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**Erakonnastumise ulatus Eestis valijaskonna tasemel viis aastat pärast
demokratiseerumise algust (1993)**

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Sissejuhatus

Käesolev töö keskendub Eesti üleminekuprotsessi osana toimunud ühiskonna demokratiseerumise ühe aspekti - erakonnastumise ulatuse ja sügavuse selgitamisele ühiskonna rohujuure tasandil vahetult pärast esimesi Eesti iseseisvumise taastamise järgseid parlamendivalimisi.

Miks on käesoleva töö keskmes erakonnad? Russel J. Dalton ja Martin P. Wattenberg kirjeldavad kogumikus „*Parties without Partisans. Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*“¹ kokkuvõtlikult poliitiliste erakondade 15 põhilist funktsiooni, mida erakonnad demokraatlikus poliitilises süsteemis täidavad. Ehkki tehnoloogia arengu, üldise haridustaseme kasvu ja teiste moderniseerumisprotsesside tulemusena on erakondade funktsionaalne väärtus mitmete uurijate hinnangul viimaste aastakümnete jooksul reas aspektides langenud, on erakondade roll toimiva ja vastutustundliku demokraatia käigushoidjana endiselt ka tänasel päeval asendamatu. Erakonnad on küll muutunud, nad on läbi teinud kohanemisi üldiste moderniseerumisprotsessidega, kuid selgeid funktsionaalseid alternatiive pole neile kujunenud. Kaheldamatult kuulub ka Eesti nende riikide hulka, kes soovib arendada ja omada vastutustundlikku ja toimivat demokraatlikku valitsemissüsteemi, mistõttu on loomulik nii üldise kui ka teadusavalikkuse huvi erakondade kui selle süsteemi keskse elemendi käekäigu vastu.

Miks aasta 1993? Esiteks, see on sisuliselt esimene aasta, mil erakonnastumise seis Eestis on mõistlik ja võimalik fikseerida. Demokratiseerumine ja toimiva mitmeparteilise esindusdemokraatia ülesehitamine olid Eesti poliitilise eliidi poolt

¹ R. J. Dalton, M. P. Wattenberg (eds). *Parties without Partisans. Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002: 5-10.

eelmise sajandi 80ndate lõpu- ja 90ndate algusaastatel avalikult välja öeldud ja järgitud üleminekuühiskonna programmilised eesmärgid. Massiliikumiste asemele erakondade loomist ja võistleva mitmeparteilise demokraatliku süsteemi rajamist võeti normatiivse eesmärgina liikumisel eemale totalitaarsest nõukogulikust ühiskonnast ning Euroopa Liidu ja NATO liikmelisuse suunal. Esimesed demokraatliku suunitlusega erakonnad loodi Eestis pärast II maailmasõda 1988. aastal. Järgnenud viie aasta kestel toimus Eesti poliitikas tormiline institutsionaalne areng: võeti vastu Eesti Vabariigi põhiseadus, viidi läbi esimesed põhiseaduse kohased presidendi-, parlamendi- ja kohaliku omavalitsuse volikogude valimised, loodi ja rakendati tööle põhiseadusest tulenevad teised riigivõimuinstitutsioonid. 1993. aasta on ajahetk, kus esimeste demokraatlike erakondade moodustamisest on möödunud sissevaate tegemiseks piisavalt pikk aeg – 5 aastat – ning toimunud on esimesed erakondlikud põhiseaduse kohased valimised.

Teiseks, 1993. aasta oli sotsiaalse konteksti osas erakonnastumise seisukohalt kriitiline ajahetk. Põhiseaduses äranimetatud institutsioonid – erakonnad – olid selleks ajaks omandanud Eesti poliitikas institutsionaalsel tasandil märkimisväärse, et mitte öelda keske rolli. Ka ajakirjanduses pälvis erakondade tegevus 1993. aastale eelnevatel aastatel erakordselt palju tähelepanu. Erakordselt kõrge oli seetõttu ka erakondade eneseteadvus. Samal ajal oli just 1993. aasta avalikus arvamuses esimene erakondades pettumise aasta – Riigikogu valimised aasta eest võitnud erakondade toetus langes drastiliselt, edetabelite tippu kerkis Jüri Toomepuu anti-parteiline valimisliit Eesti Kodanik. Just erakondade ilmne pretensioon domineerivale rollile tollases ja tulevases Eesti poliitilises protsessis ja seeläbi kogu Eesti elu kujundamisel, muudab tähtsaks käesoleva töö uurimisküsimused: kui tugevalt toetub erakondlik poliitiline süsteem Eestis sel ajal tegelikult valijaskonnale? Kui suur on lõhe erakondliku poliitilise eliidi (enesepildi) ja valijaskonna tegelike hoiakute vahel erakondade suhtes? Neil küsimustel on mitte üksnes teoreetiline või tunnetuslik tähtsus ja tähendus, vaid ka pragmaatiline: erakondade kui institutsioonide prestiiž ning nende integreeritus valijaskonnaga omavad olulisi järelemeid nii poliitilise süsteemi püsimisele ja stabiilsusele üldiselt, mitmeparteilise demokraatia tulevikuväljavaadetele kui ka poliitikute poolt ettevõetavate konkreetsete reformide ja poliitikate avalikule toetusele. Kui kaugel oli Eesti 1993. aastal murdepunktist, kus poliitiline areng

oleks võinud võtta hoopis teise – anti-erakondliku suuna? Käesolev töö loodab sellele pisut valgust heita.

Kolmandaks, Eesti erakonnastumise algseisu uurimise tähtsus on ajaga kasvanud ja on autori arvates eriti aktuaalne just praegu. Me kõik tajume, et ühiskondlik kontekst ja seis erakonnastumisega on Eestis täna 1993. aastaga võrreldes teistsugune. Me võime seda igaüks aimata isikliku vaatluse põhjal, jälgides avalikus inforuumis esitatavaid hoiakuid või ka mõnede üldteada statistiliste näitajate järgi nagu näiteks erakonnaliikmete arvu kasv või erakondlike nimekirjade arvu suurenemine kohalikel valimistel. Erakonnastumine oli Eesti demokratiseerumise algusajal normatiivne eesmärk. Täna kõlab Eesti ühiskondlikus debatis äratuntavaid noote liigsest erakonnastumisest, soovist muuta poliitilist süsteemi vähem erakondlikuks, kohatist erakonnastasusest. Asjakohane teadusavalikkus kogu maailmas arutlebki erakondade tähtsuse üleüldise languse ja erakondade ning erakonnastumise teoreetilise ümbermõtestamise vajaduse üle. Seega 15 aastaga on olud erakondade jaoks ja ümber märkimisväärselt muutunud. Kuid see, kui suurel määral täpselt valijaskonna hoiakud ja side erakondadega on möödunud 15 aasta jooksul Eestis teisenenud, nõuab korrektset uurimist. Selle eelduseks on, et meil on võrdluseks alus, et me teame, mis oli enne, et meil on olemas korrektne nullpunkt. Käesoleva uurimus fikseerib nullpunkti tulevaste uurimuste jaoks, mis analüüsivad Eesti erakonnastumist valijaskonna tasandil sotsioloogilisest aspektist.

Käesoleva töö eesmärgiks on seega Eesti erakonnastumise ulatuse ja sügavuse hindamine ühiskonna rohujuuretasandil võrrelduna Lääne-Euroopa demokraatiate ning Ida- ja Kesk-Euroopa saatusekaaslastest üleminekuühiskondadega Eesti demokratiseerumise esimese viieaastase (1988-1993) perioodi järel. Käesolev töö otsib vastuseid küsimustele:

- **kui laiale alusele Eesti erakonnad reaalselt toetuvad: kui suur on usaldus erakondade kui institutsioonide ja erakondliku demokraatia vastu laiemalt?**
- **kuivõrd ühiskonda läbiv on erakonnastumise protsess Eestis olnud?**
- **kui tugevatele sidemetele valijatega Eestis tegutsevad erakonnad kui institutsioonid toetuvad?**

Eelnevast tulenevalt ja kokkuvõtvalt: kui tugeval legitiimsel alusel seisab aastal 1993 erakondade pretensioon kesksele kohale Eesti poliitilises süsteemis? Kui kaugel on Eesti väljakujunenud ja stabiilsuse eeldustega mitmeparteilisest demokraatlikust süsteemist ning kaas Eesti on erakonnastumise ulatuse ja sügavuse mõttes aastal 1993 Euroopa ja Ida- ning Kesk-Euroopa üleminekuriikide kontekstis unikaalses või analoogses seisus?

Käesoleva töö peamisteks andmeallikateks on Eestis (ja võrdlusena teistes Euroopa riikides) põhiliselt 1993. aastal läbi viidud poliitilise kultuuri ning avaliku arvamuse uuringud.

Käesolevas töös hinnatakse kompleksi erinevaid indikaatoreid, mis kirjeldavad Eesti valijaskonna hoiakuid, usaldust ja lähedustunnet mitmeparteilise demokraatia ning erakondade kui institutsioonide suhtes. Töö keskseks metodoloogiliseks kontseptsiooniks on *partei-identifikatsiooni (identification)* või *partei-lojaalsuse (attachment) kontseptsioon* – enese samastamine või psühholoogiline lähedus mõne konkreetse erakonnaga. Sellise sideme olemasolu määr ja tugevus kogu ühiskonna tasemel näitab erakonnastumise ulatust ja sügavust ühiskonnas, väljendades ühtlasi kodanikkonna poliitilisse süsteemi integreerituse ja erakonnasüsteemi funktsionaalsuse taset ning seeläbi stabiilsuse väljavaateid. Väljakujunenud ja toimivast mitmeparteilisest poliitilisest süsteemist on põhjust rääkida üksnes siis, kui erakonnamaastik on välja kujunenud nii institutsionaalsel (erakondade arvu, organisatsioonide, nende tegutsemise formaal-juriidilise konteksti, ideoloogilise jagunemise skaala stabiilsuse jmt mõttes) kui ka valijaskonna tasemel (partei-lojaalsuse ulatusliku leviku ja tugevuse mõttes).

Harold D. Clarke, David Sanders, Marianne C. Stewart ja Paul Whiteley leiavad², et partei-identifikatsiooni kontseptsiooni on peetud poliitilise psühholoogia keskseks elemendiks peaaegu pool sajandit. Sellega tulid 1950ndatel välja Angus Campbell ja tema Michigani ülikooli kolleegid (viited sellele ka magistritööks

² H.D. Clarke, D. Sanders, M.C. Stewart, P. Whiteley. *Political Choice in Britain*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

esitatud artikli „*Political Parties: Identity and Identification*“, *Nationality Papers*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1995: 29-41 märkustes), USAst kandus kontseptsiooni Britanniasse ja mujale Euroopasse. Algselt peeti partei-identifikatsiooni mehhanismiks, mille kaudu klassiühiskonna lõhed valimisprotsessi üle kantakse. Sisuliselt käsitleti partei-identifikatsiooni klassiteadvuse pikendusena - eeldati, et klassiteadvus, enese töölis- või keskklassiga samastamine areneb edasi kestvamaks samastumiseks erakonnaga, kes neid klassi pikaajalisi huvisid esindavad. Valimistel antud hääled väljendasid selle kontseptsiooni kohaselt siis nõ „hõimulojaalsust“ oma klassile. Michigani (klassipõhine) mudel eeldas ka, et elutsükli jooksul partei-identifikatsioon indiviidi tasandil tugevneb. Ennekõike on partei-identifikatsioon olnud valimiskäitumise, täpsemalt valimiseelistuste käsitlemise analüütiliseks tööriistaks.

André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Richard Nadeau ja Neil Nevitte toovad esile³, et partei-identifikatsiooni kontseptsioonil on kaks keskset elementi: 1) identifikatsioon või samastumine e tegu on kodaniku enesemääratlusega, mis aitab tal end ja teisi poliitilisel maastikul paigutada ja 2) ajaline horisont e pikaajaline ja püsivam iseloom. Algne kontseptsioon eeldab, et end parteilise enesemääratluse kaudu mõne erakonnaga sidunud kodanike hoiakud, valijaeelistused ja -käitumine on selle erakonna ja tema liidrite suhtes positiivsemad ja püsivamad ning vähem mõjutatud igapäevaselt laekuvast poliitilisest informatsioonist.

Sünnist alates on partei-identifikatsiooni kontseptsiooni suunal tehtud küllalt palju kriitikat, mida võib jagada sisuliseks ning metodoloogiliseks (operatsionaliseerimist puudutavaks). Sisuline kriitika vallandus lihtsast tõsiasiast, et vastupidiselt teoreetiliselt ennustatud püsivusele ilmutasid partei-identifikatsiooni empiirilised mõõtmised partei-läheduse näitajate märkimisväärset ebapüsivust ja -stabiilsust nii indiviidi kui ühiskonna tasemel. Ühe heatahtliku ja struktuurse seletuse sellele võib leida klassi-keskse diskursuse ja praktika globaalses hajumises viimase 50 aasta kestel. Partei-identifikatsiooni näitajate seoste nõrgenemise kohta sotsiaalse klassiga on tõepoolest ka empiirilisi tõestusi, muuhulgas toovad need ülalmainitud raamatus ära Clarke jt. Selle

³A. Blais, E. Gidengil, R. Nadeau, N. Nevitte. Measuring Party Identification: Britain, Canada, and the United States. *Political Behavior*, Vol.23, No.1, 2001: 5-22.

järeldamina on moderniseeritud ka arusaama partei-identifikatsiooni olemusest: Clarke jt pakuvad eelnimetatud töös välja, et tegu on „ladestunud parteilisusega“ (*valenced partisanship*) ehk aegade jooksul akumuliseeritud erakonna ja selle liidrite tegevuse hinnangutega. Uue määratluse järgi kasutavad valijad informatsiooni erakondade ja nende liidrite tegevuse kohta tundlikul moel iseenda poliitilise tegevuse orientiirina, ladestades selle info olemasolevale erakondlikule enesemääratlusele ja vähendades sel viisil oma oma orienteerumiskulusid. Selle pideva ladestusprotsessi tulemusena jäävad osad valijad oma enesemääratluse juurde, teised saavad aga tõuke selle muutmiseks.

Radikaalsema sisulise kriitika võtab kenasti kokku Richard Sinnott⁴. See taandub kahele küsimusele: 1) kas partei-identifikatsioon on üldse valimiseelistuste kujundamise iseseisev muutuja või pelgalt valimiskäitumise ja teema-eelistuste peegeldus? Ehk kas tegu pole mitte lihtlabase tautoloogiaga – inimesed, kes mõnd erakonda toetavad, toetavad teda (ka valimistel) 2) kas partei-identifikatsioon mõjutab teisi poliitilise käitumise aspekte nagu osalus ja valimiseelistuste kõikumine (volatiilsus)?

Metodoloogiline osa kriitikast on pühendatud partei-identifikatsiooni kontseptsiooni operatsionaliseerimisele viisil, mis oleks rahvusvaheliselt standartne ning võimalikult tundetu erinevate ühiskondade spetsiifilise konteksti ning eriti erinevate keelte semantiliste eripärade suhtes. Eesmärk mõistagi riikidevahelise korrektse võrreldavuse tagamine. Erinevad sõnastused ja mõõtmise traditsioonid USAs ja Euroopas ning Euroopa eri riikide vahel on andnud tagajärjeks ka sisuliselt kaheldavaid üldisemaid järeldusi ja mõõdarääkimisi. Hea ülevaate sellest problemaatikast ja pakutud parandatud mõõdikutest annab ülalmainitud Richard Sinnott'i artikkel.

Käesoleva töö kontekstis on eelneva kriitika taustal oluline rõhutada paari momenti:

- 1) partei-identifikatsiooni kriitikute ootused on ennekõike seotud valimistulemuste prognoosimise lootustega valijakäitumise suurema ennustatavuse läbi indiviidi tasemel. Partei-identifikatsioonile on asetatud

⁴ R. Sinnott. Party Attachment in Europe: Methodological Critique and Substantive Implications. *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 28. No. 4, Oct., 1998: 627-650.

suuri lootusi osalemisaktiivsuse ja valimiseelistuste variatiivsuse iseseisval seletamisel, mistõttu kontseptsiooni tautoloogilise iseloomu omaksvõtt tähendaks selle kontseпти kollapsit. Antud töö kontekstis ei ole need aspektid aga olulised. Käesoleva töö kontekstis on partei-identifikatsiooni kontseptsiooni kasutatud analüütilise tööriistana erakondliku süsteemi valijaskonnaga integreerituse (ja seeläbi funktsionaalsuse) selgitamisel. Antud kontekstis pakuvad huvi ainult parteilise enesmääratluse leviku ja tugevuse agregaatnumbrid ühiskonna tasemel ning need väljendavad parteisüsteemi institutsionaliseerituse määra;

- 2) ka Sinnott jõuab oma eelmainitud töös siiski järeldusele, et kui metodoloogilised erinevused tasandada, näitab analüüs, et partei-identifikatsioon on tegelikult seotud nii valimistel osalemisega (positiivselt) kui ka eelistuste volatiilsusega (negatiivselt) ja seega peegeldab ka poliitilise süsteemi stabiilsuse väljavaateid;
- 3) partei-identifikatsiooni mõõdikute kõrvutatavus on oluline ka käesoleva töö kontekstis. Töös on kasutatud Euroopa traditsiooni sõnastust (vt töö alusartiklit „*Political Parties: Identity and Identification*“, *Nationality Papers*, Vol. 23, No. 1, 1995: 30), mis (ehkki ei võta arvesse Sinnott'i kolm aastat pärast käesoleva töö ilmumist pakutud metodoloogilisi täiendusi) peaks tagama töö ühe eesmärgina taodeldud võrreldavuse.

Käesolevas töös püstitab autor uurimisülesande selgitada, kui tugevale ja püsivale alusele Eesti valijaskonnas Eesti erakonnad viis aastat pärast demokratiseerumise algust toetuvad. Töö annab ülevaate Eesti olukorrast võrrelduna Lääne-Euroopa demokraatiate ning Ida- ja Kesk-Euroopa saatusekaaslastega, arutleb erakonnastumise seisuga võimalike põhjuste üle ning esitab võimalike tulevaste arengute visandeid.

Autor esitab hüpoteesi:

H1: *Erakonnastumise pealispindsuse hüpotees* – mille sisuks on väide, et valijaskonna tasemel on erakonnastumine toimunud väga vähesel määral, valijaskonna side erakondadega on nõrk, usaldus erakondade vastu ning erakondade prestiiž on madal. Erakonnastumine on Eestis esimese viie demokratiseerumisaasta jooksul toimunud vähesel (*üksnes erakondade formaal-*

juriidilise struktuuri ning algelise organisatsiooni ülalt-alla ellukutsumise) määral.

Hüpoteeside kontrollimiseks kasutab autor kaht tüüpi andmestikku:

- 1) peamise andmeallikana EMORi poolt Eestis põhiliselt 1993. aastal läbi viidud Omnibuss uuringuid, milles sisaldasid küsimused poliitilise kultuuri ning avaliku arvamuse kohta;
- 2) võrdlusandmeid teistest Eestis ja mujal Euroopas läbi viidud analoogseid küsimusi sisaldavatest uuringutest (Eurobarometer jt).

Käesolev uurimus on unikaalne mitmes mõttes. *Esiteks* on tegu esimese rahvusvaheliselt aktsepteeritud teadusajakirjas ilmunud Eesti erakonnastumist käsitleva sotsioloogilise uurimusartikliga Eesti autorilt.

Hiljem on Eesti autoritest Eesti erakonnastumist kõige viljakamalt käsitlenud Allan Sikk (magistritöö „*Stabilisation of Post-Communist Party Systems*“, 2001, doktoritöö „*Highways to power: New party success in three young democracies*“, 2006 Tartu Ülikooli Sotsiaalteaduskonnas⁵; mitmed artiklid ja ettekanded⁶).

Rahvusvahelistelt autoritelt on pärast käesoleva töö ilmumist avaldatud rida Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopa (KIE) üleminekuühiskondade noori erakonnasüsteeme analüüsivaid töid. Mahukamatest töödest sisaldub Eesti olukorra käsitus David Arteri raamatus „*Parties and Democracy in the Post-Soviet Republics: The Case of Estonia*” (mis muuhulgas sisaldab ka viiteid käesoleva töö alusartiklile), Paul Geoffrey Lewis’e raamatus „*Political Parties in Post-Communist Eastern Europe*”, Richard Rose ja Neil Munro raamatus „*Elections and Parties in New European Democracies*“ ning Susanne Jungerstam-Muldersi toimetatud väljaandes „*Post-communist EU Member States: Parties and party systems*“ (Eesti osa käsitleb selles Evald Mikkeli artikkel „*Patterns of party formation in Estonia: Consolidation unaccomplished*“)⁷.

⁵ Käesolevas töös viidatud üliõpilasuuringuste nimistu on esitatud lisas 3.

⁶ A. Sikk. How unstable? Volatility and the genuinely new parties in Eastern Europe. *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol. 44, 2005: 391–412. Ettekanne „*Party Systems in the Baltic States: Reflections on Systemness and Cleavages*“, 2008, http://www.unifr.ch/iicee/assets/files/W1_Sikk_Fribourg.doc.

⁷ D. Arter. *Parties and Democracy in the Post-Soviet Republics: The Case of Estonia*. Dartmouth Pub Co, 1996; P.G. Lewis. *Political Parties in Post-Communist Eastern*

David Arter üritab oma raamatus Eestile tulevikuks välja pakkuda anti-erakondliku partei süsteemi kujunemise võimalust. Lewis kardab, et erakonnasüsteemi institutsionaliseerumine ei pruugi post-kommunistlikus ruumis toimudagi ning näeb vaimusilmas ühe võimalusena sinna kuuluvate riikide suundumist mööda Ladina-Ameerika väheinstitutsionaliseeritud parteisüsteemide ja hegemoonlike erakondade teed. Mikkel analüüsib Eesti erakonnasüsteemi arengut, jõudes järeldusele, et see on jõudnud üleminekufaasist konsolideerumisfaasi, kuid erakonna-valija sidemete nõrkuse ning jätkuvalt suure valimistulemuste volatiilsuse tõttu jäävad lõplikku konsolideerumise väljavaadete osas otsad endiselt lahtiseks. Rose ja Munro süstematiseerivad KIE riikide erakonnastumisprotsessi alguse ühisjooned ning leiavad, et kogu protsessi iseloomustab a) erakondade ülepakkumine kodanikuühiskonna puudumisel b) valijate vähene usaldus erakondade vastu c) ning erakondlik võistlus ilma institutsionaliseerunud erakonnasüsteemita.

Eesti erakonnasüsteemi üksikuid aspekte käsitlevaid teadusartikleid on hiljem ilmunud terve hulk. Toon vaid mõned uurimistöö suundi ja huvi globaalsust iseloomustavad näited. Volatiilsust Eesti parteisüsteemis võrrelduna teiste KIE riikidega käsitletakse näiteks Sarah Birch'i Ameerika Poliitikateaduste Assotsiatsiooni 97. aastakoosolekuks koostatud ettekandes „*Electoral Systems and Party System Stability in Post-Communist Europe*“⁸. Andres Kasekamp on käsitlenud üht rühma Eesti erakondadest – äärmusparempoolseid. Daniel Bochsler on uurinud häälte „raiskamise“ ja valimissüsteemi konsolideerumise temaatikat. Uute erakondade lavaletuleku eeldusi uutes demokraatias, kaasa arvatud Eestis analüüsib Margit Tavits⁹.

Antud töö kontekstis olulisele valimiseelistuste volatiilsusele on pühendatud ka rida hilisemaid Tartu Ülikooli bakalaureusetöid (Peep Purje, 2001; Iti Vanaküla,

Europe, Routledge, 2001; R. Rose, N. Munro. *Elections and Parties in New European Democracies*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press, A Division of Congressional Quarterly, 2003; S. Jungerstam-Mulders. (ed). *Post-communist EU member states: party and party systems*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.

⁸ <http://www2.essex.ac.uk/elect/database/papers/SBvolatility.pdf>

⁹ A. Kasekamp. Extreme-right parties in contemporary Estonia. *Patterns of Prejudice*, Vol. 37, No. 4, 2003: 401-414; D. Bochsler. The „normalisation“ of Party Systems and Voting Behaviour in Eastern Europe. *Romanian Journal of political Science*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 2005: 54-74; M. Tavits. Party Systems in the Making: the Emergence and Success of

2006). Magistritöö tasemel on erakondi Tartu Ülikoolis, tõsi, rohkem politoloogilisest aspektist käsitlenud ka Kaili Roopalu („Parteide arvu ja suurima partei suuruse suhe parlamentides“, 2002). Akadeemiliselt on käsitletud Eesti erakondade õiguslikku seisundit (Leif Kalev, 1999), konkurentsi (Kadri Vilder, 2002), liidrite ja kandidaatide värbamis- ning selekteerimisstrateegiat (Riho Kangur, 2004; Maris Lindmäe, 2005; Andres Korberg, 2005; Küllicki Kübarsepp, 2006), turundustegevust (Eveli Kuklane, 2005; Helen Kõvask, 2006), ideoloogiat (Evelyn Kaldoja, 2003; Siim Tiidemann, 2003; Rannar Vassiljev, 2004; Priit Pruul, 2005; Tõnu-Eerik Liivak, 2007; Juhan-Markus Laat, 2007), finantseerimist (Reet Müür, 2003), koalitsioone (Kaili Roopalu, 1999; Mirjam Allik, 2004), erakondade representatsioone meedias (Marko Ojakivi, 2004), konkreetseid poliitilisi jõude (Ingrid Laidvee, 1998; Priit Simson, 2005; Raul Ranne, 2006) ning erakondlikke ajakirjandusväljaandeid (Helle Torm, 2006). Nagu loetelust näha, käsitleb valdav osa hiljem tehtud uurimusi erakondi endid, mitte valijaskonna suhtumist ja hoiakuid erakondade suhtes, erakondade juurdumist valijaskonnas.

Rida akadeemilisi töid (valdavalt bakalaureusetöö tasemel) on puudutanud Eesti poliitilise kultuuri üksikuid karakteristikuid nagu usaldus institutsioonide vastu (Piia Paasma, 2002; Maarja Lühiste, 2007), Eesti valimissüsteem (Piret Paljak, 1998; Andrus Männik, 2003; Katrin Pajula, 2005; Riina Tallo, 2005; Priit Vinkel, 2006), valimistel osalemine (Marti Taru magistritöö, 1997; Urmas Kask, 1998; Alliki Koka, 1998; Rain Rosimannus, 2001; Elvis Joakit, 2007), valimiseelistuste mõjurid (Triin Kask, 2004; Kadri Lühiste, 2004) ning Eesti demokratiseerumine üldisemalt (Liina Kirsipuu, 2000; Sven Illing, 2002; Maria Savisaar, 2004; Siim Ausmees, 2005; Reelika Väljaru, 2003 ja magistritöö 2006; Klaus-Amandus Jõgi, 2006; magistritööd – Anneli Tarkmeel, 2001, Reesi-Reena Runnel, 2004, Kats Kivistik, 2007, Irja Toots, 2007).

Teiseks, eelnevast tulenevalt on käesoleva töö puhul tegu olulise esmase referentspunktiga järgnevatele Eesti erakonnastumist käsitlevatele sotsioloogilistele uurimustele muutunud sotsiaalses kontekstis – viimase viie aasta

avalikus arvamuses on domineerinud pigem ülepolitisiseerumise ja ühiskonna liigse erakonnastumise hirmud ning teemad.

Kolmandaks, uurimuse kodanikupositsiooni ja eeldatava mõju osas. Autor sai tõuke uurimuse teostamiseks avalikkuses, aga ennekõike Eesti erakondade enesepildis laialt levinud arusaamast, et erakonnastumine on Eestis piisavalt kaugele arenenud. Selline arusaam kätkes endas ohtu poliitilise süsteemi stabiilsusele ja mitmeparteilise demokraatia väljaarenemise väljavaadetele Eestis. Antud uurimus ilmus esimeses versioonis esmakordselt 1993. aastal eesti keeles ja eesti ajakirjanduses ning eeldatavalt mõjutas nii erakondade enesepilti kui ka käitumist eneste kui institutsioonide arendamisel ning tihedamate ja laiemate sidemete arendamisel valijaskonnaga.

Töö loodab ergutada avalikku ja teaduslikku debatti Eesti viimase 15 aasta erakondliku arengu ning erakondade ja erakonnastumise tuleviku ning väljavaadete üle oluliselt muutunud kohalikus ja globaalses sotsiaalses kontekstis.

Küsimusi, mille üle juurelda on enam kui küll. Nii näiteks on Eesti erakonnastumise teel mõnede indikaatorite osas liikunud Lääne-Euroopa viimase 20 aasta trendiga selgelt vastassuunas.

1994. aastal oli Eestis Tiina Raitviiru andmetel erakondlike või proto-erakondlike ühenduste liikmeid **15 769**. Tegemist on kohati hinnanguliste numbrite kokkuliitmisega, algandmed pärinevad ühendustelt endilt ega ole kontrollitavad. Pigem võib oletada, et ühendused on neid näidanud tegelikest suurematena¹⁰. Valimisealistest kodanikest moodustas see **2,13%** (suhe on arvutatud 1992. ja 1995. Riigikogu valimistel osaleda saanud valimisõiguslike valijate keskmisest e 739 816 valijast, allikana kasutatud Vabariigi Valimiskomisjoni kodulehekülge www.vvk.ee). 2003. aastaks on äriregistri andmetel ametlikult registreeritud erakondadel liikmeid kokku **38 920** ehk võrreldes 1994. aastaga rohkem kui kaks korda enam. Ka osakaal valimisealistesse kodanikesse on kasvanud samal määral – **4,53%**ni (valimisõiguslikke kodanikke aastal 2003 on 859 714). 2008. aasta 1. jaanuari seisuga on äriregistris aga juba **50 398** erakonnaliiget ehk omakorda ligi

¹⁰ T. Raitviir. Eesti üleminekuperioodi valimiste (1989-1993) võrdlev uurimine. Rahvusvaheliste ja Sotsiaaluuringute Instituut, 1996: 114-115.

30% rohkem kui 2003. aastal (sealjuures 2004-2008 kasv langeb eranditult viie tänase parlamendipartei arvele, vaid Sotsiaaldemokraatlik Partei pole parlamendiväliste erakondadega sarnaselt suutnud oma liikmeskonda sel ajavahemikul oluliselt kasvatada). Erakondlaste osakaal on kasvanud **5,62%**ni valimisõiguslikest kodanikest (valijaid 2007 – 897 243). Kokku on erakonnaliikmete arv võrreldes 1994. aastaga seega kasvanud rohkem kui kolm korda.

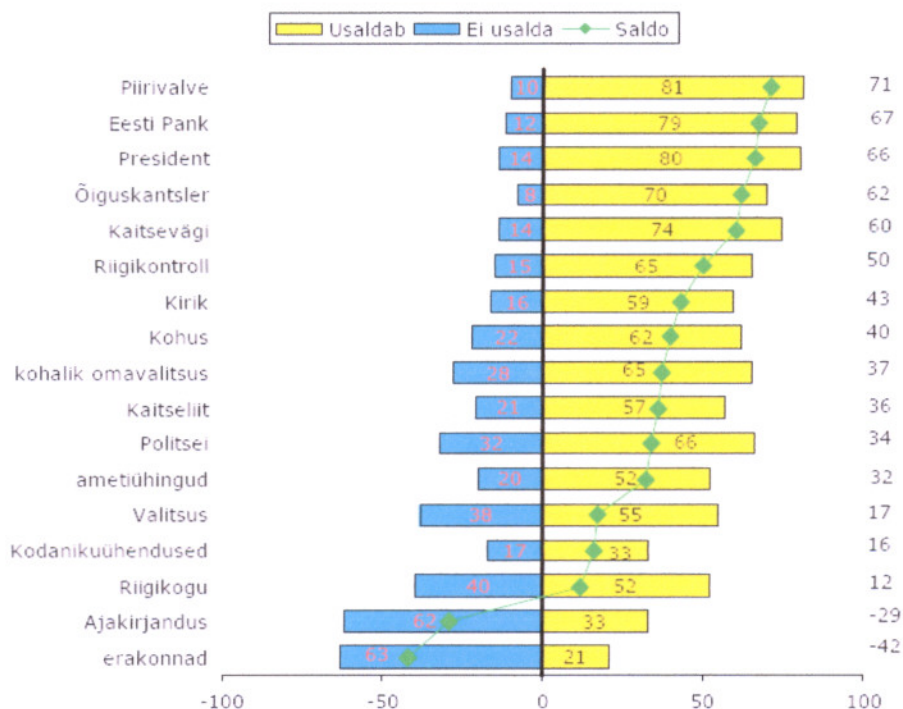
Peter Mair ja Ingrid van Biezen näitavad¹¹, et Lääne-Euroopa vanades demokraatiates (kelle hulka ei saa lugeda Portugali, Kreekat ja Hispaaniat) on trend täpselt vastupidine – sealjuures ei vähene erakonnaliikmete arv mitte üksnes suhteliselt (osakaaluna valimisõiguslikest kodanikest), vaid ka absoluutarvudes. YLE andmetel vähenes ainuüksi 2007. aastal Soomes poliitiliste parteide liikmeskond kokku rohkem kui 8 000 liikme võrra, parteilaste arv väheneb juba alates 1980. aastatest. Kui veel ligi 30 aastat tagasi ulatus erakonda kuuluvate inimeste arv põhjanaabritel üle 600 000, siis praegu on parteide nimekirjades kokku vaid 300 000 liiget (YLE uudised 2008). Võrdlemaks meie tänast olukorda muu Euroopaga, toon Mairi ja van Biezen'i raamatust siinkohal paar arvu. Euroopa kõrgeim suhtelise erakonnastumise näitaja on Austrias, kus erakonna liikmete osakaal elektoraadis hilistel 1990ndatel oli 17,66%. Madalaim näitaja vanadest Euroopa demokraatiatest on Prantsusmaal – 1,57%. Uurimusse oli lisatud ka neli Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopa riiki (Slovakkia, Tšehhi, Ungari ja Poola), kellest kõrgeim otsese erakonnastumise näitaja oli Slovakkial (4,11%) ja madalaim Poolal (1,15%). Kõigi 20 uurimusse mahtunud Euroopa riigi keskmine näitaja oli 4,99%. Erakonnaliikmete vähenemise tendents ei puudutanud Mairi ja van Biezeni andmetel nõ nooremaid demokraatiasid – Portugali, Kreekat, Hispaaniat ning käsitletud Kesk- ja Ida-Euroopa riikidest Slovakkia ja Ungarit (Tšehhis langes nagu vanas Euroopas ja Poola kohta polnud piisavalt andmeid). Eesti paistab nende numbrite valguses täna parteistunum kui keskmine Euroopa riik ja trendidelt sarnane pigem noortele Euroopa demokraatiatele.

Objektiivseid märke Eesti ühiskonna erakonnastumise edenemisest alates 1993 on muidki. 2005. aasta suvel puhkes õiguskantsler Allar Jõksi initsiatiivist pöörduda

¹¹ P. Mair, I. van Biezen. Party Membership in Twenty European Democracies, 1980-2000. *Party Politics*, Vol. 7, No.1, 2001: 5-21.

usaldas erakondi kui institutsioone **alla 10%** Eesti valimisealisest elanikkonnast ja erakonnad olid kõige vähem usaldatud Eesti institutsioonid (vt töö alusartiklit „*Political Parties: Identity and Identification*“, *Nationality Papers*, Vol. 23, No, 1, 1995: 33), siis viimased on nad usalduse poolest ka 2005. aastal, kuid usalduse nivoo on oluliselt tõusnud – **21%-le** (vt allolevat joonist).

Joonis. Institutsioonide usaldusväarsus 2005. a. oktoobris



Allikas: Uuringukeskus Faktum, 2005. Projekti raportist „Demokraatia ja rahvuslikud huvid. Eesti ühiskond – 2005. Sotsioloogiliste küsitluste materjalid ja projekti töörühma analüüsid“, Avatud Eesti Ühiskonna Instituut: Tallinn 2006. 6. „*Avalik arvamus ja riigivõimu usaldusväarsus*“, Juhan Kivirähk.

http://www.oef.org.ee/_repository/Document/DeMo_taispikk_version.pdf

2006. aasta detsembris usaldas Faktumi küsitluse järgi erakondi **27%** Eesti valimisealistest elanikest ja 2007. aasta detsembris koguni **29%** (Faktum).

Kahjuks ei ole partei-identifikatsiooni näitajate osas Eesti kohta autorile teadaolevalt värskemaid avalikke andmeid. Raamatus „*Citizens and the State*“ analüüsivad Hermann Schmitt ja Sören Holmberg 15 riigi partei-identifikatsiooni näitajate muutumist pärast II maailmasõda ning jõuavad tulemusele, et ühest pilti on raske välja tuua (*Part II. Political Linkage. Political Parties in Decline?*)¹². Kui osades riikides on jälgitav aeglane ja pidev parteilise enesemääratluse languse

¹² H.D. Klingemann, D. Fuchs (eds). *Citizens and the State*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1995: 95-133.

tendents ja osades liiguvad näitajad tsükliliselt üles-alla, on uuemates demokraatiates (nagu Hispaania) hoopis tõusuteel

Selline Lääne-Euroopa partei-identifikatsiooni näitajate muutumine riigiti sarnaselt erakonnaliikmete muutumise dünaamika mustriks (enamuses vanades demokraatiates on paigal või langeb, aga suhteliselt noores demokraatias, Hispaanias tõuseb), sunnib tuleviku tarbeks püstitama laiemat hüpoteesi – kas kogu erakonnastumise näitajate languse taga pole mitte üksainus tegur – konkreetsete riikide erakondade kui institutsioonide madal kohanemisvõime moodsa maailmaga? Kas kogu see ažuur ja teaduslik diskursus erakondade languse üle pole mitte lihtsalt atrofeerinud ja viletsa kohanemisvõimega Lääne-Euroopa vanade demokraatiade hädade ebaproportsionaalne võimendamine?

Kõige inspireerivamaid edasiarendusvõimalusi pakub selles võtmes Allan Siku doktoritöös välja pakutud teoreetiline kontseptsioon „projektist“ (lk. 32-34) kui iseseisvast erakonna ressursist. Märke ja viiteid Eesti erakondade poliitilise tegevuse projektipõhistumisest on mitmeid. Üksikud poliitilised algatused tõstetakse erakondade poolt kiiresti avalikkuse orbiiti ja kaovad sealt sama kiiresti. Sageli on need algatused nõrgalt seotud erakonna kehtivate formaalsete poliitiliste programmidega, kohati isegi neist lahknevad. Kogu selle muundumise taga näib olevat meediaruumi muutus, millest kõnelevad käesoleva Sissejuhatuse alguses viidatud raamatus ka Dalton ja Wattenberg – meedia agressiivne nihkumine poliitilisele väljale, erakondade suurenenud sõltuvus meediast, uute meediavormide pealetung (online, blogid) ja inforuumi küllastumine. Erakonnad on pideva surve all täita operatiivselt uudisteruumi ja peavad oma hääle kuuldavaks tegemiseks, „nähtavuse filtri“ (*visibility filter*, Allan Siku doktoritöö, lk 29) läbimiseks tegema igapäevaselt meeletuid ponnistusi. Nii paisatakse eetrisse lühiajalisi poliitilisi kampaaniaid, et korjata kiiresti ära igapäevane kiire avaliku arvamuse toetuse annus, üksikute huvide ja poliitikate ühtesidumine järjepidevaks ideoloogiaks muutub järjest vähemtähtsamaks.

Kas ei tulegi erakondliku tegevuse projektipõhistumist vaadelda kui erakondade kohanduvat vastust muu ühiskonnaelu meeletule moderniseerumisele?

Lääne-Euroopa „vanade demokraatiate“ ja Eesti trendide vastassuunalisust silmas pidades on paslik küsida: kas me peaks ootama tulevikus ka Eestis erakonnastumise taandumist? Kas ja mis hetkel saabub Eestisse erakondade languse faas? Või on Eesti erakonnad, olles endiselt noored ning sunnitud algusest peale toime tulema ülidünaamilises ja kiirelt moderniseeruv keskkonnas vanadest etableerunud Euroopa erakondadest suutlikumad üha keerulisemate väljakutsetega toime tulemisel? Kas need jooned, mida avalikkus Eesti erakondadele sageli ette heidab (amerikaniseerumine, turunduslikkus, äriorganisatsioonile sarnaste juhtimisvõtete ja organisatsioonimudeli rakendamine, projektistumine, professionaalsuse ja tõhususe esiletõstmine osalemise arvelt) pole hoopis erakondade vastus moderniseerumise survele, ainus viis oma rolli säilitamiseks pluralistliku demokraatia keskse hammasrattana? On's Eesti (ja Kesk- ning Ida-Euroopa) erakondlik demokraatia pigem katselabor uue erakonnatüübi väljaaretamisel? Kas erakondade tegevus kohandub suuresti projektipõhiseks, jätmata ruumi ennustatud üksikküsimuste-kesksetele ajutiste (*single issue*) rühmituste esilekerkimiseks ning erakondade hukku oodanud teoreetikud jäävad taas kaotajaiks? Erakondade eeliseks on pika-ajaliselt kogunenud ressursid oskuste, struktuuri, inimeste, finantside jmt näol. Kas läheb nii, et erakonnad kui poliitikatööstuse ettevõtted jäävad, kuid muutub nende toodangu sisu? Kas läheb nii, et üksik-küsimuste rühmi ei tulegi, selle asemel transformeeruvad erakonnad ise erinevate üksik-küsimuste edendamise kontsernideks?

Küsimusele, kuhu me suundume, annavad loodetavasti vastuse tulevased uurimistööd. Käesolev töö aitab heita valgust sellele, kust me tuleme.

Töö on jaotatud Sissejuhatuseks, autori *European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH)* B kategooria nimestiku ajakirjas *Nationality Papers* 1995. aastal ilmunud artikli „**Political Parties: Identity and Identification**“ äratrükiks ning kokkuvõtteks. Töö lisadena on esitatud äratrükid kahest teisest autori kaasosalusel ilmunud teadusartiklist. Neist esimene "The Premises for Democracy: A Study of Political Values in Post-Independent Estonia," (ERIH B kategooria ajakirjas *Journal of Baltic Studies*, kaasautorid Juhan Kivirähk ja Indrek Pajumaa) ilmus 1993. aastal ning seda võib vaadelda ka käesoleva töö eelloo või I osana. Artikkel käsitleb Eesti valijaskonna poliitilise kultuuri

karakteristikuid vahetult pärast esimesi põhiseaduslikke erakondlikke valimisi Eestis aastal 1992. Teine kirjatöö, peatükk „*Estonia*“ tunnustatud rahvusvahelise sotsiaalteaduslike väljaannete kirjastuse ABC-Clio kaheköitelises väljaandes „*Public Opinion and Polling Around the World. A Historical Encyclopedia*“ ilmus aastal 2004 (kaasautor Mikk Titma). Peatükk kirjeldab muuhulgas aastatel 1988-2003 Eesti poliitilist protsessi, sealhulgas erakonnastumist mõjutanud avaliku arvamusruumi väljakujunemist ning võtab kokku Eesti avalikku arvamust polariseerinud ning erakonnamaastikku liigendanud põhiküsimused.

**ARTIKKEL „POLITICAL PARTIES: IDENTITY AND
IDENTIFICATION“**

POLITICAL PARTIES: IDENTITY AND IDENTIFICATION

Rain Rosimannus

In Estonia, parties have, within a short period of time and with little trouble, assumed a dominating position in the political process.

In 1988 the Popular Front was founded (officially in support of Mikhail Gorbachev and *perestroika*), and the first (but not registered) opposition—the Estonian National Independence Party—appeared shortly thereafter. The first parliamentary election after the recovery of independence was held in 1992, making use of an electoral system which virtually excluded the election of independent candidates to the parliament and made it hard for small parties to get in. Now, in 1994, a law on political parties is being debated which is likely to provide for government funding of those parties represented in parliament.

Unfortunately, parties have started much too soon to take this privilege for granted. Their self-confident manner leaves one with an impression that most of them proceed from the false assumption that, if parties in the political system have already developed firm and irreversible roots in Estonia, the only question now is who will win the day. In a sense, this illusion is supported by the press as well as by the monthly poll rankings.

I will now show that the high self-esteem and ambitions of the parties conflict to a great degree with public opinion. Beneath Castle Toompea,¹ the population views the spectacle of parliament with indifference, or, at best, irony. Relying upon empirical data gathered by the public opinion firm EMOR,² I will examine the public attitudes towards political parties, the possible reasons for each attitude, and how far the Estonian multi-party system has actually developed. Or, if that is the case, how weak the foundation of our parties may be at present. This should provide an idea of the actual status and importance of monthly party rankings. But first, a few words about the theoretical aspect of the problem.

The Two Levels of a Multi-Party System: The formation of a multi-party system can be described on two levels: the institutional and the so-called “grassroots” level. The former concerns the existence and types of party organizations, their internal structures, positions on different ideological scales and in relation to the whole political process; the type of system (two-party or multi-party system), the polarization of the party system, *etc.* This approach is party-centered, and evidently underlies most of the more optimistic assessments of the Estonian party system.

This formal aspect of the formation of a multi-party system, however, acquires substantial meaning only when we consider it in conjunction with the development of

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a party system on the "grassroots" level. It is on the grassroots level that the popular trust in parties—that on which the above-mentioned institutional constructions of a political system rely—is best studied. Such a voter-centered approach seeks to answer questions about the prestige of parties, and whether the society is ready to trust the parties with representing its political interests.

On Party Identification: One of the most widely used empirical indicators showing the strength of the ties between parties and the public is the so-called party identification or party loyalty indicator. In brief, this indicator shows how many people have found a party with which they feel a certain psychological closeness.³

Technically, party identification is measured by asking the person whether he considers himself close to any particular party. Depending on whether the answer is "yes" or "no," the respondents are divided into party identifiers and non-identifiers. The former are also asked about the intensity of their support, on the basis of which strong identifiers (*very close to* or *somewhat close to*) are distinguished from weak identifiers (*merely sympathize*).

Estonia and Western Europe: The following table renders the indicators of Estonia's party identification the way they stood last year during the April poll by

	Total Number of Identifiers (%)	Strong Identifiers (%)
Holland	76	27
Denmark	68	33
Portugal	68	10
Greece	65	30
West Germany	58	28
Italy	55	32
Belgium	55	22
Great Britain	54	41
France	52	15
Luxembourg	47	17
Spain	40	14
Ireland	37	24
EC 1992 average	56	30
Estonia 1993	13	7
Estonians in Estonia	17	9
Non-Estonians in Estonia	7	4

Source: Eurobarometer 1992 and EMOR Omnibus Survey 1993 (April)

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EMOR. Taking into account the ultimate political goals of Estonia, the results have been compared with the 1992 readings of the twelve European Community member states. The only European Community member state which Estonia slightly resembles in number of strong identifiers is Portugal. However, the similarity vanishes once we compare the total amount of identifiers, which is over five times larger in Portugal

Estonia and Eastern Europe: The comparison with Western Europe is without doubt as illustrative as it is inappropriate, considering the tremendous contextual differences. For it is clear that one should not expect anything better given so short a period of time. Or should one? Let us look at the following table providing a comparison with some Central European states that used to belong to the sphere of influence of the former Soviet Union.

	Total Number of Identifiers (%)
The Czech Republic 1993	36
Slovakia 1993	31
Hungary 1992	23
Poland 1992	13
Estonia 1993	13
Estonians in Estonia	17
Non-Estonians in Estonia	7

Source: Fessel + Gfk, Politische Kultur, and EMOR Omnibus Survey 1993 (April)

Thus we see that in Eastern Europe, Estonia could be compared only with Poland. Poland's political landscape, however, is evidently one of the most fragmented in the region (the parliament dissolved in 1993 consisted of over thirty parties). Of course, even with the so-called Visegrad countries one has to take into account the fact that, unlike Estonia, they enjoyed a certain degree of independence even before *perestroika* and had, at least formally, something like a multi-party system.

At this point, one might ask whether the importance attached to just one indicator has been too great, or whether the situation has been dramatized. In order to answer the question, let us look at the function of party identification: namely, in what respect are the identifiers with certain parties considered better for the society than non-identifiers.

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The Function of Party Identification: One of the most important functions of political parties is their socialization effect—the integration of the citizenry into the political system.⁴ Some find that identification with one or another party also involves the emergence of positive attitudes towards the political system within which the given party operates. Thus, the development of the multi-party system, in an indirect way, produces citizens who trust the current political regime and are loyal to it. Weak party identification, on the contrary, leaves ample space for the growth of political cynicism.⁵

Research gives reason to claim that party identifiers are generally more active voters and take a greater interest in election campaigns and election returns than non-identifiers.⁶ Falling indicators of party identification, however, testify to either the growth of political apathy or the spread of protest which may endanger the current political order.⁷ In short, a person's identifying with a party works towards the stability of individual voting behavior. The smaller the amount of party identifiers, the more unstable are election preferences, the better are the chances of new parties, the more scattered the party system will be, and the more difficult it will be to put together coalitions and to form an effective government.

A clearly substantiated function of party loyalty is the mobilization of people into well-tested forms of political participation. It is also a firm foundation for their party preferences. In general, party identification is directly related to the stability of the party system, and indirectly to the stability of the whole political order.⁸

Parties into the Dustbin of History? In countries with a stable democracy, the decline of parties has been a favorite subject for some time. It is often predicted that due to the general rise in educational standards, the growing influence of mass media, the emergence of post-materialistic values, and the spread of political skills and new forms of political participation, a class of young, educated, politically skillful and self-confident "new citizens" (Samuel Barnes' term)⁹ is about to be born. This new class feels less need for political organizing or stable ties with parties.¹⁰ The post-party era is also described as a free market of votes where issue-voting dominates.¹¹

Will the future indeed belong to political unions of another type that will emerge to solve a concrete problem and will dissolve as soon as the purpose is accomplished? Maybe it makes no sense to waste energy and to resuscitate obsolete institutions in Estonia if posterity will take no heed of them anyway? Unfortunately, the theory of the decline of parties has yet found very little credible empirical corroboration.¹² And even if the theory should prove correct, the rise of the hegemony of "new citizens" will take a long time and the conservatism that grows together with age may well have had its effect by that time.

"Pre-Party" Estonia: Nevertheless, it seems that "pre-party" Estonia is in a sense similar to the already described "post-party" condition. The indicators of party identification are extremely low while the volatility of party preferences is very great. In the poll conducted five months after the 1992 parliamentary elections, only 44 percent

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of voters had stuck with their earlier choice, whereas the sympathies of the remaining 56 percent had already changed.¹³ By way of comparison, let us take the all-time high volatility of post-war Western Europe set by Danish voters in 1973. By that time, 40 percent of Danish voters had changed their preferences expressed at the elections two years earlier.¹⁴

We do not have to go too far to find an example of the openness of Estonia's political system to new and unconventional political alliances, to the spread of "unpolitical" attitudes or cynicism: we need only recall the success of the Royalists¹⁵ and the "Estonian Citizen"¹⁶ at the previous elections. The fact that the parties existing today have only been able to attract a small percentage of the population leaves ample room for ever more radical newcomers. Besides the anemic evolution of the multi-party system, the role of propaganda has become extremely vital in filling the gap between the parties and the voters. During the last elections, one of the largest parties at that time ("Pro Patria")¹⁷ was formed only in the course of the campaign.

When it comes to issue-voting, its existence during the last elections cannot be verified by the research data. Instead, the domination of person-oriented (the candidate's personality) voting behavior seems apparent. This fact sharply distinguishes the present situation in Estonia from the description of the post-party era. It is not the self-confident "new citizens" but rather their opposites that dominate today's electorate.

More About Popular Attitudes: In addition to the central indicator of the evolution of the party system—party identification—EMOR has at its disposal a number of other indicators supporting the position of this article.

Trust in parties as institutions: In the December 1992 poll, political parties and movements ranked last among the 14 institutions featured in the confidence ratings of the whole population. Only every tenth Estonian and every twentieth non-Estonian believed in parties. For the non-Estonians, the parties were the last on the list. The only institution Estonians trusted less than parties were the Russian troops in Estonia. The police, the court system as well as trade unions were all placed higher.¹⁸

Attitudes towards party elections: In 1989–1993, two-thirds of the population supported the multi-party system as a principle necessary for the development of democracy.¹⁹ Nevertheless, 62 percent of the people who voted at the September 1992 elections would have preferred a choice between individual candidates to a choice between parties. A mere 15 percent of voters preferred party-oriented elections.²⁰

Types of voting behavior: In the post-election poll, the voters were asked to provide motives for their preferences. The factor analysis based on motivations deduced three principal factors the people based their choice on: person, election coalition, and chance/protest. Grouping the electorate, it appeared that the personal factor dominated with 52 percent of the voters, and the election coalition with 31 percent. The preferences of 8 percent were determined by either protest or random choice.²¹ One should bear in mind that the political activeness of those who voted was above average.

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The popularity of politicians: In the popularity poll conducted in February 1993 Estonians mostly preferred the politicians whom the respondents did not connect with any political party, or could not yet relate to the recently formed major alliances (government coalition and opposition). The rating of the politicians whom the public knew to be closely connected with some party was considerably lower.²² In that sense the only exception among the first twelve politicians mentioned by Estonians was Jüri Toompeuu,²³ And even he was then the leader of an anti-party movement. In February Toompeuu's closer relations with the opposition were still taking shape.

The case of the Estonian Citizens' Union: Immediately after the elections, 9–12 percent of the respondents would have voted for the Estonian Citizens' Union which confronted all parties and resembled a popular movement. In the party ratings of late 1992 and early 1993, the above percentage would have granted the Citizens' Union first place.²⁴ The popularity of the Estonian Citizens' Union lasted as long as Toompeuu—relatively independently—stood against the so-called traditional parties of Estonia. But the closer he moved to the opposition parties, the more the Citizens' Union and its leader lost their particular image and with it the support of the people. Since then, the Estonian Citizens' Union has, in the public's perception, degenerated into yet another minor party, enjoying the support of a mere 4–5 percent of the people, and has dropped down to the middle of the list of party preference.²⁵

Party awareness: Given the open-ended question, 11 percent of Estonians were unable to name even one Estonian political party. Another 23 percent knew one or two parties, although in actual fact over twenty exist. "Pro Patria" was the only party which more than 50 percent of the respondents were able to recall, though their attitude towards that party was predominantly negative.²⁶

The Party Rankings: Party rankings vividly show that Estonian party patterns stand, to a great extent, on a weak foundation. Or, to be more precise, the extensive fluctuation in polling results depends on whether or not the respondents have been provided with the list of the parties, and whether or not the card also includes the names of the leaders.

Here, one should emphasize that we are discussing a case in which all other conditions are equal: the sample is representative, the polls were conducted at the same time, and the respondents were posed the same question (*Please choose one party you would vote for if the elections took place tomorrow*). Thus there is no reason to doubt the reliability or comparability of the findings. Following are a few concrete examples.

March: EMOR Ltd

(pre-given full list with the names of 2–3 leaders after each party) other political organizations; includes only the name of the party without leaders)

Baltic Media Facts

(given 10 parties supported most in earlier polls, also possibility to offer all

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Citizens

"Pro Patria"	9	"Independent Royalists"	6
Citizens' Union	9	"Pro Patria"	15
Entrepreneurs' Party	9	Rural Union	10
Rural Union	9	Citizens' Union	5
Greens	7	People's Center Party	4
"Moderates"	7	"Moderates"	4
Other	37	Other	13
No preference	13	No preference	33

April: EMOR Ltd

(pre-given full list with
the names of 2-3
leaders after each
party)

Saar-Poll Ltd

(open-ended question, no
pre-given list)

Whole Population

"Secure Home"	10	Farmers' Assembly	10
Center Party	7	"Independent Royalists"	8
"Pro Patria"	7	Russian Democr. Movement	8
Entrepreneurs' Party	6	"Pro Patria"	7
"Independent Royalists"	5	Entrepreneurs' Party	4
Greens	5	"Secure Home"	4
Democratic Labor Party	5	Democratic Labor Party	4
Other	29	Other	8
No preference	26	No preference	48

Source: EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1993 (March, April) & Baltic Media Facts
NRS & TGI, 1993 (March) & Saar Poll Survey, 1993 (April)

As we see, the results differ to an extent that could never occur in countries with a stable, fully formed party system. The results differ in the amount of the people who expressed their preference, in the percentage of support to parties as well as in the ranking of parties.

As mentioned above, there is no reason to doubt the reliability of the findings. But interpretation of the results is quite another matter. We could explain the situation as follows: in one case, the formation of preferences was more influenced by the personalities of party leaders, in another, by the names of the parties, and in the third case, by the political sophistication of the respondents. The only explanation that applies to all three is the statement that the parties lack any real support. The preferences are

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formed at random or on the basis of secondary factors rather than proceeding from the parties themselves or from political interests. Thus, the first thought that may occur to one now is the conclusion that, in such a case, the monthly party ratings make no sense or have no meaning whatsoever. As a matter of fact, this is not the case; the discrepancies can be ascribed to the parties' own inconsistencies.

The Grandeur and Misery of Estonian Parties: The position of Estonian parties is characterized by a wide gulf between their legal and popular legitimacy. Despite the fact that the parties "enjoy" but weak and vague support and the people's trust in them is low, their influence over the development of society is disproportionately great and bolstered by legislation. The fact that the whole of the Estonian political system has been built up as if we had strong parties and that the organs of power are elected, and the fact that the policy is carried out on the basis of these greatly random party preferences, does attach practical significance to the party rankings that are formed on the basis of polls.

Of course, only the results of such polls where the situation the respondent has been placed in is identical to the actual electoral situation have any practical meaning. In practice, showing the pre-given complete list with the names of leaders seems to be the best approach. First, most probably, in nationwide election, scores of groups will be running for the organs of power, and the exclusion of a few smaller ones would promptly bring about the overrepresentation of the bigger ones in polls. And second adding the names of the leaders is advised since, at election time, the citizens get the lists of both the electoral association or party as well as of the persons put up as candidates, and the voter must make a choice only between the persons, and not the electoral associations.

The Strongest of the Weak: Which of the parties stands firmest at the moment? According to the membership figures, we could speak of only four parties in Estonia that reportedly have over 1000 members each: the Estonian National Independence Party, the Estonian Democratic Labor Party, "Pro Patria," and the Estonian Citizens' Union.

In order to gain a better understanding of the current prestige of the parties, let us return to party identification. The following table describes the results of the April 1993 poll by EMOR wherein the given percentages cover only the opinions of the citizens who participated in the 1992 parliamentary elections.

Two facts strike one as significant. First, the share of identifiers among the supporters is the largest with the two political groupings that have been operating the longest, the National Independence Party and the Center Party (if we consider it to coincide with the earlier Popular Front²⁷). Among the April electorate of all other parties, more than half were more or less "floating" voters.²⁸ Second, the larger the number of opponents of a party, the higher is the share of identifiers among the supporters (except in the case of the tiny Liberal Democratic Party). The relatively "young" and less distinctive or

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% Citizens Who Participated in the Last Elections and

	would have voted for that party in April	identify themselves with that party	share of identifiers among voters in April (B/A)	would on no account vote for that party
	(A)	(B)		
Center Party	5	2.9	56	14
National Independence Party	4	2.0	50	16
Pro Patria	8	2.9	35	21
Citizens' Union	4	1.4	33	11
Independent Royalists	7	2.2	33	7
Liberal Democratic Party	2	0.8	33	4
Democratic Labor Party	3	0.8	27	21
Entrepreneurs' Party	7	1.6	23	5
Pensioners' Union	3	0.6	20	3
Rural Center Party	1	0.2	20	5
"Estonian Greens"	4	0.8	19	3
Farmers' Assembly	3	0.6	19	2
Coalition Party	8	1.4	19	6
Rural Union	6	0.6	10	2
Social Democratic Party	4	0.2	5	6
Democratic Union	1	0.0	0	8
Average	4	1.2	27	8

Source: EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1993 (April)

conflict-inclined Rural Center Party, Social Democratic Party, Coalition Party and the Rural Union, on the contrary, rank the last. However, none of the parties has any reason to be too pleased. The average Estonian party may count on the support of around 4 percent of voters, with only one-quarter of them as identifiers.

What's the Matter? There are a number of possible reasons for the weak evolution of the multi-party system and the formation of the parties' images. The following are some of the reasons.

1) A historical stereotype of parties as hagglers, out of touch with the people, institutions out for their own interests, which is largely the result of the ultra-proportional election system of the 1920s.

2) The general distrust of all "public organizations" and all mediator-institutions that is inherited from the totalitarian past. It would be difficult to overestimate the role of

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the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in the discrediting of the very institution of political parties.

3) The originating mechanism of the parties—an overwhelming majority of parties have been created “from above” by a small group, not initially with the aim of solving specific problems concerning the public at large or in realizing their interests. Rather, the initiators were stimulated by the perception that the existence of parties was nominally necessary for the development of democracy. At the initial stage, voters were not mobilized, and most of these groupings have remained “pocket parties” of merely a few leaders.

4) The electorate lacks the experience of party-oriented elections, the experience of party democracy. The whole political development preceding September 1992 was overwhelmingly person-centered. All more or less free elections that took place before that time meant a choice between individual candidates.

5) The emergence of parties coincided with the beginning of economic decline and the retreat of national unity before pluralism. The nostalgic drift *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* is fully possible; parties allegedly cause recession.

6) Interests and interest groups have developed weakly; the process is hampered by the delay of proprietary reform. When real interests are not at stake, preference may be based on a prettier smile or a gentler voice of the candidate.

7) The party landscape is highly fragmented; the poor distinctiveness of the parties and their ideological instability render it difficult to take one's bearings in the multitude of parties in order to form stable party preferences. Most of the parties lack a clear-cut image. Although the purpose that had restrained the emergence of differences—regaining national independence—was already attained two and a half years ago; the parties' programs have not “grown up” yet. Mere labels say nothing to a considerable part of the voters.

All efforts to create a distinctive self-image are nullified by the ideological wavering of our young parties: the populist tactics in daily politics have led to a confusion among common voters. It is increasingly difficult for them to understand what one or another grouping stands for. The situation is made even more ambiguous by the fact that all too often the names of the parties do not correspond to their actual behavior in politics. The social democrats are rather social liberals; the Center Party calling itself centrist defends the interests of pensioners and non-Estonians for want of a middle class, *etc.* The merger of parties, the displaying of a distinct platform, adherence to the earlier advertised course would considerably increase the prospects of the emergence of a stable party system in Estonia.

8) A decrease of interest in and alienation from politics. While in June 1989 the percentage of Estonians interested in politics was 91, by May 1991 it had dropped to 75, by May 1992 to 65, and by October 1993 to as low as 43%.²⁹ This is a natural reaction to the over-politicizing of the “singing revolution” period. Unfortunately, it manifests itself in an aversive reaction to everything connected with politics, including parties. One

might say that parties did not make the best of an opportunity for securing their footing when it was still popular to be politically active.

9) The unsuccessful methods that have been used to develop a multi-party system. Above all, one should bear in mind the electoral system used at the September election in 1992. The voters were left with the impression that parties were forced upon them against their own will. Admitting the rationality of the aim of the authors of the election law (the development of the multi-party system), one cannot but concede that, even from that point of view, the compromise was a failure. The Estonian voter has not yet been forced to determine himself as either a supporter of some party or an independent (as in the USA). The choice between the parties (first one should choose the ballot of a list and after that a person included in it, as in Latvia) was not required in autumn 1992.

Keeping in mind the motive of reinforcing party patterns, purely party-oriented voting with a choice between full lists and not single candidates would have yielded a better result. In the case in question, though, citizens had to choose between persons; the results, however, were rendered as if the voters had made a conscious choice in support of some party. As a result, neither the voters' satisfaction (because the party politicians decided on what they wanted), nor the prompt erecting of a party system (because there was no need to make a choice between them), was achieved.

The image of the "party clique" was also boosted by insufficient inner-party democracy. The method of closed lists used at the 1992 election presupposes intraparty democracy. As far as is known, the only direct intraparty preliminary election was carried out within the Popular Front. And even this did not give the necessary effect of public control over putting up their candidates, since it is generally known that the number of party members is very small and is often restricted to the dedicated disciples of the party leader.

10) Weak links with the rural periphery: city-centralism. All Estonian parties are in trouble with establishing territorial nationwide branches. The party system will feel its legs only after the parties have given up being a phenomenon characteristic of the capital city, after they have proved their indispensability through the raising and solving of problems locally. Things will improve only when the future party leaders who crop up in other regions do not hasten to the capital before they have accomplished something in their local county, village or town. But nothing will change so long as the parties continue to communicate with the people only through official announcement briefings or visitations (reminiscent of Soviet propaganda).

To sum up, it can be said that in our treatment of the development of democracy and the multi-party system in Estonia, we are examining how a certain formal matrix, which can be designated "formal-democratic," gets associated with local practices and discourses dominating a society where democracy used to be lacking. Just how truly democracy and truly democratic political institutions will take root depends on how they are harmonized with the actual debates and how they are adapted thereafter.³⁰ A direct parallel can be drawn here with the attempts undertaken in the 1960s to export Western democracy to "third world countries." Although Estonians often wish to thin

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otherwise, it must be admitted that during the pre-war independence period (1918–1940), West European democracy (in the sense of a developed multi-party system) never managed to take hold in Estonia. During the ensuing fifty years of Soviet rule, even this imperfect democracy existed only in fading memories.

Conclusion: A comparison with the European Community countries has shown that Estonia is only just embarking on a course of democratic political institutionalization. Being an optimist, I hope the well-known American social scientist Converse is right in saying that a newly-born party system gets stronger with each subsequent generation and will achieve stability during the third generation.³¹

Yet things do not happen of themselves. Whether and how fast Estonia will proceed on that course depends on how effective the necessary processes are of adapting the formal-democratic matrix to native conditions and whether the political system services the citizens. It was precisely the desire of the political elite to achieve a quick admission into the European states system by means of simulating Western formal-democratic models that led to the failure to establish multi-party parliamentary democracy in the inter-war Republic of Estonia. In their haste to catch up, they not only ignored their own people with their unique patterns of behavior and thinking, but often tried to out-Europe Europe.³² The same danger threatens today—of more democratic facade than democratic substance.

NOTES

1. Toompea Castle—the seat of the Estonian parliament and Government.
2. Estonian Market and Opinion Research Centre Ltd., the biggest polling company in Estonia, founded in 1990, a full member of Gallup International.
3. Paul R. Abramson, *Political Attitudes in America. Formation and Change* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1983), p. 71.
4. S. Neumann, *Modern Political Parties* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1956).
5. A. H. Miller and O. Listhaug, "Political Parties and Confidence in Government: A Comparison of Norway, Sweden and the United States," *British Journal of Political Research*, No. 20, 1990, pp. 357–386.
6. A. Campbell, P. E. Converse, W. E. Miller, and D. E. Stokes, *The American Voter* (New York: John Wiley, 1960); S. Verba, N. Nie and J. O. Kim, *Participation and Political Equality* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1978); R. J. Dalton "Citizen Politics in Western Democracies," *Public Opinion and Political Parties in the United States, Great Britain, West Germany and France* (Chatham, NJ: Chatham House Publishers, 1988).
7. M. Kaase and S. H. Barnes, "In Conclusion: The Future of Political Protest in Western Democracies," *Political Action* (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1979); M. Kaase, "Mass Participation," *Continuities in Political Action* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989).
8. Hermann Schmitt and Sören Holmberg, "Political Parties in Decline?" Chapter Draft for Hans-Dieter Klingemann and Dieter Fuchs (eds.), *Citizens and State* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, forthcoming); Lecture at the IPSA-School of Political Science (Tallinn: Sakala Center, 1993), pp. 8–9.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 2.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 1.

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11. *Ibid.*, p. 4.
12. *Ibid.*, p.1-35.
13. EMOR Omnibus Survey, February, 1993, N = 1000.
14. Hans Jörgen Nielsen, "Danish Politics and Elections," Lecture at the IPSA-School of Political Science (Tallinn: Sakala Centre, 1993), p. 6.
15. A moderate party of political grotesque, propagating the idea of an Estonian Kingdom.
16. An electoral association representing national-fundamentalist views, inclined toward participial democracy and populism, the predecessor of the Estonian Citizens' Union.
17. The biggest ruling party, with 31 seats in the 101-seat parliament; it is a moderately nationalist coalition party formed through a merger of four little rightist parties before the 1992 election supporting a free market economy and the restitution of proprietary rights.
18. EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1992, December, N = 1000.
19. USIA Survey (conducted by EMOR), 1989, December, N = 1000; EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1990, February, N = 925; Basic Political Attitudes Survey (EMOR), 1991, March, N = 1554; USIA Survey (conducted by EMOR), 1993, July, N = 987.
20. National Election Survey (EMOR), 1992, September, N = 1128.
21. *Ibid.*
22. EMOR Omnibus, February, 1993, N = 1000.
23. Former emigre Estonian and US colonel who resettled in Estonia in 1992; founder and leader of both the electoral association "Estonian Citizen" and later of the Estonian Citizens' Union.
24. EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1992, November, N = 1000; EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1992, December, N = 1000; EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1993, January, N = 1000; EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1993, February, N = 1000.
25. EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1993, December, N = 1000; EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1994, January, N = 1000.
26. EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1993, November, N = 1000.
27. The Centre Party was formed on the basis of a section of the Popular Front at the initiative of one of the Popular Front leaders and in an abortive attempt to monopolize the image of the Popular Front by that party.
28. EMOR Omnibus Survey, 1993, April, N = 1000.
29. *The Balticom Project, Preliminary Report* (Tallinn: 1993).
30. Ahto Lobjakas, "The Mass public and the development of political institutions in Estonia since 1988," *Research Project granted by NATO, Preliminary Report* (Tallinn: 1993), p. 8; the research project is based on methodology developed from Michel Foucault's theory of discourses and praxes. By the term "matrix/discourse" is meant here a regime of meaning, always existing together with concrete form of everyday praxis, for present purposes defined as a framework legitimative rationalization signifying and articulating a particular political *modus vivendi*. Praxis is the material, behavioral part of discourse; praxis is inseparable from discourse, but the term discourse refers to a symbolic sphere interpreting or even allowing praxis.
31. Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, Jerrold G. Rusk, and Arthur C. Wolfe, "Continuity and Change in American Politics: Parties and Issues in the 1968 Election," *American Political Science Review*, No. 63, 1969, pp. 1083-1105.
32. In 1920 an ultra-proportional electoral law was passed which led to an unduly fragmented parliament and to frequent cabinet crises. This resulted in 1934 in the formation of an authoritarian regime in Estonia (the so-called "silent Era"). There has been speculation that the alienation of power from the people was in a way fateful for the Estonian State in 1939 when the Soviet Union forced its military bases upon the Estonian leadership.

Summary

The present thesis analyzes the process of democratization of Estonia concentrating on emergence of permanent links between the electorate and parties as political institutions. The main focus of present study lies on determining how widely and deeply rooted on the grass-roots level is the development of multi-party system in Estonia five years after the process of democratization started (in 1993).

Hypotheses have been tested against empirical evidence. There were expected to be no strong and persistent identification with political parties on the level of general public.

Hypotheses find some strong support from evidence ("Political Parties: Identity and Identification." Nationalities Papers 23, no. 1 (1995): 31, 33-34).

The study is based on concept of party-identification or party-loyalty and uses mainly datasets of Estonian Market and Opinion Research (EMOR) Ltd surveys carried out in 1993 or earlier.

L I S A D

LISA 1. *The Premises for Democracy: A Study of Political Values in Post-Independent Estonia*. JOURNAL OF BALTIC STUDIES. Vol. XXIV, No. 2 (Summer 1993)

THE PREMISES FOR DEMOCRACY:
A STUDY OF POLITICAL VALUES
IN POST-INDEPENDENT ESTONIA

Juhan Kivirahk, Rain Rosimannus, Indrek Pajumaa

On August 20, 1991, independent statehood was restored in Estonia, putting an end to the 50-year annexation by the Soviet Union. In both March 1991 and June 1992 national referendums, the population of Estonia reaffirmed their intention to restore the political and social order based on democratic principles and support individual freedoms.

But how soon can one expect democratic attitudes and a democratic political framework to take root in the Estonian political consciousness? Just a few years before the changes began, almost four in five Estonians felt that only socialism could guarantee the observance of human rights. In addition, political development in post-independent Estonia has been more concerned with the dissolution of the institutions imposed by the Soviet regime than with the creation of new democratic institutions, although Estonia also has the experience of the first independent Estonian statehood (1918-1940) to draw upon.

This examination of the changes in Estonian political values and attitudes during the last four years, 1988-1992, is based on the analysis of public opinion data collected by *Estonian Marketing and Opinion Research (EMOR)* and will show the extent of the changes and the implications for the development of a democratic political system in Estonia. Specifically, this study examines levels of political participation, political trust, and the formation of party systems.

In any study of public opinion, one can distinguish between different levels of influence on collective behavior. Vladimir Yadov, a Russian sociologist, has educed three levels: the traditional or mytho-ideological level, which regulates the relationship between the individual and society; the evaluative-normative level, which is characterized by norm-seeking behavior of people within society; and the purposeful-rational level, which represents stable, internal values.

On the surface, public opinion is mostly connected with attitudes regulating behavior. At the same time, the verbal expression of attitudes is considerably influenced by the evaluative-normative level (that which *should* be, or is deemed *normal* by society's changing standards). This may lead to differences between what attitudes people may express in an interview and how they have behaved/would actually behave.

Public opinion associated with certain topical issues is more volatile and may change significantly over time. Thus on the normative level, people may support democratization, but may be very far from accepting aspects of democratic thinking in their daily lives.

Attitudes will also be influenced by the new mythology of a democratic society, which, in turn, will form new societal norms of behavior. This is important because by restoring independence, one can formally restore the former social institutions and legislation, but it is a much more complex task with regard to the way people think—how they have been influenced by the previous mytho-ideological level and its norms of behavior. The restoration of democracy and its continuing existence require not only the acceptance of the "myth" of democracy, but also the formation of stable democratic values among the population.

Interest in Politics

In a stable society, how great an interest should there be in politics? The Polish sociologist Jerzy Wiatr believes that a person's lack of interest in politics is no more abnormal than a lack of interest in football (soccer). For comparison with Estonia, Finland serves as a good model of a stable society. In a recent poll conducted by Suomen Gallup, about half the population in Finland expressed an interest in politics. In Estonia, the interest in politics peaked during the events of 1988-1989. Lately, surveys have shown a decrease in interest to a level quite similar to that found in Finland. The decrease in interest was found both among Estonians and non-Estonians:

Table 1. Interest in Politics, June 1989-Sept. 1992

By Estonians	June 1989	March 1991	April 1992	November 1992
Very interested	43%	27%	20%	8%
Somewhat interested	48	51	50	44
Not very interested	8	16	24	33
Not at all interested	1	5	5	12
By Non-Estonians				
Very interested	25%	20%	12%	12%
Somewhat interested	49	55	49	39
Not very interested	19	17	27	32
Not at all interested	6	6	9	17

Political Participation

Along with interest in politics, participation in political activities has also declined. The decline is particularly noticeable in the most active forms of participation (demonstrations, marches, pickets), while levels of less active forms of participation have stayed about the same (Table 2).

**Table 2. Political Participation in Estonia by Ethnic Estonians,
March 1991 and April 1992**

	I have done it, I am doing it		I have never done it, but might		I would never do it	
	March 91	April 92	March 91	April 92	March 91	April 92
Discuss politics with others	84%	73%	5%	6%	6%	11%
Take part in political demonstrations	25%	15%	31%	20%	35%	48%
Act in support of a political candidate	13%	5%	21%	11%	46%	56%
Participate in activities of a political party	6%	3%	24%	11%	51%	62%

The level of participation by non-Estonians has also dropped. However, it should be noted that only citizens of Estonia had the right to take part (predominantly Estonians, representing about 70% of the voting age population):

**Table 3. Political Participation in Estonia by Non-Estonians,
March 1991 and April 1992**

	I have done it, I am doing it		I have never done it, but might		I would never do it	
	March 91	April 92	March 91	April 92	March 91	April 92
Discuss politics with others	78%	60%	5%	5%	10%	11%
Take part in political demonstrations	16%	8%	11%	10%	61%	53%
Act in support of a political candidate	19%	7%	11%	5%	54%	52%
Participate in activities of a political party	7%	2%	6%	3%	73%	61%

One of the main reasons for the decline in participation was that once the primary political goal—*independent statehood*—was attained, domestic problems such as the state of the economy and social welfare became more important. People also became disillusioned with the political infighting which followed Estonia's independence. Giving up the sweet feeling of unanimity of the "singing revolution" was painful for most.

Despite these indications of a drop in interest in politics and in levels of political activities, participation in the June 1992 referendum and September 1992 elections was rather high. It should be noted, however, that only citizens of the Republic of Estonia had the right to take part (representing about 60% of the voting age population). Of those entitled to vote, about two-thirds took part in the referendum and elections.

The least politically active part of the population in Estonia was among young people and non-Estonians. Among the most politically active, one could distinguish between two groups: middle-aged people with higher education and socio-economic status, and elderly people, most often pensioners.

Political Efficacy

The concept of political efficacy measures one's perceived impact (or lack thereof) on the political process. It has been used by Western political scientists to study relationships between the citizen and state and it has been theorized that people with high political efficacy appear to be more engaged in the democratic political process.

In past surveys of Estonia, two types of political efficacy were measured: internal efficacy, which is when one believes that the means of influence are accessible; and external efficacy, the belief that the authorities or regime are responsive to influence. While one may argue that these measures are not as applicable in a country where Western democratic traditions have not existed for many years, it is still necessary to establish a baseline in order to measure change over time.

The level of political efficacy in Estonia (especially external efficacy) is quite low. On average, about 15% of Estonia's adult citizens consider themselves as having an impact on the political processes in their country. This situation is characteristic of the society and the stage of its evolution: the past regime has trained people to think that they have little influence on the political process. In addition, democratic institutions and procedures are still quite underdeveloped in Estonia.

While other measures of interest in politics or political participation have fallen, levels of political efficacy have remained fairly stable. Russians were likely to show fairly similar levels of political efficacy compared with Estonians (Table 4).

Some differentiation between different levels of political efficacy was accounted for by the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents. Those

with higher levels of education, middle-aged and male were more likely to consider themselves as having an impact on the political process.

Table 4. Political Attitudes in Estonia Among Estonians and Russians, April 1992 (Percentage disagreeing with statement)

	<u>Estonians</u>	<u>Russians</u>
Politics and government seem so complicated	12%	17%
People like me don't have any say in politics	16	15
Voting is the only way people can have a say in politics	19	26
Public officials don't care what people think	17	12

A cluster analysis of interest in politics, political participation (excluding voting) and political efficacy variables differentiated between three groups:

Table 5. Typology of Political Orientations in Estonia based on Cluster Analysis, 1992

"Sympathetic audience"	*Number of women exceeds the average *A third have only primary education and were 50 years or older *Group with the lowest monthly income *Most unable to define their world outlook	
<u>Size</u>	<u>32-46% of Estonians</u>	<u>32-39% of Russians</u>
"Activists"	*Number of males exceeds the average *More highly-educated *Most able to define their world outlook	
<u>Size</u>	<u>2-3% of Estonians</u>	<u>2-3% of Russians</u>
"Political nihilists"	*Number of males exceeds the average *Number of young people (below 24 years) exceeds the average *Highest monthly income	
<u>Size</u>	<u>20-25% of Estonians</u>	<u>9-10% of Russians</u>

The remainder of the population (32-48%) did not fall into a distinguishable group.

Political Trust

According to the American political scientists D. Eaton and J. Dennis, three different structures can be observed in a society's political system: *Political community*: a group of people who share a division of political labor; *Political regime*: a constitutional order in the broadest sense of the term, the underlying goals pursued by members of the system, the norms or rules by which they

conduct political affairs, and the formal or informal structures of authority that allocate responsibility or resources in the system; *Authorities*: those members of the system whose primary responsibilities lie in the activities of the political system, elected representatives and other public officials.

Eaton and Dennis also distinguished between two kinds of support: the specific, which is provided in return for satisfactory outputs; and the diffuse, which is the generalized trust or confidence that people have in different elements of the political system. In 1987-1992, profound changes took place in each of the above-mentioned elements of the political system in Estonia.

Political community: The first wave, the komsomol generation of the times of the "Prague Spring" (Popular Front) and the leaders of the Moscow Fifth Column (Interfront) emerged to replace the Communist party officials; the second wave consisted of expatriate Estonian politicians and the last wave, after the September 1992 elections, was comprised of young intellectuals (Pro Patria/Fatherland party).

Political regime: Up to 1990, the liberalization of the political regime took place within the institutional structures of the earlier regime (the Communist Party Central Committee, the Supreme Council and the Council of Ministers). As the communist monopoly on power ceased, mass political movements emerged. As the state power was relieved of ideology, decentralization began. The society began to move towards greater political and economic autonomy within the Soviet Union.

In the spring of 1990, a transition regime was declared with the goal of restoring independent statehood to Estonia. Two somewhat parallel power structures were formed—the Supreme Council and the Cabinet of the Republic of Estonia, which had emerged from the former structures and the alternative Council of Estonia and the Congress of Estonia, which took on the role of the opposition. Scores of new political parties were born. The authorities started forming political, economic and administrative structures of an independent state and for the transition to a market economy. The recent elections completed the third regime as the new constitution went into effect. The President of the Republic of Estonia and the new parliament, the State Assembly, assumed their duties. Its goals are to restore a stable democracy as a part of the European community of nations and to carry out political, social and economic reforms.

Authorities: Changes in the composition of public officials and the government were concurrent with changes on the community and regime levels of the political system. A number of changes have already taken place in higher governmental offices.

Political Changes and Ethnic Groups

There were substantial differences in support for political change between Estonians and non-Estonians. The changes in the political regime and community were carried out by the support of ethnic Estonians. In December 1988, following the declaration of independence, 80-90% of the Estonians believed that

the Supreme Council, Communist Party Central Committee and Council of Ministers were acting on the behalf of the people. A similar show of support was observed in September 1989 and after the elections in Spring 1990 and September 1992 (Figures 1 and 2).

Estonians' support for the general direction of change were manifested most clearly in critical situations such as the attempt to occupy the Parliament building in May 1990, the events in Vilnius and Riga in January 1991 and the August 1991 coup attempt. During these periods, Estonian support for the political regime reached the high levels first recorded in 1988. In the intervening periods, when threats to the ongoing political process were not so acute, the public's attention was refocused on the authorities' attempts to solve the most pressing social and economic issues.

FIGURE 1: How Much do the Activities of the Estonian Supreme Council Correspond with the People's Interests? December 1988 to May 1992

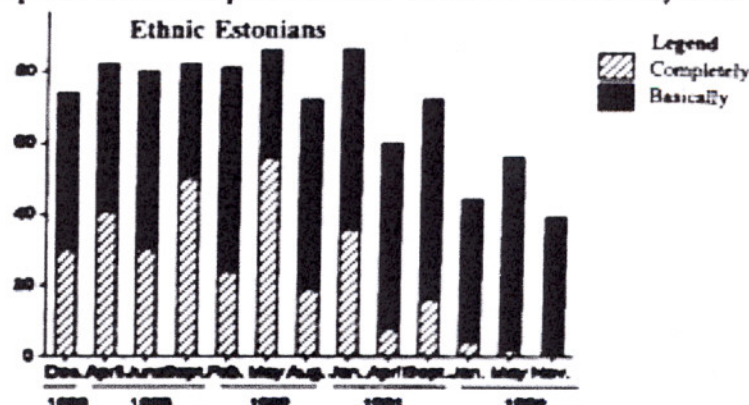
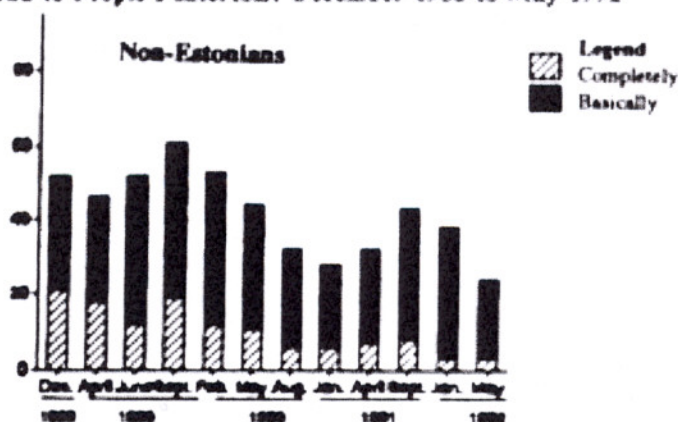


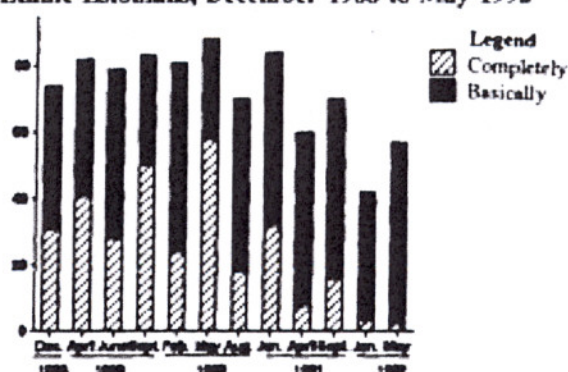
FIGURE 2: How Much do the Activities of the Estonian Supreme Council Correspond to People's Interests? December 1988 to May 1992



In general, the trend reflected changes in support for the political regime as a result of deepening economic problems and changes in the administration. Lack of support for the government was highest just before the September 1992 elections. Preceding the election, only 30-40% of Estonians believed that the government and Parliament were acting in the interests of the people.

FIGURE 3: How Much do the Activities of the Estonian Cabinet Correspond to the People's Interests?

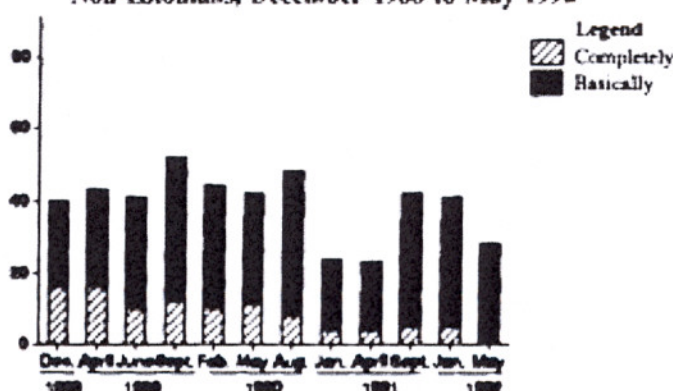
Ethnic Estonians, December 1988 to May 1992



For non-Estonians, the political situation was marked by two major changes: the political regime became ethnic Estonian-centered in 1988 and independent statehood was restored in 1991.

FIGURE 4: How Much do the Activities of the Estonian Cabinet Correspond with the People's Interests

Non-Estonians, December 1988 to May 1992



The first change (excluding the Economically Independent Estonia program) caused a negative reaction and a decrease in the support for the political regime. Since spring 1990, only 20-35% of non-Estonians believed that the authorities were acting in the interests of the people and on average, 50-60% did not trust

the authorities. Non-Estonians' reactions to the restoration of independence were somewhat different. In a survey conducted immediately after following the restoration of independence, many non-Estonians were supportive and the number who had trust in the authorities increased significantly. At the same time, however, non-Estonians also became more reticent in expressing their distrust or even their opinions on political issues. Over time, support soon fell to earlier levels. The attitudes of non-Estonians towards the authorities were not influenced significantly by the events between these major political shifts. Their support for the government and Parliament was stable.

From Mass Movements to Political Parties

The initial increase in political activity was connected with the emergence of mass political movements and the following drop in activity was related to the institutionalization of political life and the formation of political parties. In Estonia the transformation from mass movements into political organizations or parties started in the late 1980s and culminated in the September 1992 elections, where political parties played a larger role in the political process. Before the September 1992 elections, the Estonian political landscape was characterized by an abundance of organizations claiming to be political parties. In April 1992, there were at least 23 such organizations. Most of these parties were formed from above, at the initiative of politicians and not at the grass-roots level. The parties were very small and were poorly organized. Differences between their political tendencies or positions on important issues were often difficult to distinguish. The parties were identified more by the specific candidates. Political relations between individual candidates had greater influence on the formation of the groupings than clear political positions.

The election law provided that the elections should be on a semi-party basis and this instigated many parties to form coalitions. The four major coalitions that took part in the election were "Pro Patria", "Secure Home", "Popular Front" and "Moderates". Only the Estonian National Independence Party (ENIP) had a full slate of candidates. Other parties included the Union of Pensioners, Union of the Societies of the Handicapped, Party of Natural Law, et al.

According to the election returns, the successful parties were those that supported radical change and national ideology on the one hand (Pro Patria, ENIP, Moderates) and antiparty protest coalitions (Independent Royalists, Estonian Citizen) on the other. The attempt to resuscitate the Popular Front ended in failure. The elections accelerated the self-definition of parties and coalition-building. The parties' political programs became more clear and the personality factor became less important. As a result of the elections there was a strong rightist (nationalist) tendency in Estonian politics. The recently formed National Assembly Party "Fatherland" has the most distinct program. ENIP is organizationally the strongest party in Estonia, with 1200 members nationwide. In addition to Pro Patria and ENIP, the following unions received the most votes: Moderates, the centrist party which is the nucleus of the Social Democratic Party, somewhat liberal; Estonian Citizen, nationalist, conservative, inclined towards

populism; Popular Front/People's Center Party, characterized by a liberal citizenship policy and social-democratic economic policy, with a populist inclination; Union of Right Centrist Parties, mostly former Party officials; and Independent Royalists propagated the idea of an Estonian kingdom. In the near future, a political coalition representing non-Estonians will probably join these unions. The trend toward party incorporation is continuing and soon the formation of a new strong rural party can be expected. In the new Estonian Parliament, the State Assembly, the government coalition which includes Pro Patria, ENIP and Moderates holds 53 of 101 total seats.

Formation of Party Identification

Concurrently with the formation of political parties and the party system, another important development has been the formation of party identification or affiliation. Party identification has been described as an individual's sense of attachment to a political reference group (Abramson, 1983). And as American political scientists have noted, party loyalties also play an important role in assuring the stability of the party system itself (Converse, 1962).

Prior to the elections, in April 1992, one third of Estonians and one fifth of non-Estonians believed that the parties represented the people's interests. There was little difference made between the parties, largely because of the great number of parties and lack of distinguishable political programs. Only in the case of ENIP and Popular Front (the political unions with the longest histories) was there any evidence of party identification. A poll conducted following the election revealed identification with a second party—Pro Patria. It was also detected among those who had voted for the Independent Royalists, but was associated more with a negative protest than their political program—the establishment of a kingdom in Estonia. For many, though, the situation was still vague. Sixty-one percent of the voters found, even after the elections, that most political parties were difficult to distinguish from each other.

Survey data have shown that the development of party identification is still moving slowly (Table 6). The individual or personality factor played a much stronger role. Most votes were cast for a certain individual candidate and not a political party. This was particularly noticeable in the case of candidates from the "Secure Home", "Moderates" and Independent Royalists.

A few additional figures which characterized the election and voting behavior: a week after the election, one in four voters polled was not able to remember the political coalition their candidate belonged to; one in ten could remember only the coalition and not the name of the candidate; two in five said they had made up their minds at the last minute and nearly one in ten voters polled admitted having voted without thought. The main social cleavage that emerged from the "second national revolution" in 1987-1991 was between the Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking communities. The political evolution of the Russian-speaking community has been rather slow and the parties are still at an early stage of development.

Table 6. General Election Results and Attitudes Towards
Political Parties and the Election.

Party coalition:	Pro <u>Patria</u>	Secure <u>Home</u>	Popular <u>Front</u>	Mod- <u>erates</u>	Indep. <u>ENIP</u>	Estonian <u>Royal.</u>	<u>Citizen</u>
Votes (468,800)	22%	14%	12%	10%	9%	7%	7%
Seats (101)	29*	17**	15	12	10*	8	8*
Subsample (882)	133	93	87	67	64	52	37
Why did you vote for this candidate?							
Trustworthy(57%)	65	65	68	78	67	48	62
Political views(42%)	54	51	53	54	44	29	49
Elec. coalition(38%)	51	41	38	45	48	58	30
Elec. platform (33%)	35	32	36	37	34	17	46
Spotless past, new in politics (26%)	34	22	33	19	31	33	43
Performance in media (22%)	23	23	30	42	14	33	22
Others were unknown(21%)	23	30	36	18	17	17	8
Charming person, handsome(19%)	16	20	21	25	22	38	11
Not a supporter but others were even worse (16%)	11	25	16	13	11	27	11

* Immediately following the election, two candidates left the Estonian Citizen coalition; one joined Pro Patria and the other joined ENIP.

** One candidate running under Secure Home has declared himself independent of the party.

Territorially-based cleavages are connected to the concentration of the Russian-speaking population in Northeast Estonia. There is some evidence of an urban-rural cleavage, largely a legacy of the Soviet system, which left the countryside underdeveloped. The gap between the rural areas and rapidly "westernizing" urban areas has continued to widen. As in other Baltic and Eastern European countries, the rural population has been more inclined to support candidates from the past regime and those who support the slowing of political and economic reforms.

In December 1991, it was possible to divide the Estonian-speaking population into three political types: supporters of leftist or rightist political parties, 40-45%; supporters of non-party political organizations, 30-40% and political nihilists, 15%. This division is still applicable today, with an increase in the supporters of political parties at the expense of non-party organizations. While it seems that neither the party system nor the voters were ready for party-based elections, they were well on the way. It has been noted that when the party system is established, it tends to become stronger with each generation, stabilizing at a high level of partisan support by the third generation (Converse).

Conclusions

In this relatively brief period, there has been momentous political change in Estonia. While there is a large number of people with positive attitudes towards the development of democracy in Estonia, political activity has diminished and the people do not feel that they have an influence on how their government is run. The political regime has the support of ethnic Estonians, but, to a much lesser extent, the support of non-Estonians. This is primarily due to their lack of representation in the government and will hopefully develop in a more positive direction following the elections of local authorities, where all residents of Estonia can vote.

Political parties are still in a nascent stage of development and have not yet won the acceptance of the population. Democratic procedures in practice are underdeveloped and ineffective when faced with problems such as severe economic hardships and rising crime rates. There is no doubt that some would find it reasonable to return to a system that could more effectively address these problems.

In general, however, progress has been made; a parliament has been freely elected based on a proportional system, local authorities will be elected on similar principles and the necessary infrastructure for democratic institutions is slowly being built. Estonia stands at the beginning of democratic development.

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LISA 2. PUBLIC OPINION AND POLLING AROUND THE WORLD. A Historical Encyclopedia. Edit. John G. Geer. Volume Two. Part 3. Public Opinion in the International Arena. *Estonia*. ABC-Clio. 2004

Estonia

Estonia does not have a tradition of multiparty democracy with free expression of public opinion. The first period of independence (1918–1940) started with an ultraparliamentarian political system, frequent elections, and plebiscites and ended with the period of silence under the authoritarian regime set up in 1934. Following almost five decades under Soviet occupation and ideological control of communist authorities, there was limited space for public expression of different views and opinions.

Sociological studies in Estonia started during the "Khrustsov thaw" in 1960 (Keen and Mucha 1994). It happened at the same time as in Leningrad and

Moscow. Estonia was opened to the West, and Western ideas penetrated more easily than in the rest of the Soviet Union. Also important was the relatively open ideological atmosphere and tolerance of Estonian authorities compared with other places in the Soviet Union. Kääriku seminars organized by Ülo Vooglaid turned out to be major discussion places for leading Soviet sociologists like J. Levada, V. Yadov, I. Kon, and others.

The leading role in the development of Estonian sociology was played by the Laboratory of Sociology at Tartu University founded by Vooglaid in 1967. Vooglaid,

together with Marju Lauristin, developed the school of mass communications and public opinion research, one of the leading directions of sociological research. In its heyday the laboratory had a permanent staff of more than 20.

Empirical research was conducted first by the local newspaper *Edasi* and later by Estonian Radio and Television. Since 1970, Estonian Radio has quarterly collected audience information and perceptions of different topics. Regular data collection led to the first electronic database in the 1960s and the first all-Estonian network of interviewers. Sophisticated methodology of content analysis was used. The Laboratory of Sociology also reestablished a national consciousness that brought its activities in conflict with the leadership of the Communist Party. As a result the Laboratory was forced to close down in 1975 (Titma 2002; Hoyer, Lauk, and Vihailemm 1993). Opinions were considered to be dangerous for the regime and were not allowed in polls until 1984, when these questions first passed censorship in an Estonian Broadcasting Data Processing Center survey (Kivirähk 1992).

A new impetus was seen after the dramatic political changes initiated by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev in the 1980s. Following the Singing Revolution (1988–1991), a peaceful evolutionary movement toward regaining independence, supported by the Estonian media, brought public opinion to center stage. It was the golden era of public opinion polling in Estonia. The polling costs were relatively low, and the results of monthly polls were regularly discussed in newspapers and TV specials. It was a legitimizing force in Estonia's fight for freedom and free society. In these years private

polling companies were established. There was a radicalization of the idea of national sovereignty and a restoration of the private sphere, including private property for people. The public debate developed from the universal idea of protecting local environments against the central bureaucracy and preserving the national cultural heritage. Just consider the fact that more than 96 percent of Estonians supported independence in 1990 (Kivirähk 1991; see Table 1).

The Republic of Estonia

The debate caused one of the biggest cleavages in Estonian public opinion. The Movement of Citizens' Committees carried the idea of legal continuity and restoration of the prewar Republic of Estonia (1918–1940), including property rights, was Euro-Atlantic in its foreign policy choices, demanded radical de-Sovietization, and felt nostalgia for the prewar agrarian way of life. The Popular Front advocated a new Estonian state, taking a kind of realpolitik approach concerning changes in the national composition of population (the share of non-Estonians grew from 12 percent in 1934 to 35 percent in 1979) and changes in the economic and social life that had taken place during the Soviet years. This approach tried to make peace with the 50-year Soviet history in domestic policy and was hoping to profit from close ties to former Soviet republics or some kind of neutrality in foreign policy. Although weakened, these patterns are still visible in Estonia and affect the formation of party coalitions. The key issue was giving or refusing Estonian citizenship to non-Estonians (mainly Russians) who had moved to Estonia during the Soviet era and a majority of whom had been against the idea of

Table 1

What kind of political status would you want Estonia to acquire in the future? (%)

	Apr '89	Sept '89	Jan '90	Mar '90	May '90
<i>Estonians</i>					
a union republic within the present federation (USSR)	2	2	0	1	0
an independent state in a confederation (USSR)	39	31	15	9	2
an independent state outside the USSR	56	64	81	87	96
don't know	3	3	2	2	3
<i>Non-Estonians</i>					
a union republic within the present federation (USSR)	54	37	20	24	21
an independent state in a confederation (USSR)	25	47	52	45	46
an independent state outside the USSR	5	9	17	21	26
don't know	14	7	9	8	7

Source: EMOR (in Kivirähk 1992).

reestablishing Estonian statehood (see Table 1). From the beginning of the 1990s the attitude toward non-Estonians has seen dramatic change, from outright rejection to integration into Estonian society (see Table 2).

The dissolution of the Soviet Union created conservative attitudes. Today the opinions of non-Estonians and titular nationals have become similar, except on language, citizenship, and some foreign policy. More than 170,000 non-Estonian

Table 2

There are different views about what should government do on the issue of non-Estonian non-citizens. Which of the following statements is closer to your opinion? (%)

<i>Estonians</i>	1994	1997
Government should concentrate on supporting the integration of non-Estonians without citizenship into Estonian society	36	63
Government should concentrate on supporting majority of non-Estonians without citizenship leaving Estonia	55	28
Don't know	9	9

Source: EMOR 1994, 1997.

live in Estonia without any citizenship; more than 88,000 are citizens of the Russian Federation. Still, a significant part of the Russian population in Estonia is oriented toward the consumption of the Russian mass media. After independence, interest in politics fell among Estonians from 91 percent to 58 percent and among non-Estonians from 74 percent to 47 percent during 1989–1996 (Lauristin et al. 1997). New problems concerning everyday life and building institutions moved to the top of the agenda. Shock therapy created socioeconomic divisions.

These are reflected in the different attitudes of younger and better educated people, who tend to support liberal values, freedom of choice, and individual responsibility, and the elderly and less educated, who want to see equality in society and put more hopes in the state. Today socioeconomic differentiation is growing as a part of the public discourse.

Estonia started to orient itself toward integration into the European Union (EU). A referendum scheduled for 2004 polarized public opinion. Although there has been a long-lasting pro-EU consensus,

there is also skepticism. The non-Estonian population is more pro-EU than Estonians. So only a vague majority of citizens is going to vote for union (see Table 3).

Negative attitudes toward European union are closely correlated with the overall dissatisfaction of respondents with their socioeconomic situation and the performance of government. As the main political goals for the transitional period, joining EU and NATO, seem to be achieved, public debate about future strategic goals has started.

Nature and Role of Public Opinion in Estonia

Because Estonia is a small society (with a population of 1.36 million) with a history of dramatic changes and adaptation, public opinion lacks strong institutional roots. Individualistic, it is not precisely definable and is dynamic. It is affected by mass media and several opinion leaders. In such a small country, society is transparent and social control is direct and personal. Public opinion (via mass media and elections) is fulfilling a control function. Although there are few politicians who do not pay attention to public opinion

Table 3

If there would be a referendum tomorrow about Estonia joining the European Union, how would you vote? (%)

<i>All Estonian Citizens Who Are Allowed to vote (18 Years and Older)</i>	<i>Apr '96</i>	<i>Apr '97</i>	<i>Nov '98</i>	<i>May '00</i>	<i>Oct '01</i>	<i>Jun '02</i>
for joining	47	32	27	34	38	43
against joining	24	23	14	26	27	31
will not participate	19	13	13	8	21	12
don't know	19	32	46	26	14	14

Source: Saar Poll.

before elections, the opposition takes advantage of it. Still, only a few politicians have stepped down under public pressure. Estonian sociologist Raivo Palmaru, who has studied the influence of media on election results, gives media and journalists a special role in the formation of public opinion in Estonia. His content analysis of printed media before elections showed strong correlations between the positive assessment of political parties and election results. On the basis of his comparative survey he found that Estonian journalists' political self-identification differs from the views of the population; journalists represent the right. He also found that Estonian journalists consider themselves to be politicians far more than their colleagues in Germany and Great Britain do (Palmaru 2001).

Public opinion data are collected before and after every election. The results of local, parliamentary, and presidential elections are analyzed in the media and used to judge the state of public thinking. For some municipalities there exists a longitudinal database that contains information about electoral participation of all voters through six elections (1992–1999). But all election data are not scientifically studied as of yet. Public opinion is a control mechanism for companies' reliability, planning marketing activities, and so on. Estonian sociologists are successful in developing public space for their research results. Two main dailies are using a lot of sociological data. Sociologists initiated a public debate on social inequality and poverty in Estonia. The prime minister and members of parliament met with social scientists and discussed the problem. Two nationwide known pollsters—Juhan Kivirähk and Andrus Saar—themselves belong to the cluster of opinion

leaders as commentators on poll results and as columnists.

The media publish nonrepresentative polls on daily highlights. Every day newspapers publish letters from readers; on radio talk shows ordinary people can call and express opinions openly.

Growing Importance of Public Opinion

There have been only two national referenda—about restoring independence (1990) and approving the constitution (1992). Rallies are becoming popular tools of voter mobilization among parties again. In 2001 more than 100,000 people attended a rally organized by opposition parties against the government's plan to privatize Estonian power plants. All major parties announced their support for reforming the presidential election system for the 2006 elections. This year Tallinn introduced and institutionalized municipal referenda as a part of its governing system.

Leading Opinion Research Companies

Estonian sociology changes mainly on the grounds of the practical needs of society. The market economy led to the transformation of opinion polling firms into market research companies with opinion polling units. Today, three major private polling companies follow the International Chamber of Commerce/European Society for Opinion and Marketing Research (ICC/ESOMAR) rules, providing full-scale professional research services and tools. The largest is EMOR Ltd. (Estonian Market and Opinion Research Centre Ltd., established in 1990), which conducts bimonthly nationwide omnibus surveys with samples of 500 respondents ages 15 to 74 using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) or Com-

puter-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) technology. With its own interviewer network and 30 researchers, it is a major institution carrying out data collection and preliminary analyses of data. Together with its partners Baltic Data House (Latvia) and SIC Rinkos Tyrimai (Lithuania), EMOR offers services in the Baltic region as well. Since the beginning of 2001, EMOR has belonged to the Taylor Nelson Sofres Group (TNS). EMOR is a member of the Gallup International Association. As a private company it does not make its data public and does limited scientific analyses. The second major provider of a monthly omnibus is Saar Poll Ltd. (established in 1988). Saar Poll is smaller than EMOR and is used by many researchers as a data-collecting service. It is oriented toward public opinion and election studies. The network of cooperation partners of Saar Poll covers Latvia, Lithuania, Ukraine, and Russia. The third competitor is Estonian Surveys Ltd. (ES Turu-uuingute AS), founded in 1994. Estonian Surveys also carries out monthly nationwide omnibus surveys.

Before 1990, Estonian sociology was empirically oriented, and this tradition continues today. Public demand for sociological knowledge is concrete and ignores purely scientific long-term efforts. State and private institutions provide resources for pragmatic tasks. Traditionally the main subscribers for professionally conducted public opinion polls are national newspapers, state institutions, and political organizations. Before elections, political parties often order private polls and sometimes focus group surveys.

In 1993 a team of sociologists, psychologists, political scientists, and human geographers from Tartu University made up an initiative group for creating a databank of social sciences and began to work

out how to save research materials collected by the Estonian social scientists during previous decades. The databank was officially formed as an interdisciplinary center for the faculty of social sciences in early 1996, and it began to function as a national social science databank—the Estonian Social Science Data Archives (ESSDA). In 1997, ESSDA became a full member of the European Council of Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA). Public opinion data are presented partially in CESSDA and are located at polling firms.

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Mikk Titma

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Estonia

Estonia does not have a tradition of multiparty democracy with free expression of public opinion. The first period of independence (1918–1940) started with an ultraparliamentarian political system, frequent elections, and plebiscites and ended with the period of silence under the authoritarian regime set up in 1934. Following almost five decades under Soviet occupation and ideological control of communist authorities, there was limited space for public expression of different views and opinions.

Sociological studies in Estonia started during the "Khrustsov thaw" in 1960 (Keen and Mucha 1994). It happened at the same time as in Leningrad and

Moscow. Estonia was opened to the West, and Western ideas penetrated more easily than in the rest of the Soviet Union. Also important was the relatively open ideological atmosphere and tolerance of Estonian authorities compared with other places in the Soviet Union. Kääriku seminars organized by Ülo Vooglaid turned out to be major discussion places for leading Soviet sociologists like J. Levada, V. Yadov, I. Kon, and others.

The leading role in the development of Estonian sociology was played by the Laboratory of Sociology at Tartu University founded by Vooglaid in 1967. Vooglaid,

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