS from November 2012 till October 2013. Overall, six discussion clubs were conducted in Narva, Kohtla-Järve, Tallinn and Tartu. 168 people divided into six groups (two English-speaking involving mainly new immigrants and four Russian-speaking involving Soviet – time settlers) participated in those discussion clubs. (Report on Integration by third country nationals Regarding Estonia’s Integration Policy, Russian version, 2013:8)

Table2. Comparison of Open Forum Participants to the General Pool in Percentages

Citizenship	Data from the Population Register (01.01.2013)	Participants of the Survey prior to the Forum (n=140)	Forum participants (n=118)	Participants of both the survey as well as the forum	The whole Project in the first half of 2013 (n=168)
Russia	48,3	37	48	44	34
USA	0,2	8	7	6	10
Other non-EU citizenship	4,7	35	24	31	48
Undetermined citizenship	46,8	20	21	19	18

Source: Report on Integration by third country nationals Regarding Estonia’s Integration Policy, Russian version, 2013:8)

There were no discussion clubs conducted with Russian-speakers who have already obtained the Estonian citizenship. (Interview with Kristina Kallas, 17/06/2014) However, all people who wanted to express their recommendations to the Ministry were welcomed to do so. (Interview with Anne-Ly Reimaa, 12/05/2014)

The Estonian language draft of the Programme was presented at the end of April; the Ministry encouraged people to comment on the draft and send their remarks and recommendation till the end of May 2014. Additionally, Development plan, as well as the results of the working groups' meetings, was open for access at the special site (<http://integratsioon.ee/>) created for this purpose. Both, the materials prepared by the coordinators of the working groups as well as the Development plan have been translated into English and Russian.

Moreover, after a rather short public discussion of the draft, the Ministry of Culture was supposed to take into account the most important recommendations and send the draft for the approval of each ministry which took part in the preparation process. After this, the Programme was supposed to be presented to the Parliament and reviewed by the Cultural Committee. And, finally, after the discussion in the Parliament the document should be approved by the Estonian government.

Although the Ministry of Culture planned to present the Programme to the Parliament in midsummer (Interview with Anne-Ly Reimaa, 12/05/2014), the process of the approval within the government itself turned out to be rather complicated one. The Ministry of Education rejected the Programme's draft claiming that it is 'unbalanced' and 'abstract'.

The Minister of Education and Research, Jevgeni Ossinovski, complained that the draft proposed to spend almost four million euros on the integration of new immigrants, what makes up almost 25% of the all expenses envisaged for the integration. He tends to explain this tendency by the Ministry's intention to attract the EU funding which is directed at the integration of new immigrants. Moreover, the Minister underlined that the Programme does not take into account the recommendation of scholars and the results of the extensive 2011 Monitoring. (DELFI, 2014, May 22)

Indeed, the Programme's draft proposes to allocate 3 806 323 euros to the integration of the new immigrants for the period of 2014-2017. In the meantime, for the other purposes of integration, the Programme schedules 18 714 510 euros. (Ministry of Culture, 2014) The budget for the whole period of integration is estimated at 38, 2 million euros. (DELFI, 2014, June 20) The proposed budget of the new Programme is smaller than the budget of the previous one, for example, the allocated funds for the

2008-2012 period amounted to 39 million euros, of which state budget resources formed 21 million euros and the external funds, 18 million euros (including the funding from the EU). (Ministry of Culture, 2012:14)

At present moment, the Ministry of Culture remains closely in touch with its colleagues from the Ministry of Education aiming to negotiate the existing contradictions. It means that the document could be adopted not earlier than in September – October this year.

As it was mentioned above, the Proposal to the Government preceded the drafting process of the Programme. The Proposal was based on the findings of the ‘2011 Integration Monitoring of the Estonian Society’. In this document the need to foster state identity was explained by the different degrees of trust towards the Estonian State among Estonian and non-Estonian residents of the country. The Integration Monitoring revealed that people with a background other than Estonian trust the Defense Forces of Estonia, Police and local government more than the President and the government of the Republic. This was true also for those non-Estonians who have already obtained the Estonian citizenship. As the result, it was concluded that the state needs to *‘foster common values and attitudes, stepping up civic education and supporting the growth of state identity among both Russian- and Estonian-speaking youth people.’* (Proposal to the Government, 2012:5)

In response to this problem, the Proposal indicates several measures aimed at the boosting of a state identity. The primary accent, according to the document, should be put on schools. In addition to this, it is indicted that the state has to pay more efforts in order to establish a ‘constructive dialogue’ with Russian – speaking minority in the media and civil society. Only after achieving this goal, the state can proceed with applying a *‘multi-layered approach to identity (immediate neighborhood – community-the state),’* (Ibid., p. 6)

Regarding the future policies in a media sphere the Proposal emphasizes the need for a dialogue. The document states that in addition to the language skills, ‘non-Estonian speaking people’ need to become part of Estonia’s public information space. However, it is highlighted that they need to become active participants and *‘valued partners in*

dialogue in all society relevant matters'. The state needs to provide information for the Russian-speaking population in Russian as well. (Ibid., pp.6-7)

In the Proposal state officials acknowledge a previously extensive (and largely unsuccessful) emphasis on the official institutions in the promotion of integration, such as citizenship, state language, single education system. Instead, it was mentioned that *'the integration field should pay more attention to its social dimension – participation in the society, fostering common values and diminishing social exclusion'*. As a result, integration policies in Estonia should expand its target groups and look beyond the *'residents with immigrant background, who have been viewed too narrowly as the 'Russian-speaking population'*. It was proposed that, in addition to the Russian-speaking population of Estonia, state institutions, civil society and other public institutions were included to a target group of integration. (Ibid.)

In an attempt to broaden the target group of integration activities, the Proposal divides the whole population into three groups: 1) citizens of other countries (primarily the Russian Federation) including new immigrants and European Union citizenships; 2) persons with undetermined citizenship; 3) citizens of the Republic of Estonia. (Ibid., p.8) However, this classification rather blurs the boundaries between two different groups: Soviet-era immigrants who have a long-standing affiliation with Estonia and well-established claims, and the 'new' immigrants.

In its turn, the Third Integration Programme 'Integrating Estonia 2020' continues to emphasize that the integration is *'the multilateral process of the formation of social cohesion in society between the people, who have different language and cultural background'*. (Ministry of Culture, 2014:26) The nature of the integration process is defined as 'multilateral', so the 'integrating activities also being directed to Estonian-speaking permanent residents'. The document proposes an elaborated cluster – based approach towards the Russian-speaking population, differentiating among categories of more and less integrated. (Ministry of Culture, 2014:6)

With regard to the state identity, the draft of the Programme defines it in the next way: *'community members shared attachment to the state. Common state identity based on shared values, symbols and provides people with a sense of belonging and a sense of*

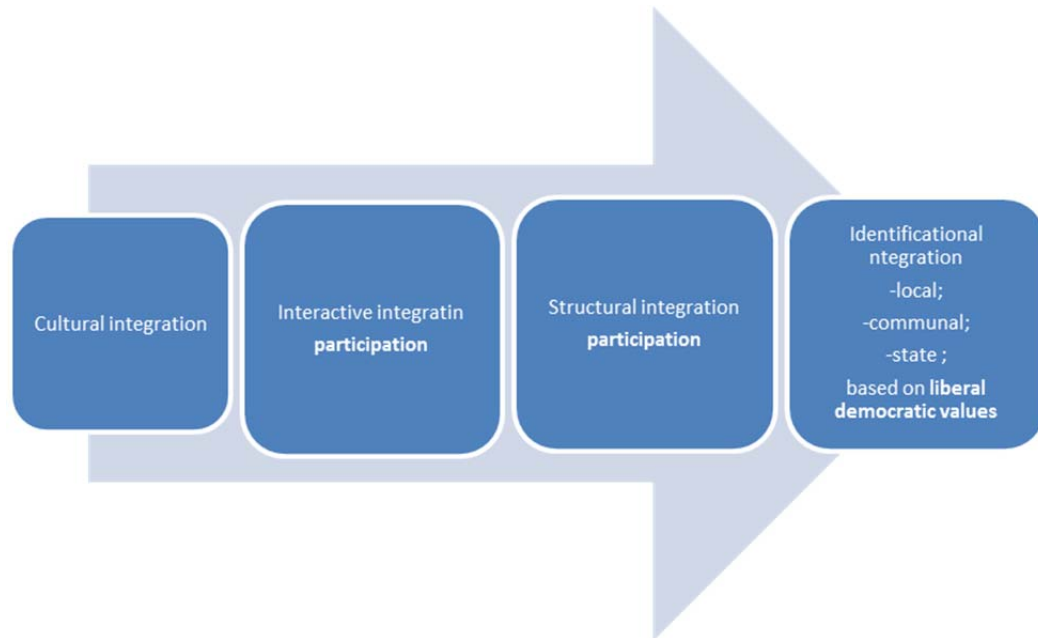
security in society. Common state identity provides all the community members equal opportunities to participate in social and political life. Common state identity is based on liberal democratic norms'. (Ibid., p. 27)

Among the measures aimed at the developing 'common values' support for the creation of a common information space and a cultural diversity awareness, support for everyday contacts and communication (through youth exchanges, cultural and sports projects, institutional cooperation projects in different regions of Estonia, etc., and support for the mother tongues and cultures of national minorities are indicated are indicated. In addition to this, the Programme also included actions within the legal-political dimension of integration which have already become 'traditional' for all integration documents: language learning and promotion of the Estonian citizenship. (Ibid, pp. 10-13)

As in the Proposal, the draft of the Programme does not clearly distinguish between the 'new' and 'Soviet-time' immigrants. Although the Programme contains 'the integration clusters' which are directly targeted at the Russian-speaking population of the country, the rest of the document concentrates on *'the people with different ethnic and culture background'*. The measures and aims of the Programme are very general. By including the whole society as the target group for integration, the Programme aims at the *'increasing the whole society's including Estonian permanent residents openness to the integration; the continuous integration support of some other languages than Estonian and the support of the new immigrants as a growing target group for adaptation and integration'*. (Ibid., p. 3)

In this way, the third integration Programme proposed a 'broadened' concept of 'state identity' where it should be viewed in a 'multi-layer' way, starting from contact between people in a closer neighborhood, then proceeding to the community level and culminating with the formation of a closer attachment to a state. Cohesion within the society is planned to be achieved through participation and involvement in all kinds of social and political activities, promoting ethnical diversity of the country. In this way, state makes an attempt to depart from a highly institutionalized approach towards integration which characterized the previous programmes.

Picture. 3. Integration measure in the third integration Programme



Third Integration Programme: promoting a common identity?

The concept of ‘state identity’ proposed in the third integration Programme ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ marks a significant shift from the previous versions presented in the early years.

The very idea of promotion of multi-layered approach to identity (immediate neighborhood – community-the state) might allow for inclusion of local (community) identities identity into a broader picture of Estonian state. This measure, supplemented by the encouragement for participation at the local level and empowerment of a civil society (Ministry of Culture, 2014:6) could be particularly successful, taking into account that the level of trust towards Estonian state institutions among the Russian-speaking population remains considerably lower than among Estonians. Instead, the Russian-speaking population trusts local government more. (Integration Monitoring,

2011) Moreover, people without citizenship and third country nationals who live in Estonia as permanent residents could participate in the local government elections.

This kind of ‘decentralization’ of state identity and shift to more informal instruments of participation signifies that naturalization as a ‘buzz’ word of the previous integration programme was changed to ‘participation’ in the ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’.

‘We are putting an emphasis on citizenship, but in a broader way: not in the strictly defined legal terms, but in terms of participation, social and political, on the local and a state level. The slogan might be: be active, participate. Of course, we are supporting naturalization, but, at the same time, we aim not at the teaching people how to be a citizen, but rather at encouraging understanding of the Estonian culture and other cultures in it. (Interview with Liana Rosmaa, 15/05/2014)

This less formal approach in the promotion of a state identity was supported with a number of measures aimed at better understanding and promotion of a cultural diversity of Estonia, mainly via media. This measure is not new, as the EIS also included the idea of a ‘shared information space’. As the result, a number of programmes introducing other cultures to Estonia were produced on radio and TV. One of the most successful examples produced within the integration Programme via MISA grant scheme were the TV shows ‘Citizens of Kitchen’ and ‘Love without Borders’⁶ where peculiarities of cultures other than Estonian were introduced to a wider public in a friendly and joyful manner. (Expert 1, interview, 2014)

However, the emphasis on the media in the latest Programme aimed at the ‘*bigger social coherence which stands on openness and mutual understanding*’ (Ministry of Culture: 2014:6) for the first time was indicated as a priority measure in promoting common values. Moreover, at present moment, The Ministry of Culture is working on the concept of a full – scale state Russian – language channel. (Interview with Liana Roosmaa, 15/05/2014)

⁶‘Citizens of Kitchen’ – the project financed by the MISA within the ‘Common media field and equal treatment’ Programme. The idea of the show is that Estonian conductor is visiting people who recently immigrated to Estonia and tries to learn some dish from a national cuisine. They communicate partly in Estonian, partly in English.

‘Love without Borders’ – the project financed by the MISA. It tells the stories of families where one of the spouses is of an immigrant origin. Project was financed by MISA within the ‘Common media field and equal treatment’ Programme. Both projects were implemented within the EIS.

Right now, Estonian Television (ETV) offers rather small number of Russian-language shows and programmes. On the other hand, Radio 4 broadcasts almost all the time in Russian language. There was a positive reaction from the Russian-speaking population to the extension of the Russian – language programmes on the ETV2 channel over the week-ends. However, the establishment of a full-scale Russian-language channel is opposed by majority of the Estonian-speaking population (53%). (Integration Monitoring, 2011)

The Programme indicates support of the development of cultures and mother tongues among ethnic minorities as a measure for fostering ‘common values’. ‘Estonian culture’ is supposed to become an ‘overarching culture’ for other cultures represented in Estonia. *‘We see Estonian culture as consisting of other cultures; moreover, we value those cultures inside the Estonian culture.’* (Liana Roosmaa, interview, 12/05/2014) Additionally, the Cultural Policy Fundamentals specify that ‘Estonian culture’ is being created by Estonians and other nations (or ethnic groups) who live in Estonia. (Estonian government, 2013:1)

Existence of a ‘modern Estonian culture’ was underlined by the discussion group ‘Cultural diversity’. *‘Many people were mentioning that we cannot say that culture we have now in Estonia is Estonian in the ethnic sense. It is European, global. It is neither Estonian, nor Russian. It is a culture.’* (Anu Valk, interview, 29/04/2014)

Till this time, support of the cultural activities of the national minorities was aimed more at the preservation of their historic distinctiveness. However, there is a need to create a common modern forward-looking culture. (Valk, 2012:1) In this respect, the idea of establishing a common multi-lingual and multi-ethnic song festival expressed by the Russian-speaking respondents would be an alternative solution to the old-fashioned methods as it will perform a role of ‘strongly uniting symbolic event.’ (A Study of Social Groups in Integration, 2013:17) However, events like these are not envisaged by the ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ Programme.

Another novelty proposed by the Programme is broadening of the target group of the integration activities. It views the whole Estonian society as the target group recognizing the need to *‘support positive attitudes towards integration and common*

values', and as the main indicator for evaluation of the progress the document mentions the '*proportion of the members of society who think that the situation with tolerance is good in Estonia*' (The Strategy for Integration and Social Cohesion in Estonia', 2014:10) The Main activities envisaged for achieving this goal is the support for a common information space for all the people residing in Estonia, support for the everyday contact and communication through informal activities and the support for the cultures and languages of national minorities. These measures are believed to contribute to the higher level of multiculturalism in the Estonian society. (Ibid., p. 11)

Contributing to a higher degree of tolerance in Estonian society indeed requires more attention from the state. Moreover, there is a clear ethnic divide in the perception of the intolerance in the Estonian society. For example, Estonian citizens perceive intolerance as 'not very serious' (43%) or 'rather not serious' (34%) problem. On the other hand, intolerance is regarded to be 'very serious' by 27% of Russians with Estonian citizenship, 29% of Russians with Russian citizenship, and by 40% of people with undetermined citizenship. So, while Estonians do not see the problem with equal treatment in the country, representatives of other nationalities, including those with Estonian citizenship, regard Estonian society as being intolerant. (Equal Treatment in Estonia: Awareness and Promotion. Research Report, 2013:12)

In this respect, the decision to include both Estonian and non-Estonian population, regardless of their citizenship status, seems to contribute to the promotion of mutual respect between the people and fostering a sense of 'we-ness' which is not hampered by the ethnic belonging of the members of Estonian society. Taking into account the previous integration strategies, this document tends to eliminate the ethnic categorization of Estonian and non-Estonian people which characterized the earlier programmes. Instead, it proposes more neutral definition of 'people with other than Estonian cultural or ethnic background' (*'erineva keele- ja kultuuritaustaga püsielanikud'*).

The new Programme presents a change in terms of instruments of state identity promotion. Although learning of the Estonian language remains an important tool, as well as naturalization process, the document places an emphasis on participation and development of networks. Thus, along with the formal participation (voting, for

example), all other forms of social activities are being encouraged. It marks a shift from the emphasis on structural integration to the interactive dimension. Differentiation between the levels of integration, as well as incorporation of the ethnic diversity into a commonly shared public space, might signify the abandoning of the assimilatory model of state identity formation.

The priority allocated to the 'common values' in the new Programme might indicate that the Estonian state engages into a process of 'societal culture' (Kymlicka, 2002) building. While using Estonian language as the common language for communication for all the people living in Estonia, state envisaged a promotion of common values highlighting cultural and ethnic diversity of Estonia, fostering tolerance and mutual understanding. For the first time, the Programme mentioned that 'liberal democratic values' should serve as the cornerstone of this value-based approach. (Ministry of Culture, 2014:27) The Programme envisages the involvement of the public and private sector institutions to this process.

The model of 'societal culture' presented in the new integration Programme looks for the extension of societal institutions on which it could rely. It adds to the citizenship and state institutions, local governments, NGOs, private enterprises, social initiatives which enable a broader participation of all people of Estonia. At the same time, it narrows ethnic markers, like the 'common core' mentioned in the first Programme, which potentially makes the common identity more acceptable for different nationalities represented in Estonia.

Moreover, by encouraging participation at the local and community level, the Programme aims at the development of local and regional identities which might foster a stronger attachment to Estonia. This bottom-up approach towards state identity supported by the idea of promoting Estonian culture as an 'umbrella' culture for all national minorities, and creation of a 'shared public field of information' where Russian-speakers are invited to a dialogue might potentially imply a change in the state's approach towards its Russian-speakers.

'The Strategy of Integration and Social Cohesion in Estonia' indeed represents a new approach towards the issue of integration in the country, attempting at 'smoothing' the

widely criticized ethnic elements of the earlier versions of integration programmes presented by the government. Although the wording of the document provides the reader with a rather optimistic outlook on the Estonian recent shift in its approach towards the integration, the analysis below will address the issues which cast a shade of doubt on the mentioned changes.

The 'Integrating Estonia 2020' makes a significant shift in its priorities: the programme does not view the acquisition of the Estonian citizenship as the prerequisite for full integration. Instead, the 'multi-layer' approach towards state identity-building encourages participation per se regardless the citizenship status as the main prerequisite for fostering feeling of belonging. Participation in community life and local decision-making is prioritized over the naturalization process. This decision was confirmed by a number of studies which found a little correlation between the status of Estonian citizen and feeling of 'attachment to Estonia' among Estonian Russian-speakers. (Integration Monitoring, 2011; Nimmerfeldt, 2009)

However, this shift in priorities might turn out to be ineffective and premature, as according to Jennie Schulze's analysis of the TIES survey results, citizenship status influences political and civic participation of Estonian Russian-speakers even on the local level. Although Estonian citizenship is not required for voting in the local elections in Estonia, Russians with Estonian citizenship are six times more likely to vote in municipal elections than those without citizenship; and four times more likely to participate than those with the Russian citizenship. (Schulze, 2014:38) So, along with the emphasis on the active participation, the state should continue promoting Estonian citizenship, especially among the younger generation. As, according to the results of Integration Monitoring, 19% of young people representing ethnic groups other than Estonians who grew up and received their education in Estonia chose another citizenship rather than Estonian. 12% of them preferred Russian citizenship to Estonian. (Integration Monitoring, 2011:17)

The second very important point is that despite the long drafting process and discussions, round tables and involvement of experts, it is still impossible to state that the document takes into account the position of Estonian Russian-speaking community. As mentioned above, there were no ethnic criteria in selection of experts and no single

discussion club was conducted with those Russian-speakers who have already obtained Estonian citizenship, but, according to the Programme's draft, still remain the target group of the integration.

While speaking about the input from the rest four Russian-speaking groups designed for stateless people and third-country nationals (mainly Russians), there are some doubts whether it is presented in the Programme. In most cases, the comments on the Programme made by the participants of these groups is not politically acceptable for majority of Estonians, like the 'zero – case' for citizenship, introduction of Russian as the second official language, keeping the Russian – language schools the way they have been, etc. (Kristina Kallas, interview 17/06/2014) Taking this into account, the fact that Russian – speakers with Estonian citizenship who might have more moderate position were not targeted as participants in the discussion clubs seems rather strange.

This selection of participants could be explained by the fact that discussion clubs were sponsored by the EU, which prioritizes research in the sphere of integration of third country immigrants and people without citizenship. The funding Estonia receives from the EU for these kinds of projects is based on the average situation in the EU, and there is a little room for flexibility in each particular country. (Kristina Kallas, interview, 17/06/2014) As a result, because of the lack of budgetary costs for integration purposes while allocating the EU funds, Estonia needs to adjust to the EU's criteria which do not reflect the very specific situation within the country.

Moreover, the allocation of funds in the Programme, also does not completely reflect the peculiarities of the Estonian case. The substantial amount of money (around ¼ of all funds) is going to be spent for the integration of new immigrants, although their share in total population remains quite small. While aiming at complying with the EU standards, this kind of budget-sharing risks neglecting the actually existing challenges in Estonia.

The issue of new immigrants received a particular attention within the New Programme. For the first time since the start of integration process in Estonia, the state Programme addresses new immigrants and allocates a substantial amount of money for their integration in Estonian society. Along with Russian-speakers, Estonia aims at integration of representatives of various nationalities who arrived in Estonia within the

period of last five years. Although the document distinguishes between the ‘old’ and ‘new’ immigrants in terms of time they spent in Estonia, at some points, those two categories merge into a very neutral but a rather general definition of ‘people with other than Estonian ethnic or cultural background’.

This might signify ‘a paradigmatic change’ in approach towards the minorities in Estonia (Kristina Kallas, interview 17/06/2014) when state does not differentiate between ‘Estonian’ and ‘non-Estonian’ population any more, and makes an emphasis on the migration history instead. However, the recent Programme fails to clearly distinguish between the different categories of immigrants. The same could be said about the actions envisaged for the achieving integration goals. They seem to be too general and not reflecting the realities of Estonian state. Like, for example, promotion of tolerance in Estonian society should address the existing prejudices towards Russian-speakers in much extensive way that towards the representatives of other nationalities living in the country.

This generalization, on the one hand, makes ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ quite technical and rather void document, and on the other hand, might threaten a shaky balance achieved by using the ‘non-ethnic’ wording and reduction of ‘primordial’ (Alexander, 2006) characteristics. In such a situation Russian-speakers might feel underrepresented and undervalued in comparison to the new immigrants.

Lastly, the Programme describes Estonian culture as being constituted from the cultures of national minorities making a reference to the ‘Fundamental of Estonian Cultural Policy’. However, both documents remain rather conservative in its measures promoting a common culture among Estonians and other nationalities living in the country. Despite the fact that the state acknowledges that the culture is being created by people representing other nationalities, it makes a clear division between the Estonian culture and the culture of ‘minority nations living in Estonia’. The culture remains strictly Estonian-centered, (Estonian language is defined as a cornerstone of the Estonian culture) operating within the Estonian language sphere and aimed at the maintenance of connections with Estonian across the world. (Fundamentals of Estonian Cultural Policy, 2013:1-2)

Moreover, the document (Fundamentals of Estonian Cultural Policy) does not mention any particular nationalities other than Estonian. Representatives of other than Estonian cultures are broadly defined as ‘minority nations’ putting on equal grounds the representatives of all nations living in Estonia, regardless of their number or migration history and relations with Estonia.

In this way, ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ along with a number of initiatives aims at the creation of more liberal and comprehensive approach towards Russian-speaking population, it contains several points which might prevent the creation of coherent and well – integrated society united by common identity.

4.5. Comparative conclusions

While answering the main research question of the thesis, the findings discussed above point at the fact that indeed, Estonia made a number of steps towards the establishing liberal integration as the ethno-political regime in its diversity management.

First of all, since the early nineties, Estonia managed to broaden the public discussion over the issue by inclusion of various research institutions, researches and minority representatives to the process of elaboration of integration documents. Although the input of minority representatives remains questionable, it is undeniable that integration became a subject of more thorough analysis and public review. In its way, it contributed to certain changes in the programmes which were highlighted above.

Namely, since the introduction of the first integration Programme, Estonian state attempts at the elimination of ethnic elements in its approach towards Russian-speakers. If the first documents highlighted the necessity to build the common identity based on the common Estonian-centric core (the first Programme), or nation-state principle (the second one), ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ advocates liberal – democratic norms in fostering of a state identity.

Moreover, the most recent integration Programme proposes to ‘decentralize’ state’s approach towards the formation of common identity, while making an emphasis on various levels of belonging to the state. This approach substantially broadens the possibilities of minority attachment to the state, as allows for articulations of various identities, not limiting them to the private sphere, as the first integration Programme, for example, did. As a result, common identity becomes more ‘real’ and less contestable in a way that instead of abstract belonging to the state; it fosters belonging to local or regional community.

‘Integrating Estonia 2020’, unlike the previous integration strategies, allocates a lot of attention to the promotion of ethnic diversity in the public sphere. In this way, without questioning the position of Estonian language in the public domain, state aims at popularization of the idea of tolerance and valuing cultural diversity in the society. This goal is even more ambitious, taking into account the fact that the whole Estonian society is targeted by integration measures. Unlike in the past, now, the state drops the ethnic marker in categorization of target groups.⁷

Also, in terms of integration promotion, the recent integration Programme applies less institutionalized approach emphasizing participation, intercultural communication and the creation of common field of information. Cultural and structural integration measures give way to social and interactive methods of establishing contacts and fostering mutual trust.

Analysis of ‘state identity’ concepts mentioned in the two consecutive integration Programmes allows for the following comparison:

⁷Which, as it was argued above, is not well-articulated and causes confusion between Soviet-era settlers and recent immigrants.

Table 3. Changes in approaches towards state identity over the time

	SIP	EIS	‘Integrating Estonia 2020’
State identity: elements	‘Estonian multiculturalism’; common core ; development of Estonian culture;	‘constitutional values of Estonia as democratic state’; acceptance of cultural differences;	‘liberal democratic norms’ ; based on local –community level identities.
Instruments of promotion	Acculturation (learning Estonian language); naturalization;	Naturalization ; citizenship education; shared field of information;	Participation & creation of common information space , cultural diversity awareness;
Target groups of integration	Russian – speakers defined as ‘non-Estonians’	Russian-speakers and ‘new’ immigrants;	The whole Estonian society
Other ethnic identities	Should be preserved within the private sphere	Should be ‘accepted’ into the ‘SI’	Should be treated as ‘partners’ .
Public sphere	Estonian-dominated	Estonian-dominated promoting cultural diversity	Estonian dominated promoting cultural diversity, encouraging dialogue .

The recently presented integration Programme offers quite a different perspective on the concept of state identity. Unlike the two previous integration documents, it indicates a clear willingness for cooperation and dialogue over the main issues which are expected to happen in public sphere. A set of actions aimed at ensuring awareness about cultural diversity of Estonian state, along with the broadening of the target groups of integration, might signify the redefinition of state policies in favor of a more balanced approach

towards the Russian-speaking minority. Although, 'Integrating Estonia' contains a number of contradicting points, in a more general comparative perspective, it continues a positive dynamics of lessening the 'ethnic control' system established in early 1990s. It underlines the commitment of Estonian state to move to a fully – fledged two-way integration process.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS AND SHORTCOMINGS

5.1. Factors influencing the change

While speaking about the factors which contributed to the gradual change of ethno-political regime in Estonia, it is worth mentioning the following ones:

- 1) broadening of the public base for the integration policies;
- 2) 'internalization' of the integration;
- 3) growth of Estonian citizenship from the number of Russian-speaking population;
- 4) success of the previous integration programmes;

While comparing the drafting process starting from the first integration Programme, it becomes visible, that since 1998 the state gradually extended the public involvement into the discussion of its integration policies. In 1998 - 1999 the first integration documents were designed with a limited involvement of national minorities' representatives as a wider public in general. State almost 'monopolized' the drafting process.

However, later integration programmes demonstrated a broadened involvement of domestic and external experts, civil society leaders, including representatives of minority groups. The second and the third integration programmes were preceded by the nation-wide surveys that were targeting the whole population of the country. The mechanism of 'dialogue platforms' (involvement of third-country nationals and stateless persons into the integration discussion) first mentioned in the EIS was implemented during the drafting process of the 'Integrating Estonia 2020' Programme. Moreover, a special open recourse (site 'Integratsioon.ee') was created in order to inform the public about the Programme's drafting process.

By expanding the public base for the integration drafting, the state was able to create a more complex picture of the existing problem and look for adequate solutions to them. However, as it was presented above, the state's willingness to negotiate with the Russian-speakers could be seriously questioned because of the 'reductionist' approach

applied to the discussion clubs. The state should account for the recommendations and in-depth opinion of a broader profile of Russian-speakers.

Secondly, if the first integration document was the result (at least to some extent) of the pressure exercised by the international institutions, second and third integration programmes became the outcome of more thorough internal evaluation of the existing situation. It contributed to the understanding of the segmentation of the Russian-speaking minority in Estonia as internal problem, not as something 'imposed' from above, but as the real existing problem which needs to be addressed within the state. Although majority elites might have various motivations for this (Agarin & Regelman, 2012), the mere fact that the state continues pursuing the integration policies without the international pressure, signifies the fact that the state recognizes its responsibility for its Russian-speaking population and their wellbeing.

Thirdly, naturalization processes in Estonia contributed to the growth of Estonian citizens with non-Estonian ethnic background, mainly Russians. This leads to the situation in which previous segmentation of public life loses its salience and people can influence the decision-making process. So, their opinion needs to be taken into account. According to the results of the Integration Monitoring, if earlier a vast majority of Estonian Russian-speakers preferred not to vote or supported mainly the 'Centre' Party, in the last years their voting dynamics changed as they started to support political parties which have been mainly oriented at the Estonian electorate. As the result, these political parties started to pay more attention to the problems of Russian-speakers. (Integration Monitoring, 2011:18)

Fourthly, the general success of integration policies in Estonia since their start (61% of all immigrants living in Estonia are strongly and completely integrated) (Integration Monitoring, 2011:7) reinforces the need to continue integration of people with other than Estonian background.

While acknowledging that the factors mentioned above contributed to the changing perspectives on the concept of state identity in particular and the Estonian ethno-political regime in general, it is worth pointing at some issues which give a ground to remain skeptical about the sustainability of the latest changes.

5.2. Remaining elements of control

Although admitting that the latest integration Programme continues a positive dynamics of gradual ‘departure’ from the ethnic control regime, it is worth pointing at some legal and practical issues which might create obstacles to this process.

First of all, the reference to the liberal democratic values as the cornerstone of a state identity contradicts with the fact that Estonian Constitution guarantees a preferential treatment to the Estonia language and culture. Moreover, although the ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ puts an emphasis on the development of shared information space, this aspiration lacks legislative basis. Estonian Public Broadcasting maintains a clear Estonian-centric approach while listing *‘support of the development of Estonian language and culture, along with the assistance in the audio-visual recording of the Estonian history and culture, and enhancing the guarantees of the permanence of the Estonian state and nation’* as its objectives. (Estonian Parliament, 2007)

Although the Cultural Policy Fundamentals provides us with a very inclusive definition of the Estonian culture, which, however, lacks elaboration and fundamental legislative support, the ‘Sustainable Estonia 21’ Plan defines ‘Estonian cultural space’ as *‘an arrangement of social life based on Estonian traditions and the Estonian language. This culture is carried by people identifying themselves as Estonians and communicating in the Estonian language. The Estonian cultural space is characterized by Estonian tradition based practices in behavior, in relationships and in the mode of living’*. (Estonian Government, 2005:13)

The Plan establishes a direct link between the preservation of Estonian cultural space and Estonian national identity by mentioning that *‘preservation of the cultural space is the precondition for the preservation of national identity, which in turn motivates people to use the national language and to hold in esteem the national values in a changing and globalizing world’*. (Ibid., p.14) Such a narrow interpretation of the ‘Estonian culture space’ and ‘Estonian nation’ casts a doubt on how sincerely the efforts aimed at the development of the common Estonian culture will be.

Secondly, the emphasis on social participation in the Programme requires a thorough work with the NGOs, continuous negotiations between the government and civil society organizations, at last, a vibrant civil society which is able to influence decision-making process. Unfortunately, civil society in Estonia, like in other Baltic states, remains weak and does not have a strong influence on the decision-making process in the country. (Agarin, 2011) Those civil society organizations which advocates minority rights (the rights of Russian-speakers in particular) are especially marginalized due to the fact that this is a highly politicized issue in the country. (Ibid., p. 196)

Moreover, as it was highlighted by one of the experts, political debates on the highest level rarely touch upon the question of minorities during the non-election time. Political discourse shaped by the state leaders remains rather neutral towards the issues of cultural diversity, minority rights and equal treatment, and it is very difficult to attract attention to the rights of minorities. (Interview with Marianne Meier, 15/05/2014) Without a continuous attention from the top decision-makers to the issues mentioned above, they risk to remain an '*ad hoc*' measures for a political mobilization, rather than a permanent topic of a public dialogue.

Partly, this lack of permanent attention to 'the minority question' could be explained by the absence of political party in Estonia which can consistently articulate the political demands of Estonian Russian-speakers. So, voting preferences of Russian-speaking minority remain dispersed, and, thus, not well-articulated. (Cianetti 2014a) This leads to the lack of institutionalized political mobilization of Russophones (Nakai, 2014) which might erupt into political protests.

Thirdly, involvement of different public and private sector organization in the integration process requires a promotion of multicultural awareness and equal treatment. So far, public awareness about the Equal Treatment Act (ETA), as well as institutions ensuring equal treatment in Estonia (Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner) remains low. Only every fifth respondent is aware of the existence of ETA and only 35% knows about the existence of the Commissioner. Majority of people do not know what to do in the situation of discrimination. (Equal Treatment in Estonia, 2013:15-19)

Fourthly, Sunday schools and national societies remain the main instruments of the state's support for ethnic minority' cultures. However, the existing system of national minority societies is established in a way that each society in order to receive a support from the state, needs to meet certain criteria, i.e. to be recognized by the state. (Seljamaa, 2012:366) In this respect, system of cultural societies might be treated as a rudimental instrument of 'control'. The absence of alternative instruments of support for minority cultures might provoke a certain degree of skepticism, as it remains unclear whether the minorities' cultures will be valued or more 'controlled'

Lastly, despite the gradual broadening of the public base for integration policies, there are some doubts whether a broad societal consensus regarding the integration process was established in Estonian society. Thus, during the discussion process of the third integration Process, one of the most discussed issues was the budget of the Programme. From one integration programme to another, Estonian state attacks funding from the EU. This year the Programme's budget is almost on 25% composed from the EU funds. While the EU funding might not always correspond to particular Estonian needs, it also signifies that there is a small willingness among Estonian elites to finance integration from the internal budget. In its turn, it might imply that there is a low societal approval of spending of public money on the issues such as integration.

These obstacles to the creation of a coherent Estonian society united by a common state identity require more attention to the practical implementation of the measures aimed at the promotion of common values among the people of Estonia. In a situation where they will not be eliminated, Estonian state identity presented in 'Integrating Estonia 2020' Programme could remain in the trap 'of fictive pluralism' (Malloy, 2009:245) and do not make substantial progress in its treatment of Russian-speaking population. This might mean that the transition from a control regime to liberal integration could be limited to the superficial change in document's language and remain a void political statement.

CHAPTER SIX

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The analysis presented here was aimed at tracing the shift in ethno-political regime in Estonia looking at the changing perceptions of the state identity concept. By analyzing Estonian documents in the sphere of integration, it is argued that Estonia is slowly eliminating the elements of the ethnic control regime established in the early nineties, and is moving towards the development of more liberal and inclusive integration policy.

The concept of state identity has gone through a long process of transformation, changing from the mono-ethnic Estonian – centered approach introduced in the State Integration Programme ‘Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007’ to the inclusive formulation of state identity ‘based on liberal democratic values’ in the recently introduced ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ Programme.

Since the introduction of the first integration document and the current ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ Programme, the concept of state identity experienced the following changes. Firstly, ‘Estonian model of multiculturalism’ based on the primordial (Alexander, 2006) essentialist treatment of values forming the ‘common core’ was changed to the broad democratic reading of the value-based system on which the common identity should be built. The new Programme envisages that the state identity should aim at promotion of cultural diversity in the public sphere.

Secondly, separation of public and public spheres, introduced in the first integration Programme, was changed to the aim of creation of a ‘shared public space’ where both ethnic Estonians, as well as people with non-Estonian background are understood as the ‘valued partners in the dialogue in all socially relevant matters’ (Ministry of Culture, 2012:7). Invitation for a dialogue, in shared information space, might serve as a step forward towards the recognition of minorities, namely Russian – speaking minority, as equal partners.

Thirdly, state elaborated a more nuanced approach towards the concept of state identity. For the first time, the integration document defines the state identity through local and community identities. This could lead to facilitation of establishing links with the

Estonian state, based on strong local (community) identity. This kind of ‘decentralization’ of state identity formation opens possibilities for more inclusive approach towards the formation of belonging to the Estonian state.

Lastly, the state attempts to promote less institutionalized channels of participation regardless person’s formal connection to the state (citizenship). It encourages involvement at different levels aiming at creating of stable affiliations with Estonia and development of loyal attitude towards it.

This shift in approaches towards the definition of state identity confirms Järve’s prediction about the gradual elimination of the control system in Estonian society. (Järve, 2005) Indeed, Estonian state demonstrated a positive dynamics in the inclusion of Russian-speaking minority and its interest in the public sphere, bringing them out from the previously ascribed private domain. The most recent changes to the concept of state identity and integration in general have shown state’s desire to eliminate the existing elements of the control regime, namely, lack of Russian-speakers’ involvement in the decision – making process, lack of local activism, and active and constructive discussion in the public sphere. Tackling these problems will lead to a fully – fledged shift towards integration as an overarching regime for fostering a cohesive and sustainable society.

While speaking about the factors which contributed to this ‘shift’, the broadening of the public base for the integration policies; ‘internalization’ of the integration; growth of Estonian citizenship from the number of Russian – speaking population and the success of the previous integration programmes could be listed. However, over-reliance on minority societies, while supporting cultural diversity of Estonia along with prevalence of Estonian nation and culture institutionalized in the Constitution and other documents, weakness of the instruments promoting tolerance and equal treatment, and lack of a broad public support for integration remain the elements of the ‘control’ regime which could hamper the transition to a full-scale bilateral integration.

Despite the efforts aimed at lessening institutionalization, i.e. active involvement of minority societies and reliance on formalized practices in the promotion of integration might be named as the main obstacle in the successful integration process and formation

of all-Estonian feeling of ‘we-ness’. Minority organizations, on the one hand, do not have a real voice in Estonian politics and opinion-making (Agarin, 2010); on the other – their activity remain largely controlled by the state (Seljamaa, 2013) So, in order to ‘empower’ participation of Russian-speakers the state needs to pay more attention to less institutionalized and less formal channels of promoting cultural diversity and fostering common identity. However, it should be pointed out that formal citizenship yet influences voting dynamics (Schulze, 2014).

This contradiction brings us to the next ‘control element’ which is present in the integration documents. Although the state attempts at the gradual elimination of ethnic markers in its approach towards the issues of integration, this process is very slow. Even if the ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ proposes liberal democratic values as the cornerstone of integration, supporting documents continue stressing the need of preservation of Estonian state, language, history and culture, where ethnic minorities are sidelined. Thus, the legitimacy of state continues to be mainly based on the ideology which reflects the position of majority group.

In addition to this, the newly presented Programme itself has several shortcomings which question the genuine will of Estonian state to build a common overarching identity. The preparation and discussion process of the document has proven that participation of Russian-speaking population remains limited, while the results received from some part of Estonian Russophones might not account for the whole community. The reductionist method applied within the discussion process and lack of balanced involvement of the Russian-speaking community threatens further implementation of the integration policies.

An emphasis on new immigrants presented in the ‘Integrating Estonia 2020’ does not reflect the situation in the country, where the Soviet-time immigrants continue lacking strong affiliation and loyalty to the state. So far, the number of new immigrants in the state does not pose a visible threat to the integrity of the country, and this question should be addressed with regard to the previously existing challenge of Russian-speakers, and not for the expense of it, leading to any kind of competition in integration of priorities. Moreover, the issue of allocation of EU funds to the integration of ‘new

immigrants' as well as state's motivation for promotion of this kind of integration might be addressed in further research.

All in all, the changes in the definition of the 'state identity' as well as approaches aimed at its popularization, could signify the shift in understanding the category 'Estonian': from a narrowly defined ethnic to a more open and inclusive one. In a long time perspective, this shift might signify the erosion of exclusionist definition of what Martin Ehala (2014) calls 'small Estonia' based on the Estonian language, traditions and history. However, inclusion of Russian-speaking minority into the broader picture of common Estonian identity needs to be addressed by a more holistic approach which will be supported by various actions in the sphere of cultural, political and socio-economic integration tackling the remaining elements of ethnic control regime.

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APPENDIX I

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EIS - Development Plan 'Estonian Integration Strategy 2008-2013

EU- European Union

MISA – Migration and Integration Foundation

OSCE- Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe

SIP - State Integration Programme 'Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007'

APPENDIX II

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

1. Kristina Kallas is member of the board in the Institute of Baltic Studies where she deals with social integration, migration and minority rights.
2. Igor Kopõtin, leader of the thematic discussion group ‘State Identity’. He is a lecturer at the Estonian National Defence College. His research interests evolve around the issues of Estonian military history.
3. Marianne Meior, leader of the thematic discussion group ‘Tolerance in the society’, Marianne is one of the founders of the Estonian Human Rights Centre and is currently the head of the Equal Treatment Programme;
4. Anna-Ly Reimaa is the head of the Cultural Diversity Department at the Estonian Ministry of Culture;
5. Liana Roosmaa is an advisor at the Cultural Diversity Department at the Estonian Ministry of Culture;
6. Aune Valk, leader of the thematic discussion group ‘Cultural diversity’. Dr. Aune Valk works at the Ministry of Education and Research and the University of Tartu.
7. Employee of the Integration and Migration Foundation.