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Aksel Kirch, Marika Kirch, Tarmo Tuisk

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Introduction:

The Institute for European Studies and Social Research in Estonia

Aksel Kirch

The Institute for European Studies (IES) was established in 1998 with main purpose to create a centre that integrates academic and applied research and practical experiences in the field of European social studies.

For the beginning of 1990-s Estonia had lost almost half of century concerning the global process of modernization. Making up for this the technological, legal, cultural and socio-political backwardness required extraordinary measures. One of those – and the one with the best prospects – was joining the EU. In 2004 before joining the EU Estonia's instrumentality concerning EU institutional structure was not well-prepared. Acute shortage of knowledge and people who could be authorities or experts in several EU related spheres was recognised. The Institute for European Studies had a chance, on the one hand, to promote European ideas in Estonia, and on the other hand, promote Estonia as a candidate country for the EU. Researchers of the Institute for European Studies saw their opportunity to participate actively in the process of societal arrangements by rising the awareness.

This was a period when one could hardly find some statistics, research data, studies and specific information about processes in Estonia on international level. Usually there were two groups of states presented in analysis – EU member states and so-called Visegrad countries. Very often statistical and research information about Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania did not reach to analysts working in Western European universities or even to researchers of Central Europe.

On the short list of Estonian experts there were researchers from the IES as well-known specialists who worked also in research institutions of former Academy of Sciences. One of the first research projects of that time is worth to underline. This was initiated by the Flemish Government (and Katholieke Universiteit Leuven) and cooperated between universities and research centres of the Baltic States. As result of this study, a monograph "The Baltic States in

an Enlarging European Union: Towards a Partnership between Small State?" was published in 1999.

The main key words of this period were *Monitoring Preparations of Transition Countries for EU-Accession*. As an example from 1999 to 2002, IES represented Estonia and participated in research network of candidate countries together with Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, later also Slovenia and Romania were integrated into the same framework.

Estonian Institute for European Studies contributed to this research network by organising in October 2002 international conference in small Estonian city Pärnu where 25 experts from different countries participated. The collection of articles „Monitoring Preparations of Transition Countries for EU-Accession" (ed. by Aksel Kirch and Juhan Sillaste) was published for the Conference and this was the starting point for periodical publication: the IES Proceedings. In 2002 accredition committee of Estonian Ministry of Education gave positive acknowledgement to the IES and added it into the list of accredited research institutions. This was a period when several research programmes and well-working relationships in co-operation with universities from Central and Eastern Europe were launched. The IES participated in the conference network and our researchers made presentations at conferences in universities in Kraków, Berlin, Frankfurt, Prague, Vienna and Budapest.

When Estonian society faced the EU-referendum in September 2003, the share of those who voted in favour of the EU was 66.8 per cent, while the percentage of those who voted against membership was 33.2. The overall participation rate in Estonia was only 64.1%. During the debate that took place in the first year after Estonia joined the EU, the majority of citizens realised that EU membership provided new possibilities for defining the country's position on Europe's political and cultural map. Although geographically being indisputably a part of Europe, Estonia's geo-political position there had not always been conclusively defined. Today the ideas about identifying Estonia as a welfare state (referring to similarities with Nordic countries) are spreading. One of these tendencies is that Estonian regional identity within the European Union could become similar to that of the Nordic countries (Finland and others). On the other hand, also certain Estonia-specific features in ethnic and national identity have strengthened, which allude to the possibility of strengthening Baltic identity (stronger Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian common identity). Furthermore, according to some popular formulations of certain politicians, Estonia tends to be more similar to Ireland and United Kingdom. This gives wide opportunity for different aspect of identity studies.

Since 2004 the Institute for European Studies became a part of the International University Audentes. As the University Audentes in 2008 was merged into Tallinn University of Technology (TUT) the Institute for European Studies became associated with Department of International Relations of the Faculty of Economics. In this new context our researchers carried out more activities in field of empirical studies and publishing research proceedings on themes related to European issues. Last empirical study concentrated on young people's reflections in their attitudes towards Estonian – Russian relations. Based on the results of these empirical studies in 2008 the research group made some publications and a conference presentation on the 19th International Association for Cross-cultural Psychology Congress in Bremen.

In 2008 the Institute for European Studies celebrated its 10th Anniversary with the fourth collection in the series of the Proceedings of the Institute for European Studies (http://www.ies.ee/iesp/) "Socio-economic and Institutional Environment: Harmonisation in the EU Countries of Baltic Sea Rim". According to our analysis, we can conclude, that the Estonian society has reached the phase, where increasing international communication, economic and cultural ties have initiated the small shift towards the creation of new "borderless" identity.

May we say that due to the Estonia's EU membership the European dimension is also forming a part of Estonians' self-perception? Yes, in their everyday life people value more and more modern arrangements and post-industrial values, which have created certain contradiction between their identity structure archetypes and these new values. Although it's doubtful whether there exists a 'European' identity – there are many varieties of what people may think as being European across the nations of Europe and across the different ethnic minorities within European nations. For the researchers it is interesting to study to what degree the Estonian people are going to identify themselves with Europe. How important they deem Europe to be a part of their identity, or are there greater variations in the expression of "Estonian identity". In general, it seems that we mostly understand common European identity as a shared sameness of people belonging to the same group, with a common narrative and broadly matching attitudes, beliefs and values. Today there are rather tendencies towards identification with Estonian and Latvian or Lithuanian Baltic welfare neighbours, i.e., referring to similarities with Nordic countries. European enlargement has influenced the self-definition of Estonian people.

Joining the European Union in 2004 will gave the opportunity to re-define 'Europeanness' from the viewpoint of new European identity components incorporated into identity. As we see from results of Estonian researchers (M. Talts, M. Kirch and others), the new opportunities can

create ground for the reception of the new set of European values. M. Talts in his comprehensive article "Some Aspect of the Baltic Countries' Pre- and Post-Accession Convergence to the European Union" (2013) provided a large comparative overview of the broader process of political, legal and societal changes characterising the Baltic countries' convergence towards the European Union. The Baltic countries` economic and social developments have been surprisingly similar throughout the past ten years – in the longer run it might cause major changes in mentality in Lithuanians' mind-set closer to the other two Baltic nations.

Since 2012 a comparative analysis of the demographical and labour processes taking place in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania was carried out. The huge emigration of highly skilled labour force has had a negative impact on the innovative and socio-cultural potential of the Baltic States – in Latvia and Lithuania, and to some degree in Estonia. It has also negatively affected the efficiency of the countries' economy (A. Kirch, in this book, pp.180).

The key issue is the predominance of structural changes in the global economy and especially how these changes will affect the relationship between the underlying patterns of competitiveness and the economic outcomes that they lead to. The coming years will be a very difficult time for collaboration and competitiveness across the Baltic Sea macro-region. As concluded in the analysis about migration losses in all the Baltic countries, they all have major problems with the formation of working resource—about half of the young educated population plan to migrate from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia to other European countries.

In a rapidly developing and globalizing world, it would be important to continue studies and analysis of social and cultural trends in European countries that accompany the globalization. This concerns especially small countries as Estonia.

Estonians and Russians in Contemporary Estonia: Is the Soviet Past still dominating the Present?

Aksel Kirch, Tarmo Tuisk, Hanna-Hulda Reinkort
International University Audentes, Estonia

Abstract

The current article focuses on a study about Estonians and Russians living in Estonia. As a method we used Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) to investigate their patterns of identification with 'Estonians', 'Russians in Estonia', 'Russians in Russia', and 'Estonian Government'. The themes embraced constructions of the past, including the context of the Soviet Union's role in WWII. Findings suggest that alarming events on the streets of Tallinn (April 2007) appear to be related to the role of the Soviet Union in WWII inter alia, where its construction as 'occupier' of Eastern Europe (as opposed to 'liberator') forms a 'core evaluative dimension of identity' for the Estonians, together with the Bronze Soldier having no symbolic salience or relation to the Estonian identity. Findings, such as Estonian Russians expressing much stronger idealistic identification with 'Estonians' than with the "own parents" group, also demonstrate ISA etic concepts that incorporate emic values and beliefs in contemporary Estonia. All Estonian people have experienced life in the EU for six years and this has deepened both Estonians' and Russians' emotional credit towards the EU. The most notable factor in this process has been rapid economic growth, although personal well-being has mostly been experienced by younger generations.

Authors' Note: Special thanks to Prof. Dr. Peter Weinreich and Dr. Wendy Saunderson for encouraging the authors to prepare this article.

About the History of Relations between Estonians and Estonian Russians.

Estonia became independent from Russia after WWI on the 24th of February 1918. On the 23rd of August 1939 the Soviet Union and Germany signed a bilateral treaty in violation of principles of self determination (called the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact) that divided Central and Eastern Europe between the USSR and Germany. Estonia remained under the Soviet sphere of influence (Misiunas & Taagepera, 2006, p. 15).

After the annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union (1944), Estonian migration was no longer a naturally developing process, it was partly forced. Russians and others had arrived in different "migration waves" from the Russian Federation and other parts of theUSSR. As you see from Diagram 1, the most intensive immigration took place during the years right after the Second World War. From the mid-sixties, the hinterland of migration enlarged and another reason for immigration became obvious: immigrants looked for material welfare. Continuous industrialization caused the increased demand for extra labour force and it caused the second larger immigration wave in the 1960s. Most of the Russian-speaking population remained in Estonia (Tammur, 2008).

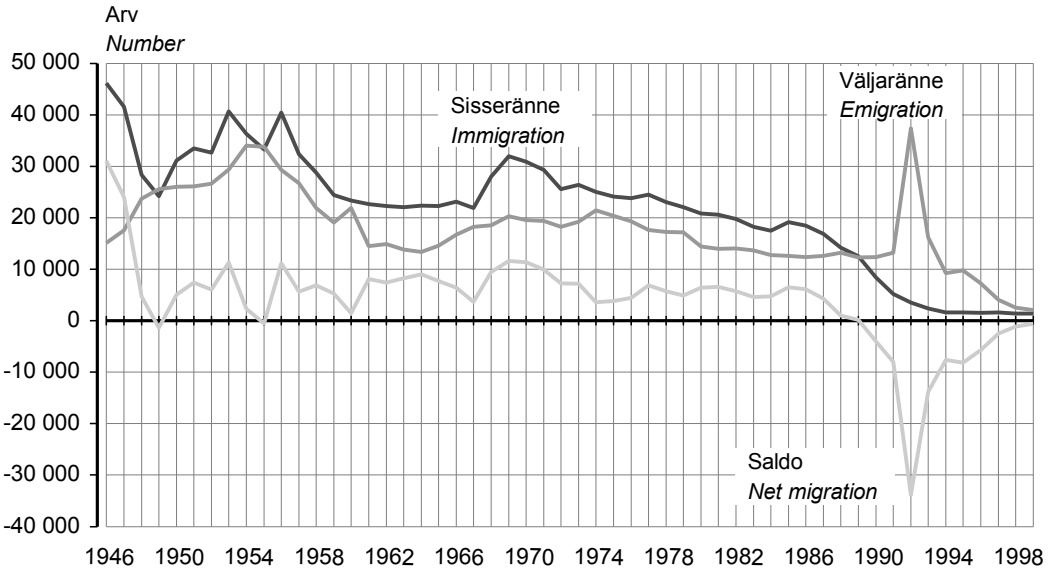

***Figure 1**. Migration in Estonia, 1946–1999 (Tammur, 2008 [a])*

[a] The data for 1946–1955 are only on urban population.

People who had settled in Estonia since 1945 came from a different geographical zone and a different national culture. At this point, an important aspect should be noted. The Russian colonists arriving in Estonia, who were different from Estonians in the ways mentioned above, settled in Estonia, thus forming a rather close community. Russians settled in places with definite spatial concentration rather willingly (i.e., medium-sized and large industrial towns), but not in rural settlements, in order to not assimilate among Estonians, whose culture was more Western and, therefore, significantly different from the colonists' culture, whose language and alphabet also were alien to them (Geistlinger & Kirch, 1995, p. 15). Owing to the weakness in Moscow's political power and the fall of the *iron curtain* at the end of the 1980s, Estonia restored its status as an independent state in 1991.

Triin Vihalemm and Marju Lauristin, social scientists at Tartu University who described Estonia's economic and political efforts to match the criteria of the West and to overcome the legacy of the communist past, have concluded that the criterion for the success of the efforts was Estonia's compatibility with the new emerging Europe. And in this societal process, the "Russian

issue" has been – and still is – the most complicated part of Soviet legacy (Vihalemm & Lauristin, 1997, p. 296).

In the post-communist countries, the construction of democracy inevitably means the use of political instruments for integrating ethnic elements into new systems, making special provisions for ethnic minorities. Since 1988-89, the civic-political-economic dimension – Estonian common political system, the national economy, a common system of social security, etc. – was subordinated to the ethnic cultural dimension. In this process of socio-cultural transformation, one central dilemma facing Estonia's Russians was that their perceived identification with the Soviet state was significantly stronger than their self-definition in term of Russian ethnic culture (Kirch & Kirch, 1995, p. 440).

In Estonia, there has been no violence in the relationships between Estonians and Russians since 1991 as many surveys, like *Freedom House Ratings 1991-2006*, show (Tilly, 2008, p. 47).

Given that Estonia gained EU membership in 2004, joined the European single labour market, and its being in the Schengen treaty space, the assumption of our research was that historical context would hold reduced salience for the two main ethnic groups of Estonia, giving way to perceptions, expressions, and nuances of some more modern, common European identity. Such assumptions are foregrounded by a number of social, economic, and demographic shifts since having joined the EU. Broader context of European Union has created a good base for a new generation of young Russian people compared with former generations (their immigrant parents). Further socialization and integration will depend also on satisfaction with life and solidarity within society, which is going to be determined by developments in economic status of younger generations.

Estonian people are still generally positive concerning the EU's economic future, and believe that the advantageous economic change will be quicker through joining the euro zone. In fact, Estonia's economic crisis has been very real. An excessively high social price has now been paid for the country's stabilisation achievements. The rate of registered unemployment has been growing rapidly, with unemployment reaching 15%.

In contrast to some of the newer EU member states, especially in Central Europe, support in Estonia's population for the EU membership is still significantly high. The last *Eurobarometer* survey (in November 2009) shows that about 62% of Estonians believe the EU membership is "a good thing" (EB 72). Despite positive trends in life satisfaction, a new question arises: Will the young Russian-speaking population living in Estonia turn into a multi-cultural ethnic group with a significant Estonian linguistic and cultural background and/or will the state-determined identity become a significant value for them?

It is evident that Estonia's accession to the EU has brought not only reconciliation with the Western economic system and legal culture, but also the adoption of European values, European political culture, etc. An interesting question is *What is or who is European*? Here, we try to limit our discussion and think about Russians' 'Europeanness'. Throughout the long period of its history, Russia has been commuting between two alternatives: trying to follow the European way of reforms on the one side, and looking for an original and different way of development, on the other (Asian) side. Indeed, a lot of Russian people are probably more European than those who live in states aspiring to become new EU member states. Nevertheless, instead of taking decisions based on people's knowledge of the internet, or traditions of Russian classical music or paintings, one has to look at the traditions of the Russian statehood, rule, and power. Traditions of Russian centralised power, hierarchy, and subordination are vital, and the inappropriateness of European traditions in this society is quite obvious.

European tradition is also to acknowledge the factual history. This is the best basis for respectable relations between partners. Especially for the three Baltic States, the Second World War recalls resentfulness. Russia cannot be a trustful neighbour for Baltic people before it admits the fact of occupation of the Baltic countries in 1940.

The attempt to understand very recent developments, which have had a strong influence on identity developments for both Estonians and Estonian Russians, also gave the authors a good reason to postulate a hypothesis based on the events that took place in Tallinn in April 2007. Just some weeks before Victory Day of the Second World War, the Government of Republic of Estonia moved the historical victory monument (named Bronze Soldier) to the war cemetery. Alongside moving the monument, a polarization occurred in the minds of Estonian and Russian people, which expanded to unexpected hooliganism in the centre of Tallinn. Despite the fact that the main "actors" in the streets were only around 2,000 Russian-speakers aged 15 to 25, rioting for two nights only, these events were enough to warrant the study of stereotypes and attitudes reflecting the historical past and the present, in order find some explanation of the question whether or not the past still dominates the present.

Method of Identity Structure Analysis and the Study Instrument

A comprehensive research method called Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) was considered applicable for the current study. The method of the ISA covers the authors' need for cross-cultural comparison and in-depth analysis providing the use of cross-cultural universals (e.g., standardised parameters like *contra-identification with others*) called *etics*, together with *emic* qualities which reflect indigenous psychologies of local cultures. It is evident that ISA *etic* parameters of identity (i.e., indices) require no translation across languages and cultures. As Weinreich underlines, "…investigators have to be keenly aware of the *emic* qualities of the discourses that are incorporated within the etic parameters." (Weinreich, 2003, p. 79).

We also give definitions of the method and of 'identity' as follows: Identity Structure Analysis (Weinreich, 1980/1986) is an open-ended conceptual framework, which can be used to explore individual or group identities within particular socio-cultural and historical contexts. It is, thus, primarily concerned with the 'individual and societal phenomena' within which issues of identity are implicated. Definition of identity: A person's identity is defined as the totality of one's self-construal, in which how one construes oneself in the present expresses the continuity between how one construes oneself as one was in the past and how one construes oneself as one aspires to be in the future (Weinreich, 2003, p. 26).

Our hypothesis in the current study is testing the symbols of World War II as expected core symbols of the identity of both ethnic groups – Estonians and Estonian Russians (using student respondents at International University Audentes). We expect that opposite poles, used for creation of the bipolar construct, probably show the split of the society, i.e., Estonians probably claim the Bronze Soldier monument as symbol of WWII is not a part of their identity, while Russians are likely to admit that this monument forms one of the core symbols of their identity.

In order to investigate the background of the identity-related processes, the authors have used Identity Structure Analysis for several times since 1993 (Tuisk, 1994; Kirch et al., 2001; Kirch, Tuisk, & Talts, 2004; Kirch & Tuisk, 2007). The experience of all earlier studies was taken into account in the planning phase of the study and for the preparation of the study instrument. The fieldwork was carried out at International University Audentes (Tallinn, Estonia). The sample comprised 100 respondents (students of social sciences and business administration), with numbers almost equally distributed between the two criterion groups – Estonians (n = 54) and Estonian Russians (n = 46). 45% of Estonians were female and 55% male, while among Russians the gender distribution was equal. Age distribution varied from 18 to 37, most falling within the age bracket of 18 to 22 years.

The questionnaires were given to each person in their mother tongue. Instructions about how to complete them were also given by a respective native speaker. Students were chosen as a target group in order to access the active part of population, and also in order to access respondents who had grown up during Estonia's period of re-independence. The assumption of the authors was that Estonians and Estonian Russians have had different experiences in this situation. That is, despite a number of shared characteristics (age range, occupation, and rather

similar general fields of study), it was expected that the two sets of respondents would experience their social worlds (and thus construe their identity) from differing perspectives.

This assertion about the influences on Estonian Russians' stereotypes was also confirmed by a representative public opinion survey that was carried out in June 2007 where 1,000 Estonians and 500 Russians were questioned. The object of this study was to investigate interethnic relations and determine the challenges to integration policies after the Bronze Soldier crisis in Estonia. The main finding is shown in the survey results: while 66% of Estonians shared the opinion that moving the monument from the Tallinn centre was the government's only choice and 5% named it totally unfortunate, it was reverse among Russians, where only 5% supported the moving and 56% considered this action as totally unfortunate (University of Tartu, Saar Poll, & Office of Population Minister, 2007, p. 28).The instrument used was specially designed for our ISA-study and consisted of eleven rating sheets, each headed by a bipolar construct (i.e., a pair of opposing values/beliefs). Respondents were asked to construe specific entities against these constructs, on a zero-centred rating scale.

Within the ISA framework, certain entities are mandatory (i.e., current, past and aspirational selves, an admired person, and a disliked person). These form the basis of the individual value-system and form a relation between individual and group identity. At the same time, our instrument included entities reflecting respondent's socio-biographical context (e.g., my parents) and from the wider socio-cultural domain (e.g., the Estonian government, and respective ethnic groups like Estonians, Estonian Russians, and Russians in Russia). The authors expected that Estonian and Russian respondents' evaluation of these entities would help to test the research hypothesis.

The constructs themselves were chosen to reflect essential issues and life in contemporary Estonia. Because of the nature of the study, attention was focused primarily on issues of Estonian language and culture within a globalising world and on the influence of Russia on Estonia. We also "tested" the symbols of World War II in the case of both ethnic groups. Also broader issues such as the threat of globalisation giving the possibility to facilitate one's emigration and 'feels European' were also included for each ethnic group in the study instrument. See the full instrument in the Appendix.

Results

Patterns of Identification

Positive role models: idealistic identification with others. Positive role models are those entities who are perceived as possessing qualities to which individuals aspire, i.e., with whom they idealistically identify. In Figure 2, these entities have been ordered according the value of an index that can vary from 0 to 1. The index value has been considered high when above 0.70 and low when below 0.50.

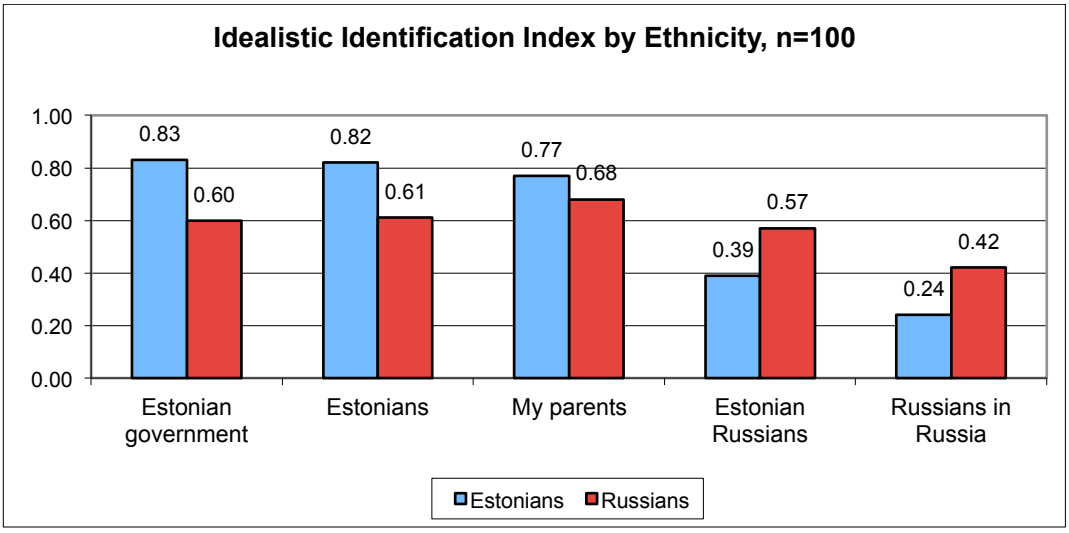

Figure 2. *Idealistic Identification Index by Ethnicity, n=100.*

As expected, Estonians' very high idealistic identification with the government (0.83) and their own ethnic group (0.82) can be easily explained by recent events described in part 3 of this paper. Unexpectedly Estonian Russians also show higher idealistic identification with Estonians (0.61) than with their own "titular" group, called here 'Estonian Russians' (0.57). Despite a slight difference (0.04), these index values still remain moderate. We also have to mention that the highest positive role model for Estonian Russians is 'parents', which can also be explained further as an entity found in the search for the origin of stability in the disorder caused by the events in April 2007. We can conclude here shortly that 'Estonian Russians' as a unit do not form a group to identify with, but Estonians as such or the parents of Russian speakers rather form a more positive role model. This is an example that demonstrates heterogeneity of Estonian Russians. This entity as such seems to be a fuzzy role model for idealistic identification. It seems that we can suppose that even if any kind of common category to "label" Russians in Estonia exists, it is not directly related to their ethnicity. There should be other dominants that bind these people on different bases (e.g., local identity or religion etc.). In the case of Estonians, those very high index levels ('Estonians' and 'Estonian government') express loyalty to the government that managed to handle the situation in April 2007 and to Estonian statehood as such, more than "simple support".

Negative Role Models: Contra-Identification with Others

Contra-identification pertains to negative role-models, i.e., entities from whose (perceived) attributes the respondent wishes to dissociate (Weinreich, 1980/1986). The contra-identification index values are considered high when above 0.45 and low when below 0.25. Figure 3 shows that 'Russians in Russia' form the group both Estonians and Estonian Russians contra-identify the most, and we notice that here the Estonians' index value is very high, while the Russians' value (0.44) almost reaches a high level. The second position with which to contra-identify is for both groups 'Estonian Russians' (the values are 0.59 and 0.38 respectively).

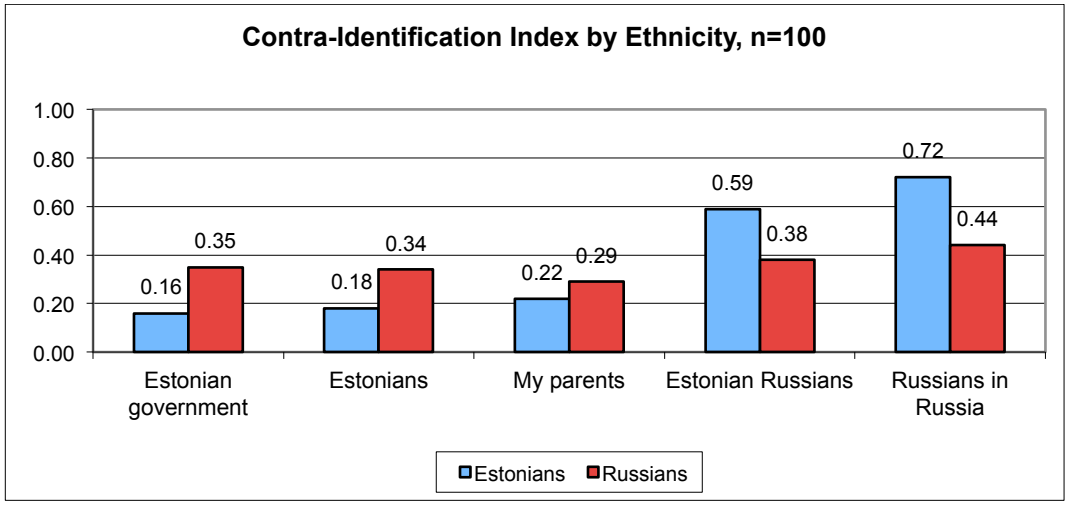

Figure 3. *Contra-Identification Index by Ethnicity, n=100.*

Empathetic Identification

In order to investigate current perceptions of the surrounding environment more precisely, the authors also used "the empathetic mode of identification, which refers to self's sense of an identity existing between self and the other in actuality – of having characteristics in common irrespective of whether these might be for emulation or dissociation". The extent of one's current empathetic identification with another is defined as the degree of similarity between the qualities one attributes to the other, whether 'good' or 'bad', and those of one's current self-image (Weinreich, 2003, p. 60). The ISA considers the index value high when above 0.70 and low when below 0.50. From Figure 4 we can see that Estonians have very high empathetic identification with the government, 'Estonians' and parents, while Russians reach the higher level only in their identification with their parents.

But also 'Estonian Russians' plays a rather significant role for them, attaining a value of 0.66.

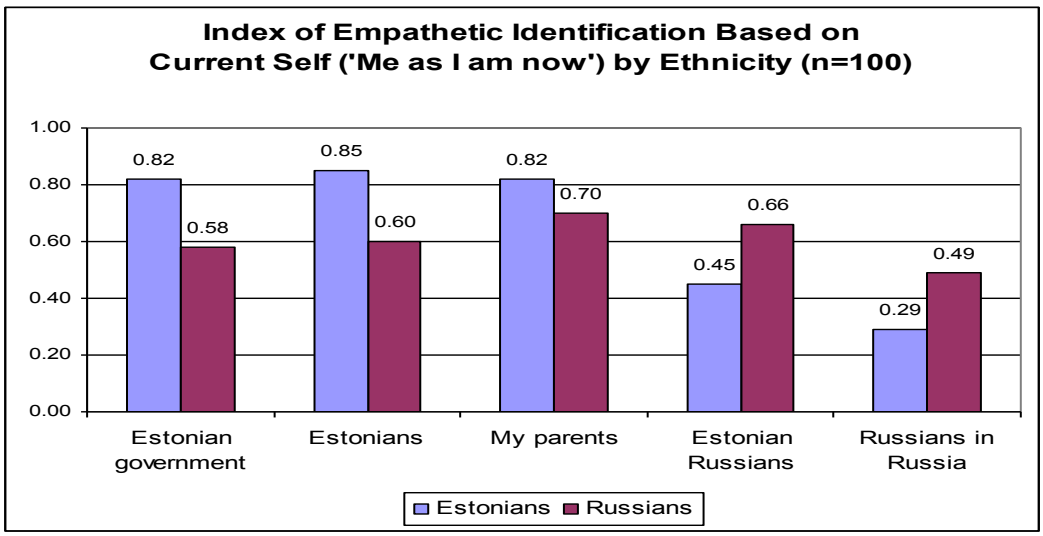

Figure 4. *Index of Empathetic Identification Based on Current Self ("Me as I am Now") bu Ethnicity (n=100).*

Conflicted Identification

If one empathetically identifies with another person, while simultaneously contra-identifying with them, one's identification with the person in question is conflicted. From Figure 5 we notice that the highest identification conflict among both groups is with 'Estonian Russians'. As the index value here is considered to be high when between 0.35 and 0.50, we see that 0.47 and 0.46 match this level. Overall, conflicted identification with 'Estonian Russians' becomes rather clear as expected 'carriers' of this identity (i.e., Russian respondents) obviously share and accept "their own group's" values while at the same time contra-identifying with these same values as well.

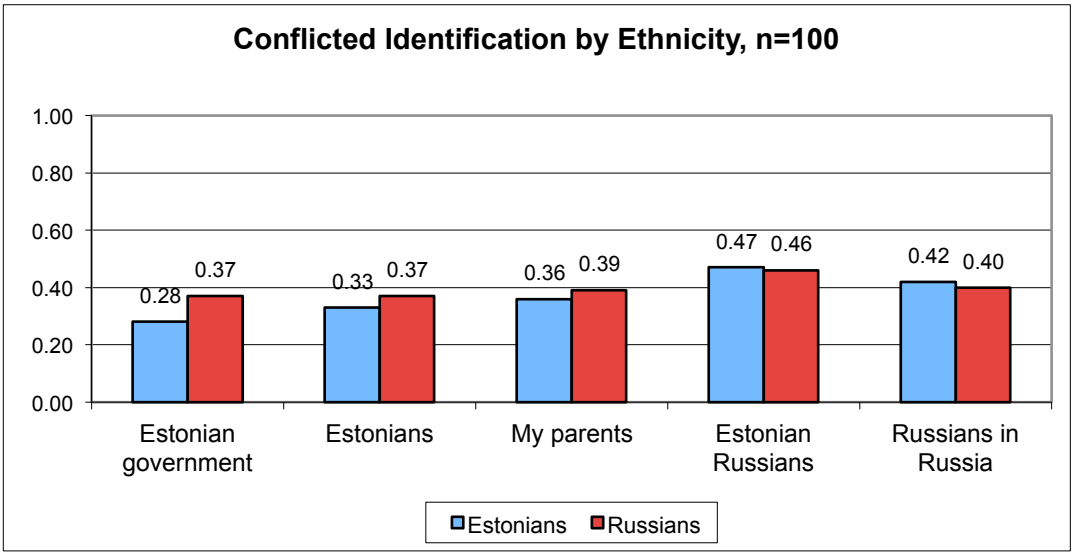

Figure 5. *Conflicted Identification by Ethnicity, n=100.*

What we can conclude at this point is that 'Estonian Russians' is a category which has conflicted identification values common for both Estonian- and Russian-speaking respondents, and both groups want to dissociate strongly from this entity as well.

Identity Variants

In order to understand the matters behind the conflicted identity levels, the ISA uses identity diffusion as a characteristic. Identity diffusion is considered to be the dispersion of conflicted identifications with others, where the greater the magnitude of identification conflicts and the more extensive their dispersion across others, the more severe is the diffusion (Weinreich, 2003, p. 64). When we combine self-evaluation with identity diffusion, nine identity variants result. The combinations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The Identity Variant Classification

	Identity diffusion		
Self-evaluation	**High (diffused variants)**	**Moderate**	**Low (foreclosed variants)**
High	Diffuse high self-regard	Confident	Defensive high self-regard
Moderate	Diffusion	Indeterminate	Defensive
Low	Crisis	Negative	Defensive negative

In Table 2, the results of a study of the distribution of these identity variants are shown. We first focus on 'defensive high self-regard' that is common for about 1/5 of Estonian respondents.

Table 2

Distribution of Identity Variants (Estonians n = 54, Russians n = 46)

Identity variant	Estonians	Russians
Diffuse high self-regard	2	5
Diffusion	8	17
Crisis	3	4
Confident	13	5
Indeterminate	14	8
Negative	1	-
Defensive high self-regard	11	2
Defensive	2	5
Defensive negative	-	-

This group has high self-evaluation and low identity diffusion. This type of identity variant has been considered as a foreclosed variant, which means that instead of moderate conflicts which are considered optimal, the low level of identity-conflicts together with high self-esteem shows strong defensiveness against possible "attacks". Some Estonian researchers also warn about the presence of such a trend among Estonians and envision this phenomenon as a possible threat to the integration of the society. Based on our research, we notice that although a category involving such a contingent exists, it is decently low. Besides 'defensive high self-regard' discussed here, we see that in fact variants such as 'confident' and 'indeterminate' dominate among Estonian respondents.

In the case of Russians, it is noticeable that more than one third of the respondents belong to a variant called 'diffusion'. When we sum up all of those Russian respondents who have high identity diffusion, we notice this number (26) exceeds even 56% of respondents, while for Estonians it reaches just 24% (13 respondents out of 54). The high identity diffusion (weighted index value = 0.39) of all Russians indicates an overall strong identity conflict that is even more explanatory regarding the identity processes than separate conflicted identification values presented by Figure 4.

Structural Pressure

Structural pressure refers to the consistency with which a particular construct is used in the appraisal of self and others. This consistency derives from the compatibility of the construct's evaluative connotations with one's overall evaluation of the identities to which it is attributed.

Table 3 shows the construct marking the Bronze Soldier monument's role in one's evaluation as having the strongest structural pressure among Estonian respondents (84.97***) and is ranked as the second in the case of Russians (55.62*). As expected, opposite poles of the construct apply here – Estonians claim the Bronze Soldier monument as a symbol of WWII is not a part of their identity, while Russians agree that it forms one of the core symbols of their identity.

The second and third strongest structural pressures measured for Estonians underline the Soviet Union's occupier role in WWII (82.19***) followed by Russia's aggressive policies towards its neighbours (71.01***). The latter reflects, in a way, a still existing fear of WWII's historical outcomes concerning Estonia and their reoccurrence.

Table 3

Core constructs of Estonian and Russian Respondents

Estonians			Russians		
No	**Construct**	**SP**	**No**	**Construct**	**SP**
11	Bronze Soldier is not related to my identity	84.97***	7	Media and internet of Russia influence Russians in Estonia	57.06*
9	Soviet Union was the occupier of Eastern Europe in WWII	82.19***	11	Bronze Soldier is one of the symbols of my identity	55.62*
4	Russia's policies towards its neighbours are aggressive	71.01***	5	It is easy to melt into Estonian society by knowing the language	49.45
5	It is easy to melt into Estonian society by knowing the language	67.50**	6	Estonian government is responsible for hard economic situation of the population	48.70
7	Media and internet of Russia influence Russians in Estonia	67.00**	3	Estonian Russians have more in common with Estonia, their country of residence	48.62
8	Estonian language and culture have history, traditions and future	65.62**	8	Estonian language and culture have history, traditions and future	48.08
10	Intends to bind future definitely with Estonia	57.79*			
2	Estonia has expectancy for fast economic development as its economy is flexible and innovative	54.32*			

Note: Structural pressure (SP) is scaled from –100 to 100. 'Core' evaluative dimensions are ***70-79; **60-69; *50-59. In the table above SP > 48.00 has also been shown to illustrate the trend and facilitate better description of structural pressure among both groups although all levels below 50 are considered as moderate and do not form the 'core'.

We have to notice that for Russians, the strongest structural pressure is given by their acknowledgement of the role that Russia's media plays on themselves (57.06*). Unexpectedly, Russian respondents have also positively ranked the construct about the key role of the Estonian language in integrating into society (49.45), and this construct is even ranked third. We think that here we can see some positive outcome of the government's continuous efforts in emphasising the importance of the language as a prerequisite and tool for successful integration

of all different ethnic groups into Estonian society. This third ranking also helps disprove an attitude that is expressed rather often (by some sceptics) that the command of the Estonian language has no use and does not grant smooth acceptance of a foreigner by Estonians. The fourth position among Russian respondents is held by a construct that claims that the government is responsible for the hard economic situation (48.70). In the light of the events of April 2007, on the one hand, we can see that the government has been made responsible for "everything", but on the other hand, we have to take into account that this can express respondents' nostalgia about Soviet-time governments that indeed had to grant jobs and accommodation together with healthcare to every single working person.

Both Estonians and Russians show their trust that the Estonian language and culture have traditions and a future by positioning this construct at the same level (as the sixth). When we compare the values, we see that the Estonians' index (65.62**) has a higher value than the Russians' (48.08). This occurred as expected.

Despite interesting findings expressed by the index values of idealistic and contra-identification and of structural pressure, we can see from Table 3 that Russians' 'core' evaluative constructs have not been as strongly formed as those of Estonian respondents. This leads us to a new search for the factors really having influence.

On the basis of the researches of Korastelina in the Crimea (South Ukraine) (see Korostelina, 2007, p. 52), we can argue that Soviet identity (in form of Soviet-centred identification with historical symbols) of Estonian Russians still occupies a leading place as a core identity not only among middle-aged and elderly people but among students, too. According to Korostelina "core identities can remain, however, even in the situation of the destruction and disappearance of their respective social groups: identity-related processes continue to be organized in the same way that they had been within the whole system in the past. Consider, for example, the Soviet identity in the population of the newly independent states of the former Soviet Union. In spite of the disappearance of the common "Soviet people", Soviet identity still occupies a leading place as a core identity among middle-aged and elderly people" (Korostelina, 2007, p. 52).

Discussion

There are many varieties of what people may think as being European. Can we say today that due to Estonia's EU membership, the European dimension is now forming a part of Estonians' self-perception more than six or seven years ago? According to a survey conducted by Estonian media researchers (Lauristin & Vihalemm, 2009), we can conclude that the Estonian society has reached the stage where increasing international communication as well as economic and cultural ties have initiated a small but relevant shift towards the creation of a new *"borderless"* identity. European enlargement has influenced the self-definition of Estonian people and has provided the opportunity to redefine *"Europeanness"* from the viewpoint of new European identity components incorporated into Estonian identity.

As Piret Ehin from Tartu University said, in Estonia, there is a clearly evident ethnic gap in public attitudes towards the state and its institutions. Despite the progress that has been achieved in naturalization, almost half of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia (many of whom are Estonian citizens) do not consider themselves to be part of the Estonian nation in the constitutional meaning of the term. The results of a survey study, which was carried out in spring 2008, show that the crisis of trust accompanying the "bronze events" turned out to be deeper and longer lasting than expected (Ehin, 2009, p. 94).

Findings of the analysis suggest that the April 2007 events on the streets of Tallinn appear to be strongly related to the role of the Soviet Union in WWII. Its construction as 'occupier' of Eastern Europe (as opposed to 'liberator') forms a 'core evaluative dimension of identity' for the Estonians, although the Bronze Soldier has no symbolic salience or relation to the Estonian identity. For Russians, the monument is continuously one of the core symbols of their identity.

Also, we have to admit that the April 2007 events in Tallinn have created a still existing strong base for conflicted identifications among Estonian Russian youth. Without strong belief in the unity of their "titular" group as such, their identification first turns towards their parents and is followed by 'Estonians'. The values of structural pressure show that besides Estonians even Russians have optimism about the continuity of the Estonian language and culture within a globalising world. Estonians and Russians both share a strong understanding of the key role of Estonian language for integrating into society.

It is evident that Estonians have mobilised themselves, and the 2007 events have even facilitated this new unity together with optimistic beliefs about the future because they are now a member of the EU and the NATO. However, Russian media, Russia's perceived hostility towards its neighbours, and the history of World War II still remain in their minds, preventing them from forgetting the past. In general, for Russians it is clear that their integration mechanism is going to occur via the Estonian language and culture; our research indicates that convergence in values with Estonians take place. At the same time, however, significant symbols such as the Bronze Soldier still have their role in Russians' memories and attitudes, causing conflicted identification leading to high identity diffusion that restricts smooth integration into Estonian society.

The role of Russia's media and internet cannot be underestimated in the case of Estonian Russians (as this forms their strongest 'core' evaluative dimension). We see that the adaptation of Estonian Russians to Estonian society is influenced by an ideology pushed from Russia's information channels. Unfortunately, interpretation of the Soviet Union's history (including Estonia's) in certain aspects remains unchanged. This is also why there are young Russians who still have a one-sided cliché in their minds, for instance about World War II.

Today, integration is a continuous process for the first and second generations of Russians in Estonia, in which they gradually become closer to Estonian society, while simultaneously losing their original cultural heritage (Russia as homeland – heritage). The results of our study show that two approaches exist simultaneously among Russian respondents: Estonia-centred and post-Soviet-centred approaches. This study reinforced our view that the integration process has become more complicated than it had been expected in Estonia about 20 years ago.

Estonian researchers (P. Ehin, M. Lauristin) are right in the perspective view that the somewhat greater support for political institutions and greater identification with the Estonian people among young Russian-speakers offer some hope that ethnic differences in political attitudes may decrease over time. However, the current gap between the political assessments of the ethnic majority and the minorities is so large that we cannot rely on the slow process of a generational change to reduce it (Ehin, 2009, p. 94).

All Estonians have experienced life in the European Union for six years by now and this has deepened both Estonians' and Russians' emotional credit towards the EU. Estonian people are still generally positive concerning the EU's economic future, and believe that the advantageous economic change will be quicker through joining the euro zone.

However, the answers that were gathered with this ISA-study showed that most of the respondents' life experience has created a positive attitude concerning integration issues, as they have got preconditions (e.g., belief in the role of the Estonian language as an integrator) for moving towards Estonia-centred dominants within their identity structure.

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Appendix

Feels European	<1>	Does not/do not feel European at all
Me as I am now	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Estonians	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Government of Estonian Republic	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Me as I was 4 years ago	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Russians in Estonia	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Person whom I admire highly	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Person whom I don't like at all	- - - - 0 - - - -	
My parents, e.g., someone of the generation of my father and my mother	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Russians in Russia	- - - - 0 - - - -	
Me as I would like to be	- - - - 0 - - - -	

Estonia has the likelihood of fast economic development as its economy is flexible and innovative	<2>	Estonia hasn't any likelihood of fast development as the country is small and resources are low
Russians living in Estonia have more in common with Estonia as of their country of residence	<3>	Estonian Russians feel more in common with Russia as with the country of their origin
Russia's policies towards its neighbouring countries are aggressive	<4>	Russia's policies towards its neighbouring countries are amicable
It is easy to melt into Estonian society by knowing the Estonian language	<5>	It is hard to melt into Estonian society even when one has full command of the Estonian language
The Estonian government is responsible for the difficult economic situation of the population	<6>	First of all everyone has to manage himself/herself
Russian media and internet influence attitudes of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia in a great degree	<7>	Russian media and internet do not influence the attitudes of the Russian-speaking population in Estonia
Estonian language and culture have history, traditions and a future	<8>	Estonian culture and language are destined to vanish in a globalising world
The Soviet Union was the	<9>	The Soviet Union was the occupier

liberator of Eastern Europe in WWII		of Eastern Europe in WWII
Intends/intend to bind his/her future definitely with Estonia – to live and work here	<10>	Want/wants to live and work in some other country of the European Union or in the USA
The Bronze Soldier is one of the symbols of (my) identity	<11>	The Bronze Soldier has no relation to my identity

The Ethno-National Identity of Estonian and Russian Youth in Respect of their Primordialist or Situationalist Orientations

Tarmo Tuisk

Department of International Relations,
Tallinn University of Technology
Akadeemia tee 3,
Tallinn 12618, Estonia
E-mail: tarmo.tuisk@tseba.ttu.ee

Abstract: *Estonia has been often regarded as a country of contrasts. This contrast-based societal constellation appears to be surprisingly well accepted by the majority of the population—both Estonians and Russians living in Estonia. A sudden freedom of expression and behaviours provided new opportunities for differentiation within and between the ethnic groups led to new cleavages between winners and losers, the successful and the unfortunate.*

Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) as a theoretical framework was applied to investigate identity construal processes within these two largest ethnic groups in Estonia. ISA is a complex theoretical framework, building on several psychological theories, taking into consideration developmental factors, social psychological and cognitive processes. Ethnic identity is understood as an expression of continuity between one's construal of past ancestry and one's future aspirations in relation to ethnicity.

A distinction is made between a 'primordialist' and a 'situationalist' understanding of ethnic identity: Primordialists define ethnicity in terms of ancestry, whereas situationalists perceive ethnicity as being socially constructed, taking into consideration fluidity and change.

ISA permits an empirical investigation of these construal processes of ethnic identity across the primordialist–situationalist spectrum. These often unconsciously held convictions are thought to contribute to the cleavages within the contemporary Estonian society. In addition, issues such as the command of the Estonian language, citizenship, the influence of the Second World War on European history, out-group acceptance, tolerance, globalisation, social responsibility, the role of government and the current economic crisis are also considered to be some of the essential features in constructing identities.

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An ISA study was carried out among Estonian and Russian university students, the resultant data was analysed using Ipseus software.

Keywords: *Estonia, ethnic and national identity, identity construction, identity structure analysis, primordialism, Russians in Estonia, situationalism*

1. Introduction

The restoration of Estonian nation-state has been "the most visionary future-directed project of the Estonian people" (Ruutsoo, 2002, p. 52). Throughout the last two decades the search for a common national identity that has been considered as a basis uniting all ethno-demographic groups in Estonia, has proved an extremely challenging task for the entire society. Despite several elaborated and implemented integration programmes and policies, the integration of the society has not been completed, and efforts to achieve this will be continued.

The current study aims to make a contribution to this topic. The identities of Estonians and Russians living in Estonia are analysed using a developmental and socio-psychological approach for investigating the fundamental features of Estonian and Russian identity structures through in-depth assessment of underlying identity processes. Identity Structure Analysis (Weinreich, 1986[1980]; Weinreich & Saunderson, 2003), facilitated by Ipseus software (Weinreich & Ewart, 2007), provides the conceptual and methodological tools for assessing cleavages in identity orientations of the two largest ethnic groups in Estonia. These orientations are underpinned by primordialist sentiments on the one hand and situationalist perspectives on the other. Furthermore, the extent to which there exist features that contribute to a common Estonian national identity across cleavages both between and within Estonian conceptions and Estonian-Russian conceptions will also be established.

Although Identity Structure Analysis (ISA) has been used several times in Estonia since 1993 (Kirch & Laitin, 1994; Rimm & Tuisk, 1997; Kirch, Rull & Tuisk, 2001; Kirch & Tuisk, 2005; 2008; Kirch, Tuisk & Reinkort, 2011), the concepts and theory related to primordialism and situationalism have never been considered by researchers within these studies in Estonia. ISA has been successfully used to assess and investigate ethnic identity in several countries (e.g., Horenczyk & Munayer, 2003; Weinreich, Luk & Bond, 1996; Kelly, 1989). ISA studies in relation to primordialist and situationalist paradigm have been carried out in Northern Ireland and Slovakia (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier,

2003). The approach allows an in-depth assessment of the contribution of psychological processes to issues of ethno-national identity, thereby augmenting sociological and political science analyses.

2. Theoretical basis

2.1. Aims of the current study

ISA is an open-ended framework of theoretical concepts and postulates about the processes of identity development and redefinition (Weinreich, 2003, p. 1). Within the current article, the ISA metatheoretical framework has been applied to study ethnicity and ethnic identity. Due to continued existence of ethnic conflicts all over the world, the concept of ethnic identity has been elaborated by many researchers. There exist two stances of ethnic identity—some researchers have demonstrated that the origins of a person's ethnic identity are ascribed at birth and remain unchanged for the entire life while others claim that ethnic identity has to be constructed and reconstructed during one's lifespan.

The distinction between these two types of ethnicities and ethnic identities has been clearly delineated (Glazer & Moynihan, 1975, as cited in Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 115). "The one that emphasizes the issue of ethnic persistence—a seemingly unchanging aspect of ethnicity, which persists down the generations, is called *primordialism* (Shils, 1957; Geertz, 1963; Greely, 1974; Isaacs, 1975; Connor, 1978; Smith, 1981; Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 115) and the other that highlights the situational features of ethnic revivalism is called *situationalism*" (Hechter, 1974; Mitchell, 1974; Nagata, 1974; Epstein, 1978; Halsey, 1978; Okamura, 1981; Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 115). Application of ISA has enabled researchers to show the developmental primacy of primordialism, that is despite people's basic propensity for primordialism, there exist also persons who develop the situationalist perspective during their lifespan while questioning their *status quo* in the changing world (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003).

The aim of the current study is to investigate whether the Estonians and Russians living in Estonia differ in terms of these orientations. A better understanding of identity construal processes and belief systems, which may not be conscious to the individuals concerned, is required in order to contribute to a better societal integration of Estonia. For this purpose I have carried out an ISA study among Estonian and Russian students, and the resultant data have been analysed using Ipseus software.

2.2. Definitions: primordialism and situationalism

When studying ethno-national identity, it is essential to show the context of how primordialism and situationalism as the main concepts of the study in relation to ethnic and national identity have been revised and defined within the new theoretical approach by Weinreich and his colleagues. According to them, simply acknowledging the two discernible perspectives on nationality and ethnicity is not sufficient. Primordialism has been taken within this analysis as 'the basic and initial lay perspective' on nationality or ethnicity as representing the cohesiveness of 'peoplehood'. It is an emotive 'gut feeling' sense of affinity with the people in question (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 118).

> *Primordialism is defined as a sentiment, or affect laden set of beliefs and discourses, about a perceived essential continuity from group ancestry to progeny (perceived kith and kin), located symbolically in a specific territory or place (which may or may not be the current place of the people concerned)* (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 1997; 2003, p. 119; Weinreich, 1998)

The set of beliefs and discourses forming primordialist sentiments is not predetermined. It may vary from person to person and from culture to culture, but certainly these beliefs and discourses will express the perceived essential ancestral continuity—in terms of language, tradition and custom; the inevitability of the ethnicity or nationality; the necessary relationship to the land, etc. Upon reflection about what has been initially taken as a natural order of things, some people will develop more of a situationalist perspective (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 118). To them, nations have not been considered as eternally stable entities—on the contrary—they are rather being constructed and reconstructed throughout history.

> *Situationalism is defined as a set of beliefs or discourses about the instrumental and socially constructed nature of the group, in which interpretations and reinterpretations of history provide rationales justifying the legitimacy of a peoplehood.* (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 1997; Weinreich, 1998)

The definitions presented above are not exclusive. A person can simultaneously hold beliefs and values that refer to aspects of both primordialism and situationalism, thereby people who hold wholly one or another type of these beliefs consistently are considered to be rare.

3. Background of the study

Since Estonia regained its independence in 1991 a need to resolve practical issues about how to make the 'restored nation-state' (in a form of liberal democracy) and its ethno-demographic realities of the post-colonial environment correspond. A discursive conflict between human rights and imperatives of the nation-state was already implanted into the nation-building project. The ethnic consolidation perspective of a nation-state was reshaped to the discourse of modernisation, which launched the project of building liberal community, incorporating collective rights for minorities. At the same time language requirements for obtaining national citizenship were not regarded as a tool for communitarian nation building, but as a precondition for active republican citizenship (Ruutsoo, 2002, pp. 52–53). At the end of the 1990s when the threat to the Estonian language and culture was no longer perceived to be as direct as before, the government adopted the 'Estonian Integration Programme 2000–2007'. While the main idea of the programme was to promote a multicultural society where all cultures are treated as equal, this overall principle appeared to be in contradiction with the aim of the Estonian statehood (Vetik, 2002, p. 60). Despite the fact that the state had to create conditions for the cultural development of ethnic minorities, it has been preordained at the constitutional level that Estonia should stay and will remain Estonia-centred as the aim of Estonian statehood itself is the preservation of the totality of the Estonian language and cultural space (*State Programme*, 2000, p. 23).

The Estonian social scientist Marju Lauristin (2011, p. 194) gives a broader view when analysing reasons of societal developments in regard to inclusion and exclusion during the last 20 years after the country regained its independence. According to her, it is paradoxical in Estonia that despite social troubles, people continuously support liberal economic policies and are ready to express support for a rightwing government that makes drastic cuts. Her analysis is commensurate with Henri Vogt who has adopted the concept of 'nation-liberalism' which values statehood as an institution that supports economic success, which is used to legitimise the readiness to make social sacrifices (for example, to unquestioningly support crisis cutbacks, which painfully affect families with children, the social security of workers, as well as schools and cultural institutions) as "national virtues". Commenting on the results of Estonia's last elections which kept the coalition that made the drastic cuts in power, Vogt writes:

> *What these results seem to tell, above all, is that the political and economic course that Estonia has followed over the past two decades*

> *is now widely accepted by the citizenry.[...] the Estonian political system, its polity, continuously obtains its basic energy from a strong sense of being a national Gemeinschaft, a community of ethnic Estonians.* (Vogt, 2011, p. 40)

This is an appeal to a 'primordialist' sentiment of a national community of ethnic Estonians, which must pose some difficulty for Russian primordialists, whose identity is Russian (living in Estonia), compared with Russian situationalists, whose identity is Russian-Estonian. Here it becomes evident that the 'culture' of Estonia, despite the political rhetoric about cultural pluralism, is thereby predominantly primordialist.

Vogt continues:

> *This also means that a large part, or perhaps the majority, of the country's citizens have deemed the sacrifices of the past 20 years necessary and above all justified. Many ordinary Estonians, far more than was expected as the new era of independence dawned, have suffered severely during the post-Soviet transformation processes. The cleavages between winners and losers, between the successful and the unfortunate, have often been deep and clear-cut; [...] The deepest cleavage of all is, of course, that between the Russian-speaking population and the native Estonians.* (Vogt, 2011, p. 40)

According to Vogt's construction of Estonian society, Estonians and Russians are expected to show the sharpest distinction according to delineation along ethnic lines. It is expected to be true in most of the cases. At the same time researchers have found the Russian-speaking community very heterogeneous (Laitin, 1998; Vihalemm & Kalmus, 2009) in their attitudes, depending on how native they are to Estonia, their citizenship status, age, education, social position and Estonian language skills, to point out some factors. In response to Estonians' overall primordialism, exposed through 'nation-liberalism', a guess is that these tough societal changes have established grounds for Russians' primordialism as well. Still, the heterogeneity of Russians at large is reflected in non-Estonians' increasing overall polarisation within integration processes. *Estonian Integration Monitoring 2011* (2012, p. 7) shows that during 2008–2011 the degree of integrated residents of other ethnicities has not changed (remaining at 61%), while the share of strongly integrated residents and of those who have not integrated at all, has increased. The latter category can be related first of all to primordialists, and those who have been able to integrate more successfully will have a stronger propensity towards situationalism.

4. Earlier studies in Estonia

Ethnic and national identity of Estonians and Russians has been studied by Martin Ehala, who approaches Estonia's Russians and their identity changes by dividing the Russians' identity development in independent Estonia into developmental periods (Ehala, 2008). During the second half of the 1990s, the attitudes of Estonians and Russian speakers towards integration were more positive than at any other time since the restoration of independence. Estonians' and Russians' ideals coincided during the 2000–2004 period which can be labelled as a period of integration and consumer individualism, based largely on economic growth. Despite all positive effects of joining the EU in 2004, it was accompanied by new threats like invasion of the English language, possible arrivals of new immigrants, a weakening of the sense of national pride, and emigration. In the years 2004–2007, the weakening of ethnic identities emerged as a salient issue in radical nationalist circles and ways were actively sought to mobilise the nationalist sentiment. This feeling of threat is a major reason for the creation of conflicts between two subgroups of the same category. According to Ehala, in such situations ethnic conflict is the most effective way to sharpen the definition of boundaries between groups. The development of events was greatly influenced by Russia's new identity policy. Russia's celebration of the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War clearly showed that victory in the "Great Patriotic War" is one of the most important sources of national pride for Russian identity (Ehala, 2008). This finding is also consistent with the Bronze Soldier crisis of 2007. The removal of the Bronze Soldier, a Second World War memorial which was erected by the Soviet power in 1947, from the centre of Tallinn to a military cemetery, was followed by riots. Most of the Russian protesters partaking in the riots were youth who could speak the Estonian language. These riots signalled that for ethnic Russians, language learning is not sufficient for creating a common national identity or feelings of belonging to Estonia. Thereby within the current study language policies and their influence to Estonians' and Russians' identity construction will be one of the main foci.

5. Formulation of the research question and the hypotheses

Earlier studies have shown that since the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet Union, first the ethnic identity of Estonia's Russians became privatised and threatened, thereafter influences of globalisation and consumerism weakened both Estonian and Russian ethnic identities, although a starting point for the construction of a shared national identity was almost within reach. Instead, these gaps on either side became fulfilled with nationalism. As far as both Russians and Estonians were concerned, the stronger linkage to the Soviet past became visible and started to dominate again (Ehala, 2008). Parallel societies of Estonians and Russians, which have existed since the Soviet times and were mostly supported by two parallel educational systems, were separated through two different languages of instruction (Lindemann & Saar, 2011, pp. 61–63). Determined efforts to change the educational system towards being monolingual through governmental policies became an issue of high salience among Russians as these policies were perceived as a measure for forced assimilation accompanied with limited possibilities for education in their mother tongue. Negative outcomes of integration could possibly be a source of retrenchment towards basic primordialism among both ethnic groups in Estonia, as both Estonians' and Russians' ethnic identities could be perceived as being threatened.

The current study aims to elucidate the underlying socio-psychological processes that result in primordialist sentiments among both ethnic groups in their ethnic identity structure construction. It also aims to specify areas that are the most distinctive and others that are the most shared among the Estonian and Russian ethnic identities in order to sort out possible common starting points for the formation of a shared national identity in the future.

In the following, I will review three postulates (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003), and taking into account Estonia's local interethnic environment (i.e. the distinction between ethnic Estonians and Russians), I will formulate four hypotheses to facilitate the analysis of locally gathered data.

The first postulate concerns the influence of variations in the development of nationhood.

Postulate 1: ***Diversified socio-cultural ethos, individual cosmopolitanism and situationalism***

> *Those historical cultural and personal circumstances that stimulate people to think of the complexities of nationhood—acknowledging*

> *fluidity and diversity—will generate a greater propensity towards situationalism.* (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 122)

Weinreich *et al.* have explained and justified this postulate through the example of Protestant British in Ulster who should by way of their historical experience of the British national debate about diverse cultural heritages express situationalism, while Catholics in Ireland should be more prone through unquestioning Irish Catholicism to primordialist perspectives (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 123). Within the framework of my study concerning Estonians and Russians in Estonia, both ethnic groups have experienced (and suffered) a lot during the changes occurring over the last 20 years. Still, the guess is that for Estonians, who have enjoyed independence and own statehood, joined the European Union and NATO, introduced their own currency in 1992 and the euro in 2011, the post-Soviet change has been more stable and positive compared to Russians, whose status from a prestigious majority of the Soviet Union to a minority in a small independent state, separated by the state border from their historical homeland, forced them to follow integration policies adopted in Estonia to protect Estonians and "their" nation-state. The worst blows for Russians (in all ex-Soviet republics) were the adoption of the language law(s) in 1989 and the collapse of the USSR itself, called 'the double cataclysm' by David Laitin (1998, p. 85). The expectation here would be that:

Hypothesis 1a: *Given the historical change from the former Soviet domination to their current status within Estonia, those Russians who hold contemporary allegiance to Estonia are more likely to be situationalists than Estonians who experience the longstanding continuity over generations of Estonian heritage (that is, Estonians will remain more primordial).*

Hypothesis 1b: *Other Russians in Estonia who do not hold contemporary allegiance to Estonia are more likely to be primordialists (identifying more closely with Russians of Russia).*

Postulate 2: ***Situationalists' enhanced developmental change in identity***

> *Given their developing questioning stance on 'nationality', situationalists compared with primordialists will show a greater perceived change in the ethnic or national aspect of their identities over time and greater modulation in their empathetic identifications with others who represent primordialist or situationalist perspectives on 'nationality'* (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 125).

As already formulated in Hypotheses 1a and 1b, whereby the flexibility and developments of identity concerning time perspective should be more evident among Russians, the expectation here will be given in the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 2: *Due to their experience of more profound societal change for them, a heightened developmental change will be the most distinctive among Russian situationalists' identity accompanied also by their greater modulation with 'political groupings' and ethno-national winners/losers groups. Thereafter, Estonian situationalists should demonstrate the second highest developmental modulation.*

Postulate 3: ***Consonant discourses as core evaluative dimensions of identity***

> *For the more strident primordialists, ISA postulates that they will endorse and express primordialist discourses as core evaluative dimensions of identity with high structural pressures when appraising national or ethnic agencies in their social world. Likewise, for the more ideologically committed situationalists, ISA postulates that they will use situationalist discourses with high structural pressures* (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 150).

Postulate 3 will be used to define the following in order to underline the role of consonant discourses in regard to primordialism and situationalism among Estonians and Russians, the following hypothesis was formulated.

Hypothesis 3: *Primordialists will endorse and express primordialist discourses as core evaluative dimensions of identity with high structural pressures when appraising national or ethnic agencies in their social world. Likewise, situationalists will use situationalist discourses with high structural pressures.*

6. Research method

6.1. Defining identity parameters

The following identity parameters of ISA will be used in the analysis.

Empathetic identification with another:

> *The extent of one's current empathetic identification with another is defined as the degree of similarity between the qualities one attributes*

> *to the other, whether 'good' or 'bad', and those of one's current self-image* (Weinreich, [1980]1986; Weinreich, 2003).

Emotional significance:

> *The emotional significance of a construct used by one during appraisal of one's social world is defined as the strength of affect associated with the expression of the construct* (Ewart & Weinreich, 2006).

Structural pressure on a construct:

> *The phrase 'structural pressure on a construct' is introduced to refer to the pressures that arise from the structures of cognitive–affective consonances and dissonances associated with the use of the construct:*
>
> *The structural pressure on a person's construct is defined as the overall strength of the excess of compatibilities over incompatibilities between the evaluative connotations of attributions one makes to each entity by way of the one construct and one's overall evaluation of each entity* (Weinreich, [1980]1986; 2003).

6.2. Study design and respondent selection

The ISA identity instrument used in this study was custom-designed for this research and was based on my best understanding of ethnic and cultural features central to Estonians and Russians living in Estonia and to the major research questions addressed in the introduction to this article. The entities and constructs were selected on the basis of previous studies carried out in Estonia among Estonians and Russians and also on a comparative in-depth study of primordialism and ethnic identity in Northern Ireland and Slovakia (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003).

6.2.1. Formulation of constructs

Although in 2011 the world was slowly recovering from the economic crisis that started already in 2008, there is still a need to include a construct which would assess a population's ability and prospects to relate this expected recovery from the crisis with the 'right-wing government that makes drastic cuts' (Lauristin, 2011, p. 194). The construct was phrased as follows:

1L *...believe/s that despite policies of large cuts implemented thus far, only the current government is capable of steering Estonia out of the economic crisis*

1R *...believe/s that success in recovering from the crisis does not depend on the particular government that Estonia has today*

The people of the Baltic States have viewed their countries' economic peril as a personal challenge and have expressed a collective desire to protect their countries from the devastating impact of the global crisis. References have also been made to the earlier experiences of the Baltic countries, especially Estonia, as they coped with the post-Communist economic collapse in the early 1990s by implementing radical economic reforms (Lauristin, 2011, p. 193). Possible collectively committed devotion here should be tested with the following bipolar construct:

2L *..feel/s that the difficulties that Estonia's society has gone through and the experience of the transition shock have helped the society to manage the current crisis*

2R *...feel/s that managing the current crisis does not depend on the experience of having survived the post-Soviet transition period and difficulties*

While linguistic-communicative integration, which means the reproduction of a common information space, has been considered one of the key aspects for successful societal integration, there has to be a certain common understanding among the population groups indicating that Estonian language and culture have a future. Also, will the command of Estonian language easily guarantee out-group acceptance for Russians? Two following constructs were included:

3L *...know/s that the Estonian language and culture are based on history and traditions, and have a future*

3R *...believe/s that Estonian culture and language are destined to vanish in the globalising world*

4L *...believe/s that it is easy for Russians to merge into the Estonian society by knowing the Estonian language*

4R *...believe/s that it is difficult for Russians to merge into the Estonian society even with a full command of the Estonian language*

The idea of the following construct is to use respondents' assessment of the presence of ethnic cleavage in the society.

5L *...think/s that there are no grounds to claim that there are ethnic cleavages in the Estonian society*

5R *...think/s that there exists a deep cleavage in the Estonian society*

The following constructs were included to help respondents to evaluate self and others from the aspect of civic values.

6L *are/is tolerant towards other people and views*

6R *do/es not accept other people and different views*

9L *...have/has a good sense of ethics and social responsibility*

9R *...are/is prone to corruption and self-aggrandisement*

Scientific evidence is still lacking on whether increasing the severity of penalties for those who do not comply with language laws is the best way to regulate language use. On the contrary, there are indications that the opposite is true—thick and control-orientated policies aimed at unifying complex language practices that are not in conformity with the official language ideology tend to work very slowly (Vihalemm & Siiner, 2011, p. 123). Although stronger control has not been considered an effective measure in Estonia, the following construct was included to let the respondents evaluate the effectiveness of language policies in general while the attitudes of respondents and their significant others concerning the overall repulsion to control was tested.

7L *...believe/s that by strengthening control and penalties when implementing language policy accelerates linguistic integration and use of the official language*

7R *...believe/s that strong control and penalties do not result in faster integration and greater use of the official language*

Despite the fact that ethnic affiliation has been considered less important than language proficiency in differentiating opportunities for participation in the labour market or public life, the claim that wealthier non-Estonians have easier access to language and citizenship because of their socio-economic position (Lauristin, 2011, p. 196) is included as a bipolar construct in order to view the role of such inequality in the construction of both Russian and Estonian respondents' identity.

8L *...think/s that the wealthier and more successful non-Estonians have gained, along with a better socio-economical position, both language skills and citizenship*

8R *...think/s that non-Estonians' command of the Estonian language and citizenship does not relate to their socio-economical position*

The ideologisation of cultural space, especially when it has been done through thesis and antithesis, delineated by the interpretation of the history of the Second World War, stifles open discussion in the society. In order to evaluate the seriousness of this claim within one's identity structure, the following construct was included:

10L *...is/are of the opinion that the Soviet Union was first of all the liberator of Eastern Europe in the Second World War*

10R *...is/are of the opinion that the Soviet Union was first of all the occupier of Eastern Europe in the Second World War*

In order to let a Russian respondent construe his or her affiliation with Estonia and to measure Estonian respondents' acceptation of Estonia's Russians, the following construct was included:

11L *...believe/s that Russians living in Estonia have more in common with Estonia being their country of residence*

11R *...believe/s that Estonian Russians feel more in common with Russia being the country of their origin*

The following three constructs were used to determine the respondents' belongingness either to the primordialist or situationalist category. Constructs 12, 13 and 14 were elaborated by Peter Weinreich and his colleagues for the comparative study of primordialism and were effectively used in Northern Ireland and Slovakia (Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003, p. 133). (P) and (S) indicate primordialist or situationalist polarity in the case of each construct, respectively.

12L *...believe/s that national ties override divisions of wealth and social position (P)*

12R *...believe/s that economic interests rather than national ones unite a people (S)*

13L *...consider/s nationality is given forever (P)*

13R *...a person is able to adapt to being of any nationality (S)*

14L *...believe/s that a common ancestral language is the essential hallmark of national and ethnic heritage (P)*

14R *...believe/s that a common ancestral language is not necessary for national belonging (S)*

6.2.2 . Selection of entities

The entities which were used for the research were divided into five domains. According to the ISA methodology there are four mandatory entities within the *domain of self (current self, ideal self, contra-ideal self and past self)*. The domain of personal heritage involves respondent's parents, while his/her friends belong to the domain of significant persons. The domain of national/ethnic groups includes both ethnic groups divided into 'winners' and 'losers' to enable the respondent to evaluate the categories which include successful or unsuccessful role model related to each ethnic group during his or her assessment. Here the dimension of 'winners' and 'losers' will be a cognitive category for the respondents to identify with, although in earlier studies in Estonia these categories have been operationalised (e.g., Narusk & Hansson, 1999). 'Russians in Russia' is included as an optional external other to identify or contra-identify with. In order to measure respondents' affiliation with political groupings, entities like 'government today' and the 'opposition in Riigikogu' (the Parliament of Estonia) were also included.

6.2.3. Study instrument and respondent selection

The ISA instrument was administered to two groups of students. The idea was to investigate the identity of Estonians and Russians by using the postulates to be verified instead of testing the hypotheses described above. The instrument was prepared consisting of 14 entities and 14 constructs. The instrument employed in the study was printed in Estonian and in Russian and was identical in both languages. The bipolar construct appeared at the top of each page, below which were listed 14 entities, each followed by a nine-point scale. The bi-directional centre-zero rating scales (4-3-2-1-0-1-2-3-4) made no *a priori* assumptions of favourable or unfavourable connotations associated with either end of the scale. The idea was to have as homogeneous sample as possible in order to eliminate variations caused by age, social position and highest educational level gained. I had to use student sample, as the resources to carry out a more extensive fieldwork were limited.

All students were majoring in international relations at the Tallinn University of Technology. The question about ethnicity was included as background

information. Only students who reported their ethnicity being 'Estonian' or 'Russian' were selected for the analysis. The year of birth of all of the students ranged from 1989 to 1992.

7. Results

In order to be able to distinguish between primordialists and situationalists among Estonians and Russians, both ethnic groups were divided before analysis according to their ideal self-positioning in regard to the following construct:

13L *...consider/s nationality is given forever (P)*

13R *...a person is able to adapt to being of any nationality (S)*

The final distribution of respondents by ethnicity, gender and primordialist/ situationalist division is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Division of respondents into primordialists and situationalists

	Estonians n=23		Russians n=22		
	Primordialists	Situatio-nalists	Primordialists	Situatio-nalists	Total
Male	4	6	4	8	22
Female	7	6	6	4	23
Total	11	12	10	12	45

The analysis by Ipseus software was carried out for four groups of respondents:

- Estonian primordialists (n=11); overall these 11 cases are distinctly primordialist (Table 4, see p. 148).
- Estonian situationalists (n=12); overall these 12 cases are very weakly situationalist with obtruding primordialist sentiment (Table 5, see p. 149).
- Russian primordialists (n=10); overall these 10 cases are strongly primordialist (Table 6, see p. 150).
- Russian situationalists (n=12); overall these 12 cases are weakly or conflicted situationalist (Table 7, see p. 151).

The division of the research participants into primordialists and situationalists was compromised by the lack of individuals expressing strong situationalist perspectives on ethnicity and nationality—the 'situationalists' of the investigation

are only weakly so (as these cases are far from holding a clear-cut situationalist perspective, they will be referenced hereafter in quotation marks to indicate this). If these findings were representative of the Estonian population, they would indicate generally primordialist Estonian and Russian cultures in Estonia, somewhat more so among the Estonians than the Russians. Further research with representative samples would be required to establish the generality of the respective ethno-national cultural propensities. The fieldwork data, after being entered and transferred into electronic format for analysis, were processed using Ipseus software. Four hypotheses (reformulated from the postulates) were tested using identity parameters generated from computer analysis. Interpretation of these results is as follows.

Hypothesis 1a: *Given the historical change from former Soviet domination to their current status within Estonia, those Russians who hold contemporary allegiance to Estonia are more likely to be situationalists than Estonians who experience the longstanding continuity over generations of Estonian heritage (that is, Estonians will remain more primordial).*

Hypothesis 2b: *Other Russians in Estonia who do not hold contemporary allegiance to Estonia are more likely to be primordialists (identifying more closely with Russians of Russia).*

Table 2. Empathetic identification of respondents with ethno-national groups

	Estonians			Russians		
	PRIM	SIT	F-ratio	PRIM	SIT	F-ratio
Estonia's Russians – winners	0.58	0.63	0.276	0.66	0.63	0.169
Estonia's Russians – losers	0.32	0.35	0.387	0.68	0.51	5.401**
Estonians – winners	0.85	0.73	4.175*	0.44	0.52	1.311
Estonians – losers	0.65	0.61	0.225	0.53	0.46	0.969
Russians in Russia	0.34	0.28	0.765	0.59	0.46	3.211*

** p <= 0.1; ** p <= 0.05; Scale range: Identification 0.00 to 1.00.*

PRIM: Primordialists; SIT: Situationalists

This evidence suggests that the ethos of Estonians is predominantly primordialist as indicated by the 'Estonians – winners', with whom PRIM Estonians identify more closely and empathetically (0.85) than SIT Estonians (0.73). Compared to 'situationalists', primordialist Russians identify more closely and empathetically

with those Russians who do not 'fit in' Estonia ('Estonia's Russians – losers') (0.68 cf. 0.51) and 'Russians in Russia' (0.59 cf. 0.46). The closest empathetic identification that any of these groupings has is 0.85 for primordialist Estonians with 'Estonians – winners', followed by 0.73 for 'situationalist' Estonians with Estonian winners, then by 0.68 for primordialist Russians with 'Estonia's Russians – losers', and then by only a moderate 0.63 for 'situationalist' Russians with 'Estonia's Russian – winners' (Table 2).

These results show that hypothesis 1a was valid since 'flexible' and Estonian-minded Russian 'situationalists' identified with 'Estonia's Russians – winners' that shows their allegiance towards Estonia while both Estonian primordialists and 'situationalists' through their high identifications (with Estonians – winners) demonstrated overall primordialism among Estonians. Hypothesis 1b was also valid as 'Russians in Russia' was most highly supported by Russian primordialists, which demonstrates their identification with roots and the importance of historical legacy within their identity construction.

Hypothesis 2: *Due to their experience of more profound societal change for them, a heightened developmental change will be the most distinctive among Russian situationalists' identity accompanied also by their greater modulation with 'political groupings' and ethno-national winners-losers groups. Thereafter, Estonian situationalists should demonstrate the second highest developmental modulation.*

The evidence about ongoing processes stated in Hypothesis 2 is presented in Table 3. Estonian 'situationalists' demonstrate a four per cent greater average change when compared to primordialists (9.4% cf. 13.4%). This means that in regard to Estonians the hypothesis is valid. In addition, when examining carefully, 'situationalists' show the biggest changes in increasing identification with 'Estonia's Russians – winners' (+19%) and two most decreasing identifications are with 'Estonia's Russians – losers' (-23%) and 'Russians in Russia' (-36%). Here Estonian 'situationalists' report their "addiction to success" while ethnicity as identification category seems to be of secondary importance. 'Estonia's Russians - winners' have been taken as possible 'business partners' becoming like 'in-group members' to identify with. At the same time tremendous distancing from 'Russians in Russia' marks a deepening distancing from Russians as the "others". Even Estonian primordialists do not distance in identification to such an extent from 'Russians in Russia' (-18%), instead their identification with their own ethno-national group ('Estonians – winners') has increased almost by 15% during the last four years. The overall estimation about Estonian 'situationalists' is their numerically greater modulation in identifications when focusing on three key

identification patterns concerning Russians. Estonian primordialists have moved closer to their Estonian core, namely 'Estonians – winners', and changing less in their attitudes about Russians in general (as when compared to 'situationalists').

When comparing the mean differences of Russian primordialists and 'situationalists' (8.5% cf. 26.4%) the summarised averaged changes in modulation of empathetic identity are substantially more visible, and changes in the identification of 'situationalists' are more evident compared to that of primordialists as expected by the hypothesis. The primordialists' identification with both the government and the opposition has decreased while the identification of 'situationalists' has increased with both, especially with the government (39%). In regard to their own group, 'situationalists' again show noticeable identification change with their 'winners' (18%) while there is no change among primordialists at all. Instead, primordialists have started to identify more strongly with 'losers' (+5%) while the 'situationalists'' degree of similarity with them has decreased by 16 per cent. The positive change in the identification of 'situationalists' with both Estonian 'winners' and 'losers' (39–41%) corresponds to the decrease in identification with both Estonians' groups among Russian primordialists. The inflexibility of primordialists in any direction is also exemplified with unchanged identification with 'Russians in Russia' while the identification of 'situationalists' with the latter category has dropped by 24 per cent.

As the analysis of the data in Table 3 shows, Russian primordialists express in their identification changes 'frozen' attitudes even in regard to identifying with their own winners' group.

They are also the only of the four analysed groups here whose almost all identification developments are neutral or negative with only one exception among the seven agents or agencies—a slight "positive" change (5%) towards 'Russians – losers'. At the same time, the most "positive" group are Russian 'situationalists' whose two decreasing identifications are only with 'Estonia's Russians – losers' and 'Russians in Russia'. At first glance it is possible to conclude that their "pro-Estonia speed rate" has been much higher than among Estonians themselves. Another and even more wide-reaching conclusion is that the cleavage among Russian primordialists and Russian 'situationalists' is noticeably larger than the cleavage between Estonians and Russians in general. Also, the cleavage between Estonian primordialists and 'situationalists' remains less significant, although 'situationalists' are closer to Russians in their identifications. These results clearly demonstrate that, while there are clear-cut Russian primordialists and 'situationalists', the Estonian 'situationalists' are not clear-cut, but retain elements of primordialist sentiment.

Table 3. Empathetic identification based on the past and current self-images with 'political groupings' and national winners–losers groups

	Estonians						Russians					
	Primordialists			'Situationalists'			Primordialists			'Situationalists'		
	Past	Current	%diff	Past	Current	%diff	Past	Current	% diff	Past	Current	% diff
Government of Estonia today	0.72	0.71	-1.4	0.62	0.64	+3.2	0.46	0.40	-15.0	0.36	0.50	+38.9
Opposition in Riigikogu	0.60	0.60	0.0	0.54	0.57	+5.6	0.56	0.50	-12.0	0.50	0.58	+9.4
Estonia's Russians – winners	0.55	0.58	+5.4	0.53	0.63	+18.9	0.66	0.66	0.0	0.54	0.63	+16.7
Estonia's Russians – losers	0.38	0.32	-18.7	0.43	0.35	-22.9	0.65	0.68	+4.6	0.59	0.51	-15.7
Estonians –winners	0.74	0.85	+14.9	0.69	0.73	+5.8	0.52	0.44	-18.2	0.37	0.52	+40.5
Estonians -losers	0.70	0.65	-7.7	0.62	0.61	-1.6	0.58	0.53	-9.4	0.33	0.46	+39.4
Russians in Russia	0.40	0.34	-17.6	0.38	0.28	-35.7	0.59	0.59	0.0	0.57	0.46	-23.9
Mean % diff			9.4			13.4			8.5			26.4

Scale range: Identification 0.00 to 1.00.

Hypothesis 3: *Primordialists will endorse and express primordialist discourses as core evaluative dimensions of identity with high structural pressures when assessing national or ethnic agencies in their social world. Likewise, situationalists will use situationalist discourses with high structural pressures.*

In order to test this hypothesis, the following comparison of the values and beliefs of eleven Estonian primordialists (moderately strongly so) and twelve weak 'situationalists' (retaining primordialist sentiments) will be reviewed (see Tables 4 & 5). Identity parameters (emotional significance and structural pressure) reported by the Ipseus analysis have been provided in the Tables where the first three constructs as indicative in regard to propensities towards classification as 'primordialists' or 'situationalists' have been grouped at the top, thereafter all other constructs have been analysed in order to distinguish between these two orientations.

The twelve Estonian 'situationalists' have an overall weak situationalist perspective on ethno-nationality and retain distinctly primordialist sentiments, which suggests that in practice there is only a marginal differentiation between their ethno-national orientation and that of the eleven Estonian primordialists. Marginal differences are revealed in a slight tendency for the 'situationalists' towards individual autonomy, contrasted with the primordialists' tendency towards the *status quo* of the current government and socio-economic status, so that 'situationalists' tend to endorse the belief (conflicted) that recovering from the current crisis does not depend on the part of the Estonian government, whereas primordialists tend to believe (conflicted) that only the government can lead Estonia out of the economic crisis; and non-Estonians' command of the Estonian language and citizenship does not relate to their socio-economical position, while primordialists tend to endorse the belief (conflicted) that wealthier and more successful non-Estonians have gained, along with a better socio-economical position, both language skills and citizenship. These findings suggest that Estonian culture at large (as represented by these Estonian participants) is predominantly primordialist, with only a very weak element of situationalist perspective restricted to only a few Estonians (cf. Weinreich, Bacova & Rougier, 2003).

Further differences between the 'situationalists' and the primordialists are revealed in the structural pressures on endorsements of the beliefs that Estonian society is not ethnically cleavaged (this is substantially greater for 'situationalists' at 52.19 compared with 33.32 for primordialists) and the expression of tolerance towards other people and views (substantially greater for 'situationalists' at 69.85 compared with 59.04 for primordialists).

In other respects, as assessed by the discourses included in the instrument, there are minimal differences to be found. The core concerns as common prominent dimensions of the Estonian participants' identity are that the Estonian language and culture have a future, it should be easy for Russians to merge into the Estonian society if they know the language, and it should be acknowledged that the Soviet Union was the occupier of Eastern Europe in the Second World War. These results demonstrate that there exists a propensity towards *assimilation* supported by overwhelmingly primordialist Estonian ethno-national culture backed with the Soviet Union as a negative agency from the history, while situationalist *integration* perspective is more considered like a challenge towards mutually respected diversity.

In order to test the hypothesis in regard to Estonia's Russians, the following comparison of the values and beliefs of ten Estonia's Russian primordialists

(strongly so) with twelve 'situationalists' (weakly so) will be presented in Tables 6 and 7. Identity parameters (emotional significance and structural pressure) reported in the Ipseus analysis have been provided in the tables where the first three constructs as indicative in regard to propensities towards classification as 'primordialists' or 'situationalists' have been grouped on the top, thereafter all other constructs are analysed in order to distinguish between these two orientations. Polarity differences in endorsement of beliefs (dimensions of identity) demonstrate that 'situationalists' by and large have greater faith in personal autonomy than primordialists.

Whereas Estonia's Russian primordialists endorse the belief (conflicted) that the Estonian language and culture are destined to vanish in a globalising world, their 'situationalist' counterparts endorse their having a future (a secondary dimension); primordialists endorse the belief (secondary) that socio-economic position is not a factor in their command of the Estonian language, whereas 'situationalists' tend to relate language skills and citizenship with a better socio-economic status (conflicted); primordialists veer towards the belief that control and penalties are the factors that induce learning the Estonian language (conflicted), while 'situationalists' do not believe that they are so necessary (conflicted); while primordialists tend to believe that the current government is responsible for leading Estonia out of its economic crisis (conflicted), 'situationalists' tend towards a different viewpoint (conflicted); and primordialists tend to view that the experience of the post-Soviet transition assists in managing the current crisis (conflicted), while 'situationalists' subscribe more to the view that the transition experience has no relevance to managing the crisis (conflicted).

Russian primordialists endorse the belief that the Soviet Union at the time of the Second World War was the liberator of Eastern Europe (secondary dimension), whereas their 'situationalist' counterparts are conflicted over this belief. 'Situationalists' are more positively inclined towards Estonia in respect to their feeling more in common with Estonians, thinking that the Estonian society is not ethnically cleavaged and that they can merge into the Estonian society by using Estonian language (all secondary dimensions for 'situationalists', but conflicted for primordialists).

Finally, Russian 'situationalists' who have tolerance towards other people and views as a core dimension of their identity, compared with this being only a secondary dimension for primordialists.

8. Discussion and conclusions

8.1. Evidence of cleavage between primordialist and 'situationalist' Estonians

8.1.1. Differences in values and beliefs

The polarities and structural pressures—core and conflicted—, which relate to the issues of the Second World War, Estonian language, out-group acceptance, recovering the economic crisis and tolerance will be discussed below (see Tables 4 & 5).

The results indicate that Estonian primordialists and 'situationalists' have both shared and non-shared values and beliefs. The list of shared cores consists of 'Soviet Union as occupier in the Second World War' (PRIM: 73.55; SIT: 74.60), 'Estonian language and culture have a future' (69.46; 72.63), 'easy for Russians to merge into the Estonian society if they know the language' (76.91; 74.79) and 'tolerance towards other people and views'. These as the core discourses of the Estonians' identity structure which are not easy to be changed even if there is a push from outside or inside of the community. It is evident that the Estonian language has the most important role for Estonians, the interpretation of the Second World War outcomes as negative for Estonia is consistent with language-related cores. Tolerance as a civic value demonstrates the openness of all Estonians towards other people although in terms of structural pressure has substantially lower value among primordialists compared to 'situationalists' (59.04 cf. 69.85).

Other differences between Estonian primordialists and 'situationalists' are experienced by favouring opposite polarities of conflicted dimensions in bipolar discourses. While primordialists endorse the belief that 'only the current government can lead Estonia out of the economic crisis', 'situationalists' support the understanding that 'recovering from the crisis does not depend on the particular government.' Conflicted discourses are subject to change within one's identity structure. Primordialists' trust in the current government to resolve the crisis (although conflicted) could be expected as this is consistent with primordialists' overall adoration of salient political groupings (as was also evident in the highest identification with the government in Table 3). Also, primordialists endorse the statement that 'wealthier and more successful non-Estonians have gained, along with better socio-economical position, both language skills and citizenship' while 'situationalists' rather express that non-Estonians' command of the Estonian language and citizenship status do not relate to their socio-economic position'. This is related to 'situationalists' propensity towards increased individual autonomy, but at large both of these differences

regarding Estonian primordialists and 'situationalists' remain rather decent, as the dominant core dimensions refer to primordialism as the main orientation within Estonians' ethno-national identity. Situationalism among Estonians is weakly expressed. Therefore, cleavages in values and beliefs concerning Estonian ethno-national identity, when divided by their orientations in respect of primordialism and situationalism, almost do not exist.

8.1.2. Differences in identification patterns

Differences in identification patterns demonstrate how individuals relate to societal groupings of relevance in contemporary Estonia. The results show that compared to 'situationalists', Estonian primordialists empathetically identify more strongly with the government (see Table 3). This was also confirmed by the prevailing discourse polarity stating that 'this particular government is the one who is able to steer Estonia out of the economic crisis.' The opposition's role is less notable among primordialists and 'situationalists'. The justification here could be long-lasting governance of Reform Party and Pro-Patria coalition accompanied by 'nation-liberal ideology' accepted among primordialists and 'situationalists' as the latter category shares mostly the same values within ethno-national identity discourses. Concerning identifications with ethno-national winners-losers groups both groups empathetically identify with 'Estonians – winners', (PRIM: 0.85 SIT: 0.73) but 'situationalists' lag behind. There exist no more significant differences in regard of identifications with any other ethno-national group among Estonians. This finding also contributes to earlier studies which claim that Estonians are much more consolidated compared to the country's migrant minorities, which have remained remarkably fragmented, both socially and politically, throughout the post-independence period (Vetik & Helemäe, 2011, p. 16).

Table 4. Structural pressure of Estonian primordialists
[data in this Table indicates that overall these 11 cases are distinctly primordialist]

Favoured polarity	Unfavoured polarity	Emotional significance	Structural pressure
Considers nationality is given forever (P)	A person is able to adapt to any nationality (S)	7.37 high	30.28 secondary
Language is an essential hallmark of ethnic and national heritage (P)	Language is not necessary for national belonging (S)	8.34 high	57.58 core
National ties override divisions of wealth (P)	Economic interests rather than national unite people (S)	6.36 high	14.56 conflicted
Believes that only current govt. can lead Estonia out of the economic crisis	Recovering from the crisis does not depend on the particular govt. Estonia has today	7.33 high	22.47 conflicted
Wealthier and more successful non-Estonians have gained, along with better socio-econ. pos., both language skills and citizens.	non-Estonians' command of Estonian language and citizenship does not relate to their socio-economical position	6.57 high	1.92 conflicted
Estonian society is not ethnically cleavaged	Estonian society is ethnically cleavaged	7.15 high	**33.32** secondary
Estonian Russians feel more common to Estonia	Estonian Russians feel more common to Russia	6.85 high	22.24 conflicted
Estonian language and culture have a future	Estonian language and culture are destined to vanish in the globalising world	8.30 high	69.46 core
Easy for Russians to merge into Estonian society when knowing the language	It is difficult even with a full command of Estonian language	8.57 high	76.91 core
Control and penalties necessary to improve Estonian language learning	Control and penalties do not result in faster integration and lang. learning	7.92 high	49.05 secondary
Difficulties Estonia passed after transition shock have helped to manage the current crisis	Managing the current crisis does not depend on the experience of having survived post-Soviet transition	7.34 high	29.96 conflicted
Soviet Union – occupier of Eastern Europe in WWII	Soviet Union – liberator of Eastern Europe in WWII	8.79 high	73.55 core
Tolerant towards other people and views	Do/es not accept other people and views	7.38 high	**59.04 core**
Has a good sense of ethics and social responsibility	Is prone to corruption and self-aggrandisement	7.46 high	43.35 secondary

Table 5. Structural pressure of Estonian 'situationalists'
[data in this Table indicates that overall these 12 cases are very weakly situationalist with obtruding primordialist sentiment]

Favoured polarity	Unfavoured polarity	Emotional significance	Structural pressure
A person is able to adapt to any nationality (S)	*Considers nationality is given forever (P)*	6.75 high	30.22 secondary
Language is an essential hallmark of ethnic and national heritage (P)	Language is not necessary for national belonging (S)	7.31 high	29.43 secondary
National ties override divisions of wealth (P)	Economic interests rather than national ones unite people (S)	7.09 high	15.18 conflicted
Recovering from the crisis does not depend on the particular govt. Estonia has today	Believes that only the current govt. can lead Estonia out of the economic crisis	6.67 high	-8.74 conflicted
non-Estonians' command of Estonian language and citizenship does not relate to their socio-economical position	Wealthier and more successful non-Estonians have gained, along with better socio-economical position, both language skills and citizenship	7.42 high	-1.93 conflicted
Estonian society is not ethnically cleavaged	Estonian society is ethnically cleavaged	6.30 high	**52.19** secondary
Estonia's Russians feel more common to Estonia	Estonia's Russians feel more common to Russia	6.83 high	26.76 conflicted
Estonian language and culture have a future	Estonian language and culture are destined to vanish in the globalising world	8.02 high	72.63 core
Easy for Russians to merge into Estonian society when knowing the language	It is difficult even with a full command of Estonian language	8.31 high	74.79 core
Control and penalties necessary to improve Estonian language learning	Control and penalties do not result in faster integration and lang. learning	7.24 high	48.37 secondary
Difficulties Estonia passed after transition shock have helped to manage the current crisis	Managing the current crisis does not depend on the experience of having survived post-Soviet transition	6.74 high	28.24 conflicted
Soviet Union – occupier of Eastern Europe in WWII	Soviet Union – liberator of Eastern Europe in WWII	8.95 high	74.60 core
Tolerant towards other people and views	Do/es not accept other people and views	7.78 high	**69.85 core**
Has a good sense of ethics and social responsibility	Is prone to corruption and self-aggrandisement	7.14 high	50.37 secondary

Table 6. Structural pressure of Russian primordialists
[data in this Table indicates that overall these 10 cases are strongly primordialist]

Favoured polarity	Unfavoured polarity	Emotional significance	Structural pressure
Considers nationality is given forever (P)	A person is able to adapt to any nationality (S)	8.91 high	**52.00 core**
Language is an essential hallmark of ethnic and national heritage (P)	Language is not necessary for national belonging (S)	9.05 high	**60.52 core**
National ties override divisions of wealth (P)	Economic interests rather than national ones unite people (S)	8.28 high	**24.09 secondary**
Estonia's Russians feel more common to Estonia	Estonia's Russians feel more common to Russia	7.70 high	10.74 conflicted
Soviet Union – liberator of Eastern Europe in WWII	Soviet Union – occupier of Eastern Europe in WWII	8.20 high	42.48 secondary
Estonian society is not ethnically cleavaged	Estonian society is ethnically cleavaged	7.31 high	-9.74 conflicted
Easy for Russians to merge into Estonian society when knowing the language	It is difficult even with a full command of Estonian language	7.87 high	3.75 conflicted
Estonian language and culture are destined to vanish in the globalising world	Estonian language and culture have a future	7.39 high	1.88 conflicted
non-Estonians' command of Estonian language and citizenship does not relate to their socio-economical position	Wealthier and more successful non-Estonians have gained, along with better socio-economical position, both language skills and citizenship	7.59 high	24.89 secondary
Control and penalties necessary to improve Estonian language learning	Control and penalties do not result faster integration and lang. learning	8.54 high	-22.42 contradictory
Believes that only current govt. can lead Estonia out of the economic crisis	Recovering from the crisis does not depend on the particular govt. Estonia has today	6.91 high	-5.35 conflicted
Difficulties Estonia passed after transition shock have helped to manage with the current crisis	Managing the current crisis does not depend on the experience of having survived post-Soviet transition	6.89 high	0.30 conflicted
Tolerant towards other people and views	Do/es not accept other people and views	6.61 high	37.93 secondary
Has a good sense of ethics and social responsibility	Is prone to corruption and self-aggrandisement	7.68 high	41.19 secondary

Table 7. Structural pressure of Russian 'situationalists'
[data in this Table indicates that overall these 12 cases are weakly or conflicted situationalist]

Favoured polarity	Unfavoured polarity	Emotional significance	Structural pressure
A person is able to adapt to any nationality (S)	*Considers nationality is given forever (P)*	7.56 high	**41.09 secondary**
Language is not necessary for national belonging (S)	*Language is an essential hallmark of ethnic and national heritage (P)*	8.04 high	**6.84 conflicted**
Economic interests rather than national ones unite people (S)	*National ties override divisions of wealth (P)*	7.18 high	**11.12 conflicted**
Estonia's Russians feel more common to Estonia	Estonia's Russians feel more common to Russia	7.48 high	32.37 secondary
Soviet Union – liberator of Eastern Europe in WWII	Soviet Union – occupier of Eastern Europe in WWII	8.55 high	17.72 conflicted
Estonian society is not ethnically cleavaged	Estonian society is ethnically cleavaged	6.72 high	21.23 secondary
Easy for Russians to merge into Estonian society when knowing the language	It is difficult even with a full command of Estonian language	8.09 high	38.73 secondary
Estonian language and culture have a future	Estonian language and culture are destined to vanish in the globalising world	7.64 high	20.60 secondary
Wealthier and more successful non-Estonians have gained, along with better socio-economical position, both language skills and citizenship	non-Estonians' command of Estonian language and citizenship does not relate to their socio-economical position	6.85 high	7.41 conflicted
Control and penalties do not result faster integration and lang. learning	Control and penalties necessary to improve Estonian language learning	8.38 high	7.78 conflicted
Recovering from the crisis does not depend on the particular govt. Estonia has today	Believes that only current govt. can lead Estonia out of the economic crisis	7.85 high	12.36 conflicted
Managing the current crisis does not depend on the experience of having survived post-Soviet transition	Difficulties Estonia passed after transition shock have helped to manage with the current crisis	7.43 high	16.48 conflicted
Tolerant towards other people and views	Do/es not accept other people and views	7.35 high	52.85 core
Has a good sense of ethics and social responsibility	Is prone to corruption and self-aggrandisement	6.79 high	37.41 secondary

8.2. Evidence of cleavage between primordialist and 'situationalist' Russians in Estonia

8.2.1. Differences in values and beliefs

For Russian primordialists there exist only two core dimensions in their ethno-national identity structure: 'considers nationality is given forever' (Structural Pressure (SP): 52.00) and 'language is an essential hallmark of ethnic and national heritage' (SP: 60.52) while for Russian 'situationalists' there exists only one core 'tolerance towards other people and views' (SP: 52.85). All the rest of the bipolar discourses have either secondary or conflicted structural pressure. Tables 6 and 7 present the lists of the constructs. It is important to notice that that 'control and penalties are necessary to improve Estonian language learning' (SP: -22.42) is extremely conflicted dimension for Russian primordialists that has even been labelled as contradictory. This is the dimension where primordialists feel the pressure from Estonian side while in their evaluations it is very stressful for them to support it when they don't have their internal acceptance to such policies. 'Situationalist' Russians endorse the opposite polarity of the same construct 'control and penalties do not result faster integration and language learning' (SP: 7.78). This difference is also affirmed by another polarisation between primordialists and 'situationalists' where primordialists endorse 'Estonian language and culture are destined to vanish in globalising world' (SP: 1.88) while 'situationalists' say 'Estonian language and culture have a future' (SP: 20.60). In regard of the economic crisis primordialists express conflicted attitude 'only the current government can steer Estonia out of the crisis', while 'situationalists' acknowledge that this does not depend on this particular government. At large, most of the bipolar identity dimensions (constructs) used for evaluation by primordialists and 'situationalists' were from different polarities. The same polarities were used only in 6 constructs out of the 14 in the case of Russians. This indicates a major distinction among Russian respondents here. Primordialists strongly express themselves by using identity dimensions which show their depression and resentment in regard to the Estonian language and culture. The Soviet Union as liberator in the Second World War continues to exist as a secondary dimension of their identity (SP: 42.48) while for 'situationalists' the same polarity of construct forms a conflicted dimension of their identity.

8.2.2. Differences in identification patterns

Polarisation among Russians is strongly visible also in their identification patterns with ethno-national groups. Primordialist Russians identify more closely and empathetically with 'Estonia's Russians – losers' and thereafter their next identification pattern 'Russians in Russia'. 'Situationalist' Russians identify with 'Estonia's Russians – winners' (see Table 2). Russian 'situationalists' empathetic identification with the government and opposition are higher compared to primordialists. This can be explained also by the primordialists' deprivation and resentment reporting minimal political interest and activity.

8.3. Conclusions

When using primordialism and situationalism as independent variables in this quasi-experimental research design in order to establish the socio-psychological underpinnings of the ethno-national identities of Estonians and Russians, some very interesting findings were revealed.

Although the sample size is small (and data from a representative sample are required for confirmation), evidence of this research shows that the Estonian society is predominantly primordialist. This is in part revealed by the paucity of Estonian subjects who held to a situationalist perspective on ethno-national identity in this study, so that Estonian 'situationalists' actually retained elements of primordialist sentiment. The distinction between the Estonian primordialist and 'situationalist' groups is rather small. Also, the analysis shows that Estonians–winners are those with whom both primordialists and 'situationalists' have primary empathetic identification, while Estonian winners are perceived as having primordialist attributes.

Nevertheless, even given the small development towards a situationalist perspective on the part of the Estonian 'situationalists', there emerged differences so that the latters' trust in the government slightly decreases, and their identification with the government is lower. Both Estonian primordialists and 'situationalists' share the same core identity dimensions concerned with the Estonian language and culture having a future, the Soviet Union's role in the Second World War as the occupier, it being easy for Russians to merge into the Estonian society if they know the language, and having tolerance about other people and views. This set of core dimensions of identity is in essence one of *assimilation* towards the generally primordialist Estonian ethno-national culture with the Soviet Union cast as the evil agency of the past, rather than a situationalist *integration* perspective of continuing cultural heritages that

are mutually respected for their diversity. On the other hand—the presence of 'tolerance' among these core dimensions will give some grounds to hope for acceptance for everybody, this being more true of the 'situationalists' rather than the primordialist Estonians.

In terms of Russians there is a substantial difference between Russian primordialists and 'situationalists'. This is the area where distinctions between winners and losers apply. Because of their resentment about Estonian national policies, Russian primordialists tend to identify themselves first with 'Estonia's Russians – losers' and thereafter with Russians in Russia. At the same time they hold on to the view that the Estonian language and culture are destined to vanish in globalising world, and the belief that the Soviet Union was a liberator in the Second World War.

Russian 'situationalists' tend to identify themselves first and foremost with 'Estonia's Russians – winners'. Their only core dimension of identity is related to 'tolerance about other people and views'. Features of their identity development from the past to current self reveal the most positive changes of all the Estonian and Russian groupings. Identifications with the Estonian government, Estonians–winners and even Estonians–losers have increased during the past four years according to the respondents' assessments. The question in regard to these Russian 'situationalists' and their increasing proximity to Estonian norms is whether they are going to accept the existing societal primordialism (thereby becoming assimilated) or will they be able to show the way towards the mutual acceptance of diverse ethnic heritages.

While the dimension of 'tolerance' features in all the four groupings, it is more characteristic of the 'situationalists' than the primordialists, and is only a secondary dimension for the Russian primordialists. Implacable (Estonian) language issues predominate both in the Estonian primordialist and 'situationalist' identities, as does the view of the Soviet Union being the occupier of Eastern Europe in the Second World War. For Russian primordialists the only core dimensions are the ones of nationality and ethnic language (Russian). For Russian 'situationalists', apart from the feature of 'tolerance', all of the assessed dimensions of identity are conflicted, indicating identities under considerable stress. These findings illustrate the socio-psychological nature of the dilemmas confronting the Estonian society from both Estonian and Estonia's Russian viewpoints in which the developmental psychological tenacity of primordialist sentiment predominates over situationalist perspectives. 'Tolerance' under these circumstances provides a route towards dealing with these dilemmas, even though the identity propensities revealed in the study warn about the nature of conflicts over identity cleavages within the Estonia's Russians (primordialists

and 'situationalists') and between the Estonians (holding more to primordialism) and Russians of contrasting propensities (primordialist towards Russia; 'situationalists' towards Estonia).

Besides ethno-national identity development and mutual group acceptance, tolerance at large has been considered a substantial feature for indirectly routing the society towards economic prosperity while "seamlessly" attracting the creative class (Florida, 2003; 2009) and facilitating expression of creativity in general. The presence of the three T's (tolerance, technology, talent) will lead to the concentration of the creative class thereby creating favourable conditions for research and development. It would be most worthwhile to undertake a new ISA study focusing on these aspects related to tolerance and carried out among different segments of population (e.g., entrepreneurs, students, designers) while using the current knowledge about ethno-national identity in order to map propensities in, say, entrepreneurial identity developments related to creativity and innovation.

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VERSITA

Some Aspects of the Baltic Countries' Pre- and Post-Accession Convergence to the European Union

Mait Talts

Department of International Relations,
Tallinn University of Technology
Akadeemia tee 3–256
Tallinn 12618, Estonia
E-mail: mait.talts@ttu.ee

Abstract: *This comprehensive article provides an overview of the broader process of political, legal and societal changes characterizing the Baltic countries' convergence towards the European Union. The article aims to identify the specific areas and issues which reveal both similarities and differences between the three Baltic countries. Special focus has been given to issues of economic development, economic policy choices, employment, public opinion and some legal aspects. The article, first of all, tries to reveal the differences between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania stemming from different economic policy decisions made by the Baltic countries in the 1990s as well as from to the fact that in 1997–1999 the European Union treated the Baltic countries somewhat differently in terms of conditionality. However, during the 21st century, especially due to the economic recession, the 'Baltic clocks' have been synchronized despite the obvious differences in political system and levels of economic development. The author of the current article believes that the main factor behind that development was the convergence to European Union.*

Keywords: *accession, Baltic States, convergence, economic policy, economic recession of 2008–2011, Estonia, European Union, Latvia, Lithuania, public opinion, unemployment*

The Baltic countries' pre- and post-accession development in regard to the EU is not a totally unstudied area. Numerous single studies have been conducted, a considerable number of articles and some significant books have been published, but the majority of them usually focuses on merely one of the Baltic States.

However, more comprehensive generalizations and genuinely comparative studies comprising developments in all three Baltic countries have begun to emerge just recently (e.g., Smith *et al.*, 2002; Van Elsuwege, 2008; Kasekamp, 2010; EHDR, 2011). The current article also tries to compare the political, economic and social developments in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania on the broader retrospective scale before and after the actual EU accession in order to reveal some issues, trends and shifts that have been not taken sufficiently into consideration.

The Baltic countries have been usually seen from outside as a single geopolitical area despite the fact that the countries themselves have tried to emphasize the differences ever since 1991. There is no doubt that sufficient cultural distinctions exist between Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. In the context of the convergence to the European Union and ultimately the financial crisis of 2008–2011 the Baltic countries have been forced to adopt quite similar economic and social policy solutions. The current paper tries to show in some detail how the Baltic countries have become more similar in the sense of economic policy, societal and public opinion trends despite the persistent different levels of social welfare, culture and political system.

1. Background

In the early 1990s, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania restored their independence after decades of Soviet occupation. Estonia and Latvia chose to strictly follow the path of legal continuity ("restoration of independence"). Upon the declaration of independence of the Republic of Lithuania on 12 March 1990, the declaration, *expressis verbis*, suggested the restoration of independence, but the act itself was implicitly based upon the inalienable right to self-determination and the right declared in the Soviet Union Constitution to "secede from the Union". Therefore, in 1991, Lithuania became *de facto* independent after the moratorium it applied to the declaration of independence and emerged as a new country with new boundaries and citizen population. Whereas clear reference was made only to the Helsinki Final Act of the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) and not explicitly to restoring the *status quo ante*, as was the case in the other Baltic countries (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 83).

In Estonia, a representative body of the pre-occupation period legitimized citizen population—*Eesti Kongress*—was selected for the restoration of independence, which in cooperation with the last Supreme Council of Soviet Estonia, elected

under Soviet jurisdiction but already in the new situation of political pluralism, established a new Constitutional Assembly to carve out the new Constitution by 1992. Latvia chose not to select such a representative body after the restoration of independence and their unique historical situation made it possible to enforce the original 1922 Constitution (Kasekamp, 2011, pp. 216–217), which has been later amended on several occasions.

The described legal differences in the restoration of independence in the Baltic region did not generate a principally different attitude towards the Baltic countries from the part of the EU, its main Member States or other Western countries (particularly the US). At least since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the "Baltic issue" has been unanimously regarded by the Western countries as a "special issue" (largely owing to the US and other countries' policy of non-recognition of the Soviet occupation) and since 1991 it has been approached as separate from other countries which restored independence after the Soviet Union's collapse (e.g., the Ukraine or Georgia). As a result, the legitimized right of the Baltic States to restore their independence was recognized by other countries and also by many international organizations, in which the Baltic countries simply reinstated their member status.

Already since 1989, the European Community has regarded the former Soviet satellite countries, the developing new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe as their potential strategic "backcountry" and, in the long run, one of the most important factors in the Union's enlargement and in consolidating the Common Market. Around the same time the implementation of the PHARE programme was prepared and the Baltic countries with other Central and East-European countries (CEEC) later joined. The juxtaposition of the Baltic States with other CEECs (and not only with other successors of the Soviet Union) was thus no longer an issue for the Western world after 1991. The first sign of the EU's changed attitude and not seeing the Baltic countries "as successors of the former Soviet Union" is the fact that the European Commission decided not to include the Baltic countries in the TACIS programme, which was implemented in December 1991 to assist members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 103). In the instrumental phase of convergence to the EU, when accession talks were already on the agenda, the issues of differentiation between the Central and East-European (including the Baltic) countries were nevertheless raised.

Among the main concerns of the Western countries was (and has been) the presence of a large foreign population compared to the indigenous population of Estonia and Latvia in the post-occupation period and this was, quite justly,

seen as a critical source of instability, even if somewhat overestimated at times. These were Russian-speaking people who had settled in the Baltic States during the years of occupation (see Katus, Puur & Sakkeus, 2002). After all, the early 1990s were a time when ethnic conflicts flared in former Yugoslavia and the territory of the former Soviet Union, and elements of conflict were certainly present in the Baltic region. The first European Parliament reports on the situation in the Baltics (e.g., the one by Gary Titley from December 1992) were relatively critical (Van Elsuwege, 2008, pp. 108–109). However, immediately after the European Council's Copenhagen Summit in June 1993 (at which the so-called Copenhagen criteria for new member countries were laid down) political consensus was achieved and the European Parliament started to support the view that the issue of the presence of Russian troops in the Baltic countries cannot be tied to the situation of the Russian-speaking population in these countries (Van Elsuwege, 2008, pp. 111–112). And yet, largely owing to the situation in the Baltic countries, all new agreements were added the so-called "Baltic clause", which directly indicated the need to safeguard democratic principles and human rights and stipulated sanctions for potential violation of these principles. Since similar clauses were included in the then European Community agreements with Slovenia and Albania, Peter Van Elsuwege (2008, p. 107) argues, this was a reflection of the political situation of the period (in Yugoslavia and Haiti) rather than anything else.

To build a functioning market economy and ensure general modernization, the convergence to the EU was virtually the only possible development alternative for the newly independent Baltic countries. At the beginning of the 1990s after the disappearance of the once unified Eastern market, mostly Finland and Sweden who were very close to accession and Denmark and Germany, who were already members, became the new target countries for the export and re-export (transit), which formed the foundation of these countries' economies. By 1995, export from the EU countries constituted 65 per cent of the total export to Estonia, in Latvia the percentage was 45 and in Lithuania 37, respectively (Grabbe & Hughes, 2000, p. 15).

Another problem that needed to be resolved was the security of the Baltic countries in what was feared to become a security vacuum (in terms of security policies in the "grey area" between the East and the West). Aside from NATO membership, European Union was seen as an additional security guarantee both by the political elite and by popular opinion (Ruutsoo *et al.*, 1998, p. 14). Of course, the European Union was not a substitute for NATO. The popularity of the European Union in Estonia (and possibly in other Baltic countries) was enhanced by the fact that without EU membership, Estonia would have had little

chance to join NATO. The fortuitous historical moment had to be seized and also gave meaning to former President of Estonia Lennart Meri's constant reminding that "we are permanently short of time" (see Meri, 1996).

At the same time, the Baltic countries' relations with the European Community/Union in the 1990s and later by no means developed in a simple and unproblematic course, as has been later claimed with political motivation. According to Klaudius Maniokas, "the Baltic–EU relations did not follow the principle of simple linear logic" and were accompanied by certain "instability, uncertainty about further steps and rather radical changes with respect to the geopolitical scope of enlargement" (Maniokas, 2005, pp. 19–20). In fact, this applies to both the pre-accession talks' period and the negotiations itself (see Raig, 2008, pp. 81–97).

The process even created significant tension between the Baltic countries, especially after the European Commission adopted Agenda 2000 in summer 1997, and in December the same year the European Council of Luxembourg invited Estonia to accession talks, excluding Latvia and Lithuania.

2. Actual convergence

Immediately after the restoration of independence in 1991, several Lithuanian politicians in the framework of the Baltic Assembly tried to spread the idea of establishing a union of Baltic countries, a kind of "Baltic Benelux", and then make a joint effort to accede to the European Community/Union (see *Päevaleht*, 1991). Estonian politicians, in particular, strongly opposed to this proposal, mostly because they feared that this could have an adverse effect to the accession prospects of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Since 1992, the Baltic countries started to make attempts to establish contacts with the EU separately, but coordinating the steps along the way.

The first agreements signed by the European Community/Union and the newly independent Baltic countries were trade and cooperation agreements, announced by the European Commission on 4 November 1991 and accompanied by a political Joint Declaration (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 105). Already in February 1994 preparations were made to draft association agreements, which were to replace free trade agreements "as soon as possible" (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 129). The agreements were ready to be signed in April 1995, were signed by the Baltic countries on 12 June 1995, but came into force only after their final ratification

by all former Member States in February 1998. In late autumn 1995, the Baltic States handed over official applications to accede to the European Union (Latvia on 13 October, Estonia on 28 November, and Lithuania on 11 December 1995).

During the period from 1995 to 1999, the European Union tried to resolve the important principles and technicalities of the upcoming Eastern Enlargement, which raised the issue of the inevitability of institutional reforming of the union. At the European Council in December 1995 in Madrid it became clear that accepting all applicant countries would prove technically overwhelming for the European Union. While Germany would have preferred the integration of only three candidate countries—Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic—France fought to get even the clearly backward Bulgaria and Romania involved in the accession process. There were debates about different negotiation strategies, such as the "regatta" and the "stadium", but it became clear that individual approach to the candidate countries would not be applicable. At the time, neither Estonia nor Lithuania argued against such individual approach, the former hoping to gain a better starting platform for accession with economic success, compared to its Baltic partners, and the latter because the problem of Russian minority was considerably milder in Lithuania. So Latvia, who lacked an influential foreign political spokescountry, as Finland was for Estonia or Poland for Latvia, inevitably became the main promoter of Baltic cooperation (Vilpišauskas, 2001, pp. 118–119). In these years Lithuania adopted the view which later became to be called "Landsbergis doctrine" (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 247). In an attempt to increase its chance to join NATO before other Baltic countries, Lithuania's political elite concentrated on emphasizing the country's historical and modern ties with Poland and other countries of the Visegrád Four. The signing of the free trade agreement between the Baltic countries in 1994 was largely seen as a political gesture, since there was clear rivalry between the countries' economies during this period (Kasekamp, 2010, p. 236). Baltic cooperation then broadly depended on the EU's attitude towards the countries at the time (Vilpišauskas, 2001, p. 118).

In June 1997, the European Commission outlined the action programme Agenda 2000, which laid the foundation for the conclusions of the Luxembourg European Council in December the same year. According to the programme, a decision was made to open accession negotiations with Cyprus, Poland, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia and Estonia, whereas Latvia and Lithuania together with Slovenia, Bulgaria and Romania were originally left to the "second echelon" (for internal political reasons, Malta had temporarily withdrawn its application). This decision stirred up considerable anger in Latvia and Lithuania, accompanied with accusations of using outdated economic statistics, and resulted in the compilation of new, "more objective" self-analysis reports in

both countries. Latvia was forced to admit that official statistics indeed failed to represent the gross domestic product of shadow economy and that differences in the official figures and actual economic situation stem from tax frauds and uneven use of accounting standards (Šteinbuka, 1999, p. 51). Latvians, however, had to swallow the bitter pill of the European Commission's main argument that Latvia's economy is only able to produce minimum viable products (Šteinbuka, 1999, p. 67) and acknowledge their demographic problems, labour quality and training, and several other obstacles in converging with the European Union's economic space even after the country's actual accession (Balabka, 2005). This was also the period of painful reactions of both Estonia's southern neighbours (especially of Latvia) to any statement by Estonian politicians regarding the European Commission's and Council's decision. True, some Estonian politicians (e.g., Toomas Hendrik Ilves, the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, whose disposition towards other Baltic countries was referred to as "allergic" in Lithuania; see Vilpišauskas, 2001, p. 81) indeed tried to emphasize the illusoriness of the "historically imposed" common Baltic identity and stressed that historically Estonia has identified itself usually with the Nordic countries. At this point, again, Lithuanians aptly remembered the "Landsbergis doctrine".

It has been argued that geopolitical motivation and even direct US influence have contributed to Estonia's inclusion in the first round of accession talks (Smith, 2008). During this period, Estonia's economy was presumed to occupy the sixth place among Central and East-European countries (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 239) and its problems with Russian minority and the border agreement were far from being resolved. This also explains the attempts to see Estonia's inclusion in accession negotiations through the spectre of geopolitical motivation, which main purpose is to give Russia a clear signal that the Baltic countries are no longer in their zone of influence and is also an effort to avoid the "double shock" for the Baltic population—that is, a situation in which after the decision to include only Poland, the Czech Republic and Hungary in the first round of NATO's enlargement, the EU would also shut the door for the Baltic countries (Smith, 1998).

Regardless of that, two years later in December 1999, the European Council in Helsinki decided that Latvia, Lithuania and four other countries are ready to join accession talks, thus casting aside the "regatta" strategy and adopting the big-bang scenario in EU's Enlargement. Peter Van Elsuwege (2008, p. 289) has seen mostly geopolitical motivation behind this step, because of the onset of Kosovo war in 1999, which brought along increased attention to integrating Bulgaria and Romania. Thus, the objectively better-off countries—Slovakia, Latvia and Lithuania—could no longer be ignored. It is also important to remember that this was the year when the Baltic States were officially named NATO's

candidate countries. The Göteborg's European Council in June 2001 declared the enlargement process "irreversible" and decided upon the number of seats for the 2004 European Parliament elections at which the Central and East-European newcomers were to participate as members of the EU (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 298). Viljar Veebel (2004) believes that there was a 'realistic' possibility at least for Estonia to stay out of the first round of enlargement. This 'Macedonian scenario' as he calls it could mean economic stagnation and Russian-supported unrest in northeastern Estonia (Veebel, 2004, p. 78).

By that time, the EU had, in principle, solved the most burning questions of institutional reform (the principle of allocation of votes in the up to 28-nation union) it had faced in parallel to the enlargement and the reform materialized with the drafting of the Treaty of Nice in December 2000. The resolution to include Latvia and Lithuania, together with Estonia, in the accession negotiations with the EU considerably eased the tensions. It can even be argued that in the course of development (in which joining the EU is a technical issue rather than a matter of principle), the Republic of Latvia even managed to quantitatively intensify its communication with non-EU members between 1999 and 2004 (Ozolina & Rostoks, 2006). When speaking about Latvia, political analysts have found it necessary to emphasize the significance of political motivation of being an EU member, especially considering the country's relations with Russia and certain hopes to achieve internal political stability (Šumilo, 1999, pp. 37–39), which, as it is known, has not materialized to a desirable degree.

3. Accession talks and referendums

Accession negotiations with Estonia were opened in February 1998, and with Latvia and Lithuania in February 2000. The positions of Latvia and Lithuania, who joined later, in the accession talks were considered more favourable than Estonia's, because by the joining of "late-comers" some chapters of negotiations with Estonia had been already closed and respective agreements concluded (Ragi, 2008, p. 85). In Lithuania, the main debate focused on the reconstruction of Ignalina nuclear power plant, which has the largest Chernobyl type reactor, the issue of Russia's cargo transit to their Kaliningrad enclave through Lithuania and restrictions for foreigners to obtain agricultural land in Lithuania (Maniokas, 2005).

For Estonia and Latvia, the issue of border agreement with Russia became one of the accession requirements (but not part of the very accession talks!). Already before the opening of the negotiations the general view was that border issues

will not be an obstacle in joining the EU, but they would have to resolve these issues on their own. Estonia subsequently signed the border agreement with Russia as late as in 2005, which Russia refused to ratify, and Latvia reached the border agreement only in 2007. Lithuania had solved somewhat analogous border issues with Poland, resulting from their complicated history, already in 1994 (Van Elsuwege, 2008, p. 84). The main concessions from the part of the Baltic countries was assuming obligations together with other CEECs to enable the 'old' EU Member States (known as EU-15) impose restrictions on free movement of labour, which finally expired on 30 April 2011. In addition, the Baltic countries (again, together with other CEECs) agreed with reduced agricultural subsidies in the framework of CAP.

In the Baltic States the referendums on EU accession agreements were held as follows—on 11 May 2003 in Lithuania, 14 September 2003 in Estonia and 20 September 2003 in Latvia (Auštravičius, 2005, p. 419). Prior to that, among the new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe referendums had been held in Slovenia (23 March 2003) and Hungary (12 April 2003). After the referendum in Lithuania and before those in the other Baltic countries, referendums were held in Slovakia (15–16 May 2003), Poland (8 June 2003) and the Czech Republic (15 June 2003). The schedule followed the model applied before the previous EU Enlargement in 1994, starting with the most euro-optimistic country and holding the last referendums in Estonia and Latvia, where euro-scepticism was the highest. Results were in every way as expected (in Slovenia 89.6% of voters said 'yes' to EU accession, in Estonia 66.8%, and in Latvia 67%), whereas the referendum results in Lithuania (91% said 'yes') and Slovakia (92.7% said 'yes') even slightly exceeded the percentages in Slovenia and Hungary, which were the most euro-optimistic at that time. One reason for that is certainly the fact that both Lithuania and Slovakia were among the countries that were left out of the presumed first round of EU Eastern Enlargement on economic and political grounds.

Up to the EU accession, citizen support to the EU passed through more or less similar course of development in all the Baltic States. In the early 1990s, when the European Community / Union was for many a distant dream, the percentage of support to potential accession was relatively high, but in the second half of the 1990s when these prospects started to take shape and specific problems began to emerge, the support clearly diminished. This fluster is most clearly demonstrated by the 1997 *Eurobarometer Report*, which revealed that had the EU accession referendum been held in November 1996, only 29 per cent of Estonia's population would have voted 'yes'; furthermore, only 17 per cent of the population would have voted 'no', while the total of 52 per cent of the population would have remained indecisive (Kirch & Talts, 1998, p. 52). In

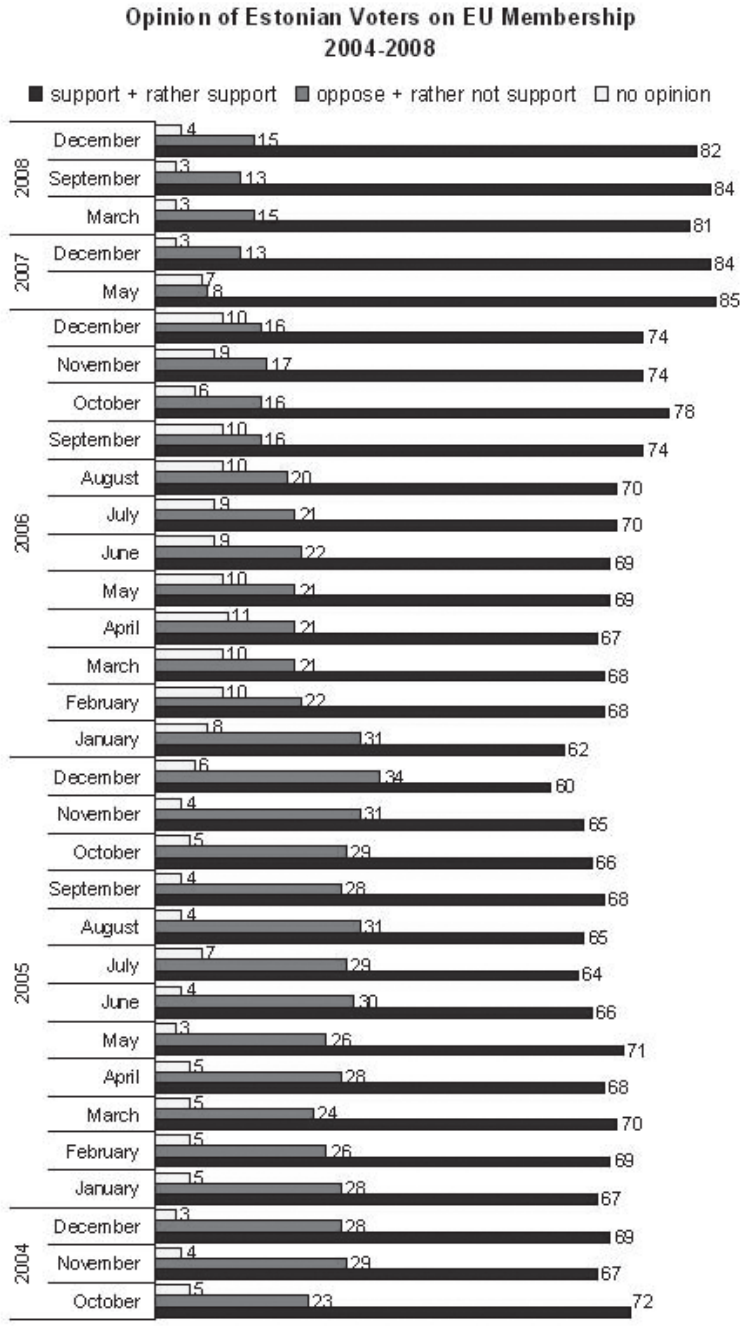
Lithuania, the support to the EU dropped to the absolute minimum in December 1999, reaching the mere 29 per cent (Gaidys, 2010, p. 22). On the turn of the century, however, the support to the EU in the Baltic countries started to grow rapidly (in Estonia, by the way, it was largely associated with the winning of the Eurovision Song Contest in 2001). Immediately prior to the referendum, the support to accession in Estonia began to diminish, although not beyond the 60 per cent, while in Lithunia it continued to grow, reaching its peak at 82 per cent immediately after the referendum in January 2004 (Gaidys, 2010, p. 26).

Pre-referendum arguments exploited in the EU support campaign were more or less the same in all the Baltic countries. An analysis of the views of Estonian and Lithuanian euro-sceptics reveals similar arguments (see Raig, 2008, pp. 77–79; Talts, 2000, p. 10; Auštravičius, 2005, p. 420). Already then, Lithuania saw the possibility of the emergence of the negative trend of "brain drain" and all the three Baltic countries agreed on that the local agricultural sector would suffer. In Latvia the total of 60 per cent of those who voted 'no' at the referendum claimed that their main reason for voting against was concern about the country's agriculture (Auers, 2007, p. 141). Some arguments, put forward in 1997–1999 by Estonian euro-sceptics, such as the potential growth in unemployment rate, were gradually rejected (Talts, 2002, p. 11). Employment rate showed slight upward movement directly before the EU accession and a rather rapid decrease after the accession (Estonia's unemployment rate in 2000 was 13.7%, in 2004 it was 9.4% and in 2007 – 4.6%; during the same years the percentages in Latvia were 13.7%, 11.2% and 6.5%, respectively, and in Lithuania 16.4%, 11.3% and 3.8%, respectively; see Eurostat, 2013) and the unemployment rate skyrocketed again at the onset of the global economic crisis in 2009.

4. Public opinion development trends in the post-referendum period

In the period following the EU accession referendum, the population support to EU membership in Estonia has continued to increase (Fig. 1), whereas in Lithuania, for example, it has shown a downward tendency (Fig. 2). Among the possible reasons for that are differences in cultural mentality. Pre-referendum debates in Estonia entailed various claims and threats of arguably negative tendencies that would accompany accession, but many of these (e.g., deep economic depression, abrupt rise in taxes, immigration from Southern Europe, etc.) never materialized.

Figure 1. The Dynamics of EU support in Estonia 2004–2008



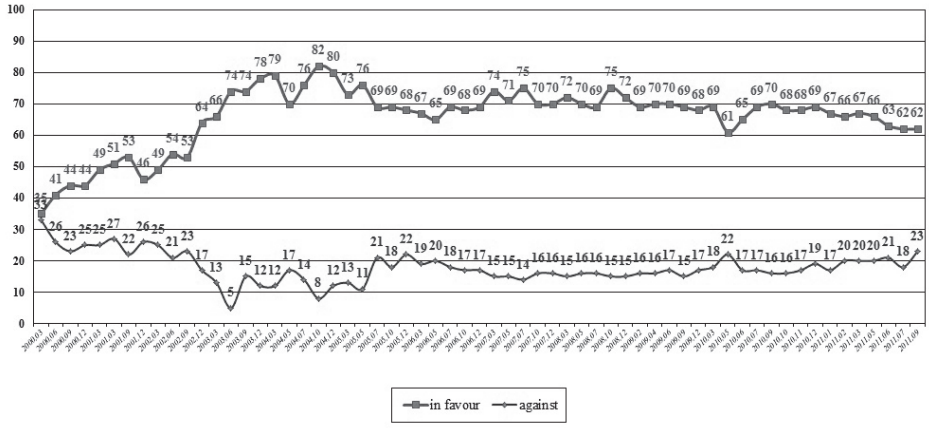
Source: TNS EMOR

On the contrary, the period to come was characterized by the fastest economic growth in Estonia's recent history. Estonia has witnessed a slight decline in public support to the EU only in the most recent years. In November 2012, the total of 74 per cent of the respondents supported Estonia's membership in the EU, while 22 per cent were against (Faktum & Ariko, 2012). Such decline in support is comprehensible in circumstances of Estonian public and media wondering "whether they really have any active power to influence the European Financial Mechanism build-up and energy relations between the European Union and Russia (Veebel & Loik, 2012, p. 182).

Lithuanians, on the other hand, got carried away with the general pro-European euphoria, and were keen to put themselves back on the map after the 1997 "humiliation", in order to stay in the game, but in the following years these heightened expectations turned into certain disappointment, which among other things has been indicated by the rapidly growing emigration wave from Lithuania. Analogous processes in Lithuania's public opinion had taken place already during the restoration of independence and directly after that, when heightened expectations and hindering reforms inevitably led to later disillusionment (cf. Gaidys & Tureikytė, 1994; Gaidys, 1998).

Lithuanian sociologist Vladas Gaidys in his comparative research of the attitudes of the Baltic nations towards the past, present and anticipated future in the 1990s has argued that evaluation of the Soviet past was counteractive to the evaluation of the present, and that while in the 1990s Lithuanians' assessment of their economic present became more pessimistic, the tendency in Estonia was quite the opposite (Gaidys, 1998). Gaidys explained this through differences in the nations' cultural background, claiming that as majority Catholics, Lithuanians tend to be more fatalistic, conservative and hold on to a more holistic world view which is based on emotions rather than reasoning (Gaidys, 1998, pp. 65–66). Lithuanians' general disposition to emotionality is, among other things, illustrated by the fact that after the privatization of Lithuanian Telecom in 1998 and the following doubling of call tariffs, Lithuanians came to the streets and the incident (together with the confusion surrounding the Ignalina power plant) was strongly associated with a sudden drop in support to the EU at the end of the past century (Gaidys, 2010, p. 22). In 2005 and 2006, Lithuanians' support to the EU was still high but then began to fall. With the problems with Russian oil and gas supplies and EU's inadequate response to these problems in 2007, the popularity of the EU in Lithuania decreased (Čičinskas, 2007). Be that as it may, by September 2010 Lithuania's support to the EU had fallen to 62 per cent, as shown in Figure 2 (Gaidys, 2012, p. 72).

Figure 2. Attitudes towards Lithuania's membership in the EU: 2000-2011



One of the things that may have contributed to the following disillusionment was perhaps the fact that while EU membership has certainly helped to improve their position in communications with Russia, the situation is far from satisfactory. The once highly anticipated breakthrough has not been achieved. Furthermore, Putin's Russia has made any effort to make the Baltic countries seem as European Union's "problematic newcomers" (Kasekamp, 2011, p. 244) and this did not change even during Dmitri Medvedev's presidency, regardless of the cautious optimism in this regard (Muiznieks, 2008). The main reasons for that lie in the poor coordination of EU's own foreign politics. Of the three Baltic countries, mostly Estonia and Lithuania have taken minimal steps towards reducing Russia's economic influence. For example, in 2006 Lithuania sold Mažeikiai's oil refinery to a Polish company instead of Russian investors (Kasekamp, 2011, p. 245). In Lithuania, the problems surrounding the decommissioning of the Ignalina nuclear power plant, which costs have exceeded all past estimates and is still unresolved, have definitely fuelled euro-scepticism (Vilpišauskas, 2012). One of the factors influencing EU's popularity in Latvia may be the issue of European Union's imposing sanctions against Belarus, Latvia's important trade partner (Muravska, 2012).

5. Simultaneous economic developments

During the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the economy of the Baltic countries was, naturally, in a disastrous state. The entire economy had been built upon Soviet internal market, which meant that some sectors (e.g., agricultural meat industry) were irrationally overdeveloped, while others were partly or completely undeveloped. Economic slowdown in the last decades of the Soviet Union encompassed the entire area and this necessitated the fast implementation of property reform and the restitution of property nationalized during the Soviet occupation, a process which had enormous political and legal significance but had only subtle positive influences on the economic situation. The aim of the property reform was the justified compensation for former injustice and had roots in the ideology of reinstating nationhood, but in many cases (for example, in agriculture) it proved to obstruct rather than encourage economic activities. Restoration, restructuration and reorientation of economy to new markets was unthinkable without an inflow of foreign investments.

In the privatization process, Estonia more than the other Baltic countries chose the strategy to favour foreign investments. Lithuania at the same time attempted to impose certain restrictions, the most important of which was the prohibition of selling land to foreigners, which caused serious tension in Lithuanian-EU relations in the second half of the 1990s. Paradoxically, the local Estonian non-corporate owners proved to be more successful than foreign investors (Terk & Pihlak, 1996). But already since the second half of the 1990s, many enterprises which started out as Estonian businesses have been incorporated in foreign corporations. All in all, the Estonian auction-based privatization model, which has certainly favoured foreign investment, has moved a relatively large portion of national assets to foreign ownership, but at the same time it has helped to avoid local corruption and the emergence of oligarchs in the region (Lauristin, 2008, p. 193). The selling of the few left domestic leader companies to foreign (mostly Nordic) investors was propelled by the onset of the economic crisis in 2008, which weakened the already commenced invasion of Estonian companies to "southern"—that is Latvian and Lithuanian—markets (Terk, 2011, p. 174).

To restore economic activity, the Baltic countries had to choose between two rather conflicting courses of development (or "extremes")—the liberal market economy ("the Anglo-American model") and the so-called coordinated market economy ("the German model"). Most economists agree that of all the new Central and East-European democracies, Estonia has chosen the most liberal course, while Slovenia most clearly represents the so-called coordinated market

economy among the transition countries (Buchen, 2007; Feldmann, 2006; Frane, Primož & Tomšič, 2009). The development course chosen by Latvia and Lithuania approaches Estonia on the liberality-sociality scale, but this has not been the case during the entire period since the restoration of independence. After regaining independence, Lithuania, then under the rule of the Democratic Labour Party, tried to force through the course of "sociality" (which entailed subsidies to the agricultural sector, certain lenience in old-age pension criteria, voucher-based privatization, etc.), but their strategy proved counterproductive and instead of the hoped "social benefit" it brought along disappointment in the same layers of society at whom such "socially-minded course of politics" was targeted (Lauristin, 2011b, p. 195).

Therefore, in recent years Lithuania has made efforts to approach the "Estonian model" (Lauristin, 2011b, p. 192). During the last economic crisis in particular, Lithuania's government under Andrius Kubilius has implemented harsh public sector cutbacks, which, however, have not resulted in other steps (Maniokas, 2009). Also, Latvia, which has a slightly different economic structure because of the transit sector, which in a way resembles the casino-oriented and oligarchic structure of Russian economy, has tried to execute the most coordinated market economy policies of the three Baltic countries (Norkus, 2011, p. 31).

Despite the differences, the three Baltic countries could still be regarded as "faithful followers of the Washington Consensus" of "the ideas of liberal economy", developed by the IMF and the World Bank (Terk & Reid, 2011, p. 32) and have introduced in the discourse the so-called Baltic neoliberal model of capitalism (Norkus, 2011, p. 25). Thus, the differences between the Baltic countries become noticeable only at closer look, but on the broader scale of world economy they continue to represent economies of rather similar development and structure.

Structural changes in the Baltic economies have taken place rather extensively and extremely rapidly in the years of independence. Estonia's employment rate in the primary sector (agriculture, fishing, forestry), for example, dropped from nearly 10 per cent by nearly half in less than eight years, while in the developed the Nordic countries, it had taken 13 to 16 years (Eamets, 2011, p. 77). Referring to the relatively high percentage of primary sector, Ramūnas Vilpišaukas has speculated that for EU's reform of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), Estonia should choose Germany, Sweden, the UK and the Netherlands as its coalition partners, whereas Latvia's and Lithuania's positions would resemble rather that of France, Italy, Poland and Romania than countries with economies dominated by agricultural sectors and which by nature oppose the radical

reforming of CAP (Vilpišauskas 2005, p. 478). Hungarian economist András Inotai (2008) has also expressed similar views. Daunis Auers, who has analyzed the situation of Latvian agricultural policy, is convinced that while the CAP reform would be detrimental to Latvia in the short run, in a longer perspective the country would have to support the liberalization of EU's agricultural policy (Auers, 2007, pp. 154–155).

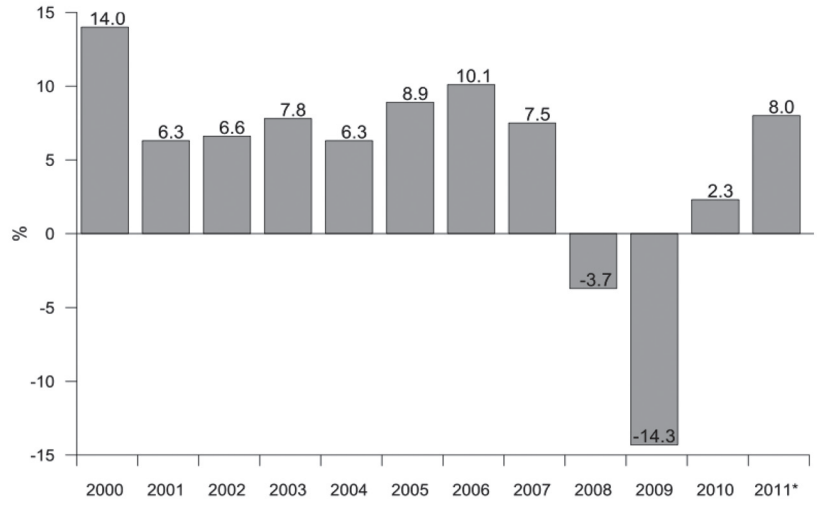
In the preuntries had reached the remarkable 10 per cent and even above (Lauristin, 2011a, p. 11). In Estonia, it has been emphasized, the "new money" that flooded the country was not used for the needed future-oriented structural investments into branches of industry with export capability or similar areas, but to encourage internal consumption and real estate development (Norkus, 2011, p. 26). Salaries surged upwards faster than labour productivity, which, in turn, decreased the Baltic countries' competitiveness and accelerated the growth of private sector loans as well as consumption loans to private individuals, because the people were not willing to downshift their standard of living. The current account deficit of the Baltic countries rose considerably also before 2004, when direct foreign investments in the region supported primarily real economy (Annenkov & Berglöf, 2011). Likewise, the other Baltic countries neglected making the necessary structural changes in their economy. Irina Čurkina, who analyzed the situation in Latvian economy in 2005, also came to the conclusion that several developments in Latvian economy at the time were similar to those occurring before the 1997–1998 East-Asian crisis (Čurkina, 2005, pp. 80–82, 92). The Baltic States became increasingly dependent on the banks of other countries and the share of private sector loans in foreign currency (euros) grew.

The depth of the crisis became particularly evident in unemployment statistics. When in 2007 the unemployment rate in Estonia was 4.6 per cent, by 2009 it had grown to 13.8 per cent and by 2010 to 16.9 per cent. Latvian unemployment rate of 6.5 percent in 2007 grew - and post-accession period, the economies of all the Baltic countries turned to growth, and the future seemed cloudless. In addition to growth in export to the EU countries, the export to the so-called third countries also increased between 2004 and 2007, contrary to euro-sceptics' claims (Inotai, 2008). Without exaggeration it may be agreed that EU accessions, the accompanying jumpstart of direct and portfolio investments and the unlimited influx of "free" loans was at least one contributing factor to the unprecedented economic boost in the area, and, in a sense, prepared the ground for the particularly devastating shock in the 2008 economic crisis. From 2005 to 2007 the economic growth in all the Baltic coto 18.2 percent by 2009, reaching 19.8 percent in 2010. In Lithuania the official unemployment rate in 2007 was only 3.8 per cent, rising to 13.6 per cent in 2009 and 18 per cent

in 2010 (see Eurostat, 2013). Between 2007 and 2009 Latvia experienced the record-breaking 27 per cent economic decline and the actual unemployment rate in 2010 was at least 30 per cent, taking into account people forced into part-time work and those who had given up looking (Moulds, 2012). It has to be remembered, though, that these figures were obtained in a situation where the official statistics did not adequately reflect the unemployment rate and the mass emigration which potentially contributes to the locally unemployed had been a reality for some time now.

In the light of the macro-economical statistics, the Baltic countries have begun to emerge from the crisis since 2011, but the question about the lesson they learned is still largely unresolved. During 2008 to 2010, the economic recession hit the Baltic States the hardest of all the EU Member States, but fortunately the applied deflation policy has brought about a slight rise, as shown about Estonia in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Development dynamics in Estonian economy during 2000–2011



Source: Data of Statistics Estonia

A negative aspect of reforms in the Baltic region has been the relatively high corruption level in the countries. According to the *Corruption Perceptions Index*, composed by Transparency International in 2001, Estonia was ranked the 29th, Lithuania the 50th and Latvia the 61st among the total of 183 countries (*CPI*, 2011). This is definitely a problem, especially since 75 per cent of Lithuanians, for example,

believe that bribery helps to solve problems and 65 per cent would be willing to give bribes (Urbonas, 2009, p. 68), which is evidence of corrupting turning into a kind of "culture" in Lithuania. Latvian oligarchs' political interventions have been also seen as a far more serious problem than simple bribery and nepotism (Lejinš, 2007). Corruption is certainly one of the reasons why people feel alienated from politics and politicians, especially in Latvia and Lithuania. Paradoxically, the local media, which so far enjoys a rather high level of confidence compared to other institutions, cultivates distrust by exploiting this topic. Thus Latvia and Lithuania continue to find themselves in a double bind of political distrust, voting at each elections for new populist parties only to become disappointed in them once again (Pettai, Auers & Ramonaitė, 2011, p. 157).

6. The social cost of Baltic economic reforms

The rapid changes in economy, mainly caused by the implementation of the model of liberal capitalism, have revealed a clearly negative influence, having brought along abrupt social stratification, the unlimited impoverishment for some levels of society, drop in birth rate, growth in manifestations of antisocial behaviour (e.g., alcoholism) and the general alienation and disappointment in one's country and leaving abroad in search for better economic opportunities. The cost of economic reforms carried out in the Baltic countries is illustratively reflected even by the Human Development Index (HDI) of these countries, measured according to the UN methods. The index is calculated on the basis of (a) gross national income per capita indicating the country's economic level, (b) mean expected years of schooling characterizing the level of education, and (c) life expectancy at birth as an index of the quality of life. Estonia's highest rank in HDI of the Baltic countries is based on the relatively good economic and its excellent education index, although the relatively low average life expectancy is systematically dragging it down (Vihalemm, 2011, p. 13). This is evidence of the rather modest level of health care in Estonia, but even more so of the increasing carelessness of the population toward their health. Since 2010, the UN HDI has taken into consideration the fact that health, education and income are often highly uneven within the country. In Estonia, the inequality-adjusted index (IHDI) is 9.8 per cent lower than the general index, while in Latvia and Lithuania the IHDI is already 10.8 to 11.5 per cent (Vihalemm, 2011, p. 16).

It inevitably concludes that Estonia has achieved its economic success largely at the expense of human capital deficit and by constant postponing of solving

the issues important for human development (Lauristin, 2008, p. 197). Even the traditional unemployment insurance system was implemented in Estonia as late as in 2002, a decade after the reforms were introduced (Eamets, 2011, p. 78). Unfortunately, the same can be concluded about the other Baltic countries, where the practise of "foot voting" has been even more intense. In the first year and a half of Latvian accession to the EU, nearly 100,000 Latvians from mostly rural areas emigrated from the country (at first "temporarily" to Ireland and the United Kingdom) in search of employment (Auers, 2007, p. 147). Even though most of them later repatriated, the migration rate clearly skewed toward the negative even before the economic crisis. It is worth noting that actual migration is under-registered in official statistics in the range of 30 to 60 per cent (Eamets, 2011, p. 81). Between 2004 and 2010 at lely oppose to cultures, say, in Southern Europe with low rationality and high leveast 125,000 people have left Latvia and during the same period at least 259,000 people have emigrated from Lithuania (Kirch, 2013). Vladas Gaidys (2010, p. 29), relying on the somewhat indirect data obtained through sociological research, estimates that the total number of Lithuanians who have left their country is 300,000. By today, the number has reportedly exceeded 400,000 (Kirch, 2013).

Especially in terms of Estonia, researchers have noticed a certain unique psychological tendency of the population to paradoxically support the government who, while favouring liberal policy, continues to make cutbacks, and the willingness to make allowances in the situation. The Finnish political scientist Henri Vogt (2011) has tried to explain the phenomenon through the concept of "national liberalism". The majority of Estonian population, Estonian society, have accepted the social gaps and contrasts and have begun to view these as 'natural' (or even inevitable) (Lauristin, 2011a, p. 11). This might explain the paradox why Estonians have continued to re-elect political parties who favour liberal policy through the 21st century.

According to the result of analysis based on the methodology of Ronald Inglehart's World Values Survey, the Baltic countries, as an entity, have been viewed as cultures of high rationality and clearly focused on material wellbeing (Lauristin, 2011b, p. 196) and as such they strongl of expression. The Baltic countries' common feature with the Nordic countries and Germany is of course high rationality, but the soft values characteristic of these welfare societies are still quite unfamiliar to people in the Baltics. The recent economic crisis seems to have widened the gap even more.

7. Conclusions

This overview attempted to map the process that could be defined as "the Baltic states' convergence to the European Union". While the topics have not been fully resolved and are thus worth exploring, the general tendencies can be outlined in the master narrative of the transition processes in the Baltic countries:

The Baltic countries have always needed the EU more than the EU has needed them. The governments of the Baltic countries have thus adopted a relatively compliant attitude towards the EU, except in issues of citizenship and language policy and relations with Russia, where some compromises have been made but first securing one's positions. The aspiration to present oneself as EU's *Wunderkind* is quite common in Estonia and Latvia (see Lejinš, 2007). Likewise, Lithuania has tried to present itself as an exemplary member of the European Union, being among the first countries to ratify the Constitutional Treaty in November 2004 (Čičinskas, 2007). This was regarded as the first step pushing Lithuania on the path of growing euro-scepticism, after which preferring a more pro-active "politics based on national interests" (for example, by President Dalia Grybauskaitė) has enjoyed certain growth in popularity (see Noreika, 2013).

Being an EU member has both economic and political advantages for the Baltic countries (especially in their relations with Russia). In the 2008–2010 economic crisis emerged the question whether the Baltic countries as a kind of testbed for economic-political measures and the experience gained here could be used as a model for other EU Member States, of course assuming there is enough political and social willingness and certain sense of sacrifice. Especially the latter seems to be somewhat lacking.

Until the actual accession to the EU the public opinion polls followed more or less the same course of development. The carefree euro-optimist of the early 1990s (the expectations to become accepted "to the club of developed countries") was followed by decline in support to the EU before and after the turn of the century, which was largely connected with the emergence of certain questions in what was actually the looming EU debate. Immediately before the referendum, the support to the EU started to show upward tendencies, resulting in the victory of 'yes' voters at the 2003 referendums. Between 2004 and 2013, in the years of actual EU membership, the support to the Union has slowly but steadily grown, whereas the Latvian citizens has retained their euro-scepticism and in Latvia the previously rather euro-optimistic figures have slowly but surely started to fall. However, as a result of the economic crisis in 2008–2011 the support to the

EU in Estonia has shown a slight decline, which occurred with short delay and became evident in 2012 (Faktum & Ariko, 2012).

Except for the 1990s, the economic and social developments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in the EU context have been somewhat surprisingly synchronized ever since the pre-accession period. The differences (although quite noticeable in some areas) have been quantitative rather than qualitative. In Latvia the economic growth was the most rapid, rise in unemployment rate the largest, and the exhaustion of state reserves the most devastating, and this lead to the country's appeal to IMF for help. IMF's conditions more or less coincided with the policies that the governments of Estonia and Lithuania had already voluntarily adopted. Emigration is still the burning issue in Lithuania and Latvia, and the loss of young working-age population is no longer a secondary problem for Estonia either. It could be claimed that the onset of the global economic crisis in 2008 and the subsequent implementation of basically analogous economic policies has brought the countries closer to each other.

The differences between Estonia and Lithuania mostly derive from the somewhat different culture, mentality, expectations and subjective worldview of these nations, which result in different evaluations of similar developments. Objectively, their economic and social developments have been surprisingly similar throughout the past ten years—in the longer run it might cause major changes in mentality in Lithuania, bringing the Lithuanians' mindset closer to the other Baltic nations. The developments of the most recent years, however, seem to suggest Latvia's deviation from the course of development of the other Baltic countries, but whether this will become a reality, will be for the future to decide.

Mait Talts has studied at the University of Tartu, graduated from the Tallinn University as an information specialist. He has a working experience from the Institute of Experimental Biology of Estonian Academy of Sciences, Estonian Childrens' Literature Centre, Estonian State Archives, Institute of International and Social Studies of Tallinn University, and International University Audentes. He has taught several courses at Viljandi Culture Academy, Tallinn Pedagogical Seminar and Tallinn University of Technology. Currently he is a PhD student at the Department of International Relations of Tallinn University of Technology and the research secretary of the same department.

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‘Knowledge Workers’ in the Baltic Sea Region: Comparative Assessment of Innovative Performance of the Countries in the Macro-Region

Aksel Kirch

Institute for European Studies,
Tallinn University of Technology
Akadeemia tee 3,
Tallinn 12618, Estonia
E-mail: akselkirch@yahoo.com

Abstract: *The article studies the problems of human resources stemming from increased mobility, and the emergence of new aspects of migration processes. A comparative analysis of the connection between academic development in the context of university (and the science system) and the process of labour migration taking place in Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia was carried out. The article examines the limits of the model through European territorial migration process and concludes that the huge migration of high-skilled labour (called the “knowledge workers”) has had a very negative impact on the innovative and academic potential of Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and a negative impact in Estonia. In the final section, the article examines increase in the requirements for competence in the Baltic Sea macro-region of the European Union and Estonia’s university reform of 2013–2016 as an illustrative experiment to (un)resolved problems. The first results of the reform in higher education indicated that it was ineffective—for students, the good ideas of the reform proved to be a lost experiment and the mobility of knowledge workers, as the future academic resource in homeland, turned from Estonia to larger Europe, especially to Finland and the UK.*

Keywords: *academic development in the Baltic countries, Baltic Sea macro-region of the European Union, strategies for human resource and local policies,*

1. Methodology of the Baltic Sea macro-region research

In this article, the conceptual model of macro-region is applied to the study of processes of transforming the social and political space in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) into a unified whole. The first and second part of this article outline the conceptual principles of the proposed model and the main geo-economic aspects of the Baltic Sea macro-region (with aspects of the 'knowledge triangle', involving science, technology, and innovation) and examine the limits of the model through the process of European territorial migration. The final part examines Estonia's university reform of 2013–2016 as an illustrative experiment to unresolved problems since the higher education reform proved ineffective—for students, the good ideas proposed in the reform proved to be a lost experiment and financing capacities have been sinking over the past five years in Estonia (2013–2017). The aim of the article is to highlight the trends and problems in human resources due to increased mobility, the emergence of new aspects of migration processes, and to study the increase of the total requirements for competence in the Baltic Sea macro-region.

This study of the integration of the Baltic countries into the European economic and technological space makes use of a model that is based on the representation of the Baltic Sea Region as an environment in which open innovative systems direct their 'knowledge triangle' and socio-economic structures towards sustainable development. The trajectory of this system development has been affected by two groups of forces: one involves forces which deflect the development from the sustainable trajectory, while the other represents forces that push the development towards the sustainable trajectory. Extreme resource depletion is a factor that limits the development. (Kirch, Nezerenko & Mezentsev, 2011, p. 204).

Among the very important resources there are also people with higher education in the out-migration flows from the EU countries of the Baltic Sea Rim. However, when resource depletion concerns also people, the situation is largely different, especially when human capital, which should become a subject for intensive economic growth or introduce structural changes in economy (young people with higher education), flows out of the region (Kerikmäe, 2001). Usually, when depletion increases, the rate of consumption of resources is reduced and the society begins to increase investments to renew the resources, as can be seen from the example of knowledge-intensive economy and development of green growth with workplaces policies of the European Commission (Kirch, Mezentsev & Rodin, 2011).

In 2009, the process of Baltic Development was initiated (Baltic Development Forum Report, 2012), with a new strategy for the regional level, within the European Union according to the *EU Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region (BSR)*. The BSR is studied as a formal macro-region around the Baltic Sea, which consists of eight European countries (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, the northern part of Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, the northern part of Poland, Sweden, and Norway) and some regions of the Russian Federation (Communication COM(2009) 248 final, p. 5).

The strategy of the Baltic Sea Region is quite a new field in EU policy-making, and since macro-regional cooperation is a precondition for further development, this macro-region strategy can be viewed as one of the priorities of the strategic framework for Europe 2020 (EC, 2010).

As a conclusion to this, Dr Tobias Etzold stated, first in the 2011 report of the Baltic Development process, that this is "the only way to develop the region and to establish a framework for binding and sustainable regional co-operation in European Union" (Etzold, 2011). In the final remarks and key messages of the following year's report (with an outlook on 2013, too), he concludes his analysis:

> *Most countries of the region fulfil their duties in Baltic Sea regional co-operation; they do no less but also not much more than that. This is somewhat surprising given the fact that the Baltic Sea Region is currently Europe's only economic growth motor. The countries around the Baltic Sea could play a key role in generating growth and helping the continent return to sustainable growth. At least, appropriate networks and frameworks have been established for playing a more active role in implementing infrastructure projects that could benefit the competitiveness of Europe more widely.* (Etzold, 2012, pp. 70–71).

Five years later, Christian Ketels and David Skilling argued:

> *The Baltic Sea Region is facing changing circumstances in Europe and the global economy that have the potential to negatively impact its future prosperity. We see in this difficult situation an opportunity for the Region and the countries within it to act rather than only adapt. It can influence the future of European Integration, and has an important contribution to make to the discussions happening right now across Europe. It can prepare for changes in the global economy, and maybe even influence the choices that are being made shaping it. In both of these areas much of the action required is national in*

> *nature. But collaboration in the Region can accompany these efforts, by providing a platform to learn from each other and by joint action that can affect the context in which the countries from the Region operate.* (Ketels & Skilling, 2017, p. 16)

In the State of the Region Report of 2011, and the following ones in 2012–2017, the main question is the predominance of structural changes in the global economy and especially how these changes will affect the relationship between the underlying patterns of competitiveness and the economic outcomes that they lead to (see *State of the Region Report*, 2011–2017).

However, the situation for the rightful planning and economic forecasting of the public sector in the Baltic Sea Rim countries is highly problematic and does not create optimism as the theoretical and statistical-informatics bases are low. What could be the problem? Dr Ülo Ennuste summarised in his large critical work about synthetic conception:

> *As a matter of fact, a very wide intelligent public in Estonia has apparently become passionate about the need for fuller and undistorted disclosure of the socio-economic governmental and private sphere socio-economic information that is targeted at stakeholders and a wide public. In other words, they are worried about a seemingly growing contamination of the knowledge environment—a term coined by András Inotai.* (Ennuste, 2009, p. 11)

Since the beginning of European integration processes in 2004, the Baltic countries have very effectively carried out the socio-economic reform up until 2008, but major country-specific challenges, resulting from the 2008–2011 financial-economic crisis, still exist in the economies of the Baltic countries and Poland. The post-crisis socio-economic processes of 2012–2017 have given good results in the Baltic Sea Region at large and today all the southern Baltic countries are making a positive and meaningful impact, although major progress in analysing knowledge environment is yet to be seen.

Currently, all the Baltic countries (all with a very limited population: Estonia—1.3 million, Latvia—about 2 million, and Lithuania 2.8 million) are experiencing significant problems with the negative social impact of the huge migration of human resources on economic growth and academic development.

As the IMF staff discussion note *Emigration and Its Economic Impact on Eastern Europe* (IMF, 2016) states, in Central, Eastern, and Southeastern Europe (CESEE), emigration has lowered potential growth:

> *It has dampened average annual working-age population growth by about ½–1 percentage point since 1990—implying that the labor supply could have been 10–20 percent greater than observed —with particularly pronounced effects in SEE and the Baltics. Specifically, migration shaved off 0.6–0.9 percentage points of annual growth rates in some countries in SEE (Albania, Montenegro, and Romania) and the Baltics (Latvia and Lithuania) during 1999–2014. About two-thirds of these losses can be ascribed to the direct impact of emigration on the labor supply, with the rest from skill deterioration.*[…] *A counterfactual analysis indicates that cumulative real labor productivity growth in CESEE countries would have been about 6 percentage points higher (in Estonia—8 percentage points) in the absence of emigration during 1995–2012.* (IMF, 2016, pp. 17–22, 42)

A recent analysis concluded that in some European countries "high emigration rates have exacerbated population decline and aging and may have reduced the supply of skilled workers. After EU enlargement, mainly young and skilled people left Central European countries, most of them for Western Europe. Their emigration accelerated population declines in some countries"—Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, Moldavia and others, "and may have slowed growth." (The World Bank, 2017, p. 43)

So, as stated in the two analytical reports, the migration of highly skilled labour force from all Baltic Sea countries has had considerable negative impact on their socio-economic development. Today, an extraordinary new research problem has emerged—how negative has been the impact of labour migration on the academic potential of the Baltic Sea Region countries.

2. Migration process and its impact on labour in and outside the Baltic Sea macro-region

Major country-specific challenges, resulting from the 2008–2011 financial-economic crisis, exist in the economies of the Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, and Poland). In the post-crisis period, the socio-economic process has given good results in the Baltic Sea Region at large and all the southern Baltic States are making a positive and meaningful impact today. In Poland, as well as in Latvia and Lithuania, the development of the common market is based on the speed of the out-migration process from these three countries and, as a disadvantage, has had some positive and also negative impacts on the countries involved in pan-European processes.

Economic and socio-cultural globalisation and European integration increase the mobility of the population and favour citizens' choice. For the country of origin, the migration of highly qualified personnel to a country with a more efficiently coordinated social system means losses in productivity and financial resources of the educational system. The migration of teachers, qualified researchers and students results in the loss of potential profits from educating the highly qualified personnel who migrate out of the country. Consequently, the educational system also loses its effectiveness in providing the country with professionals that stay in their home country.

The migration processes of highly skilled personnel and the side effects of this process on the development of an innovative economy must be examined also within the macro-regions. Within the boundaries of our model, the migration process is often a flow which originates in the emergence of differences in the socio-economic potential between the countries—the country of origin and the country of choice.

Statistical analyses show that Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian migration is beginning to change from a short-term economic migration to a long-term one, because of family reunions and rapidly developing social networks. In Estonia and in all of its neighbouring countries—Poland, Latvia and Lithuania—the unemployment rate is approximately 20%, and this factor has proved to be a major economic problem in the economic crises of 2008–2015.

In Latvia, emigration was about 16,000 people on average during the years of economic growth (2012–2016) and 40,000 people in the years of the economic crisis (2008–2011) and post-crisis period. So, *summa summarum*, Latvia lost *ca* 200,000 people in 2008–2016, and the total loss of the Latvian population was 427,000 in the years 2001–2016. As to migration processes, the demographic loss of 65% and 35% indicates that the most significant factor in Latvia's population decline is migration.

In reality, the years 2000–2016 represented a national demographic catastrophe for Latvia—the decrease in population was from more than 2.4 million people in 2000 to no more than 2 million people according to the 2011 population census, and to mere 1.85 million people today (according to Latvian population census as of July 2016 and other statistics). The main destinations of Latvian emigration are the UK, Ireland and Germany.

In Lithuania, the most significant factor in population decline was migration, amounting to the loss of 657,000 people between the years 2001 and 2016, constituting approximately 19% of the population. In Lithuania, emigration was

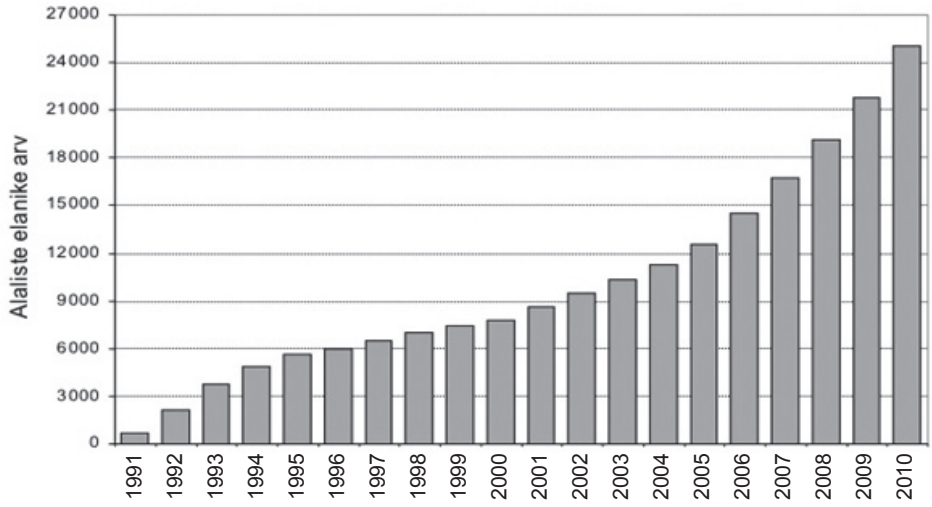
about 15,000–17,000 people on average during the years of economic growth and more than 20,000 people in the first year of the economic crisis (2009). The emigration flow increased in 2010 four times compared to 2009 and the stable high flow continued in 2011–2015, when 50,000 people left Lithuania.

The main destination routes of Lithuanian emigration are Ireland, the UK, Spain, Norway and the USA. Lithuania remains in the forefront according to the migration rates in the European Union.

In Estonia, these issues are not as salient as in Latvia and Lithuania. Here, the most significant factors of population decline were natural increase and labour migration, amounting to the loss of more than 85,000 people between the years 2001 and 2016 (Rannala & Tammur, 2010, p. 63).

However, the labour migration between Estonia and Finland has increased in the past 25 years and, as a result, Estonian migration to Finland has become part of intensifying economic (labour-seeking) migration. Since 2010, the pendulum from free labour to migration labour as the first migration process model could serve as an important impact factor (and as the second model, as in the period of 1991–2010).

Figure 1. The number of people migrated from Estonia in Finland (permanent residents), 1991–2009



Source: Finnish Immigration Service, 2011

Thus, in comparison with Latvia and Lithuania, in Estonia these labour migration processes were not as negative, as approximately 60–75,000 labour migrants from Estonia are there as regular commuter workers—and of this group about 40,000 visit Finland as workers during a one-year working period (Tiit, 2015, pp. 56–75).

As a final result it is estimated that in the period of 2004–2010 about 45,000 and in the period of 2011–2016 another 55,000 Estonians and Russians from Estonia emigrated to permanently live and work in Scandinavian countries—primarily Finland, Sweden, Norway, or the UK.

From 2010 onward, the pendulum from free labour to migration labour as the first migration process model could serve as an important impact factor, and another period was 1991–2010 (Tiit, 2015). In 2010, the "visiting workers" (in Estonian, *kalevipojad*) usually did not live permanently in Finland but had stable work places. Reasons for this are very practical and, as Estonian and Finnish sociologists claimed in 2012, the visiting workers represent a good socio-cultural and economic tool in the large process of creating Estonian-Finnish transnational space (Jakobson *et al*., 2012), first between Helsinki and Tallinn. According to the recently established register, there were about 60,000 migrants from Estonia working in Finland yearly during the last five years, while only 5,000 people from Finland were working in Estonia. According to Koikkalainen (2017, p. 169), since the mid-1990s more than 145,000 Finnish citizens have moved to other EU Member States.

A comparative analysis of the labour migration processes taking place in Latvia and Lithuania indicate that the highly skilled groups (especially post-graduate students) in the national social structure are very effective in the conditions of labour mobility in the European Union—they leave homeland faster than young people leave Estonia.

During the period of 2005–2016, nearly 250,000 Latvians and half a million Lithuanians emigrated to Ireland, the UK, Germany and the USA. In terms of Poland, as a result of huge emigration, 2.5 million Polish people work in Western Europe and in the USA.

3. Data: European Innovation Scoreboard as a complex database

In recent analyses, the development of innovative economy has been named as one of the main objectives of the joint efforts of the Baltic States. Unfortunately, it is not a simple task to measure a country's level of innovation. In order to work out, apply, and assess political criteria for this purpose, it is imperative to provide proper measuring tools for the object under consideration.

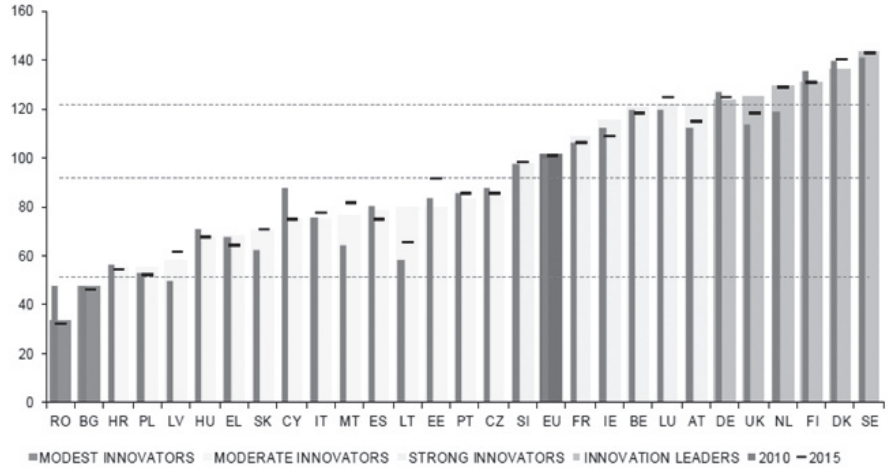
For more than 25 years, the European Commission has been measuring the innovation performance of countries by means of the European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS, 2017). European Innovation Scoreboard (EIS) has been published annually since 2001 to benchmark the relative innovation performance of the EU Member States. EIS uses the most recent statistics mostly from Eurostat, and other international sources have been used wherever possible in order to improve comparability between countries.

EIS is a complex database of recent research on the impact of outward migration on the innovative and academic competitiveness of the countries of the southern Baltic region and of European Union members in comparison, on the whole. Figure 2 presents a comparison of innovation opportunities in Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania with other European Union countries with the Summary Innovation Index, calculated for the EU-27.

Based on their average performance scores, as calculated by a composite indicator on 27 statistical indicators, the Summary Innovation Index, the Member States fall into four different performance groups (see EIS, 2017, p. 4):

1) Denmark, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Kingdom are *Innovation Leaders* with innovation performance well above that of the EU average.
2) Austria, Belgium, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, and Slovenia are *Strong Innovators* with performance above or close to that of the EU average.
3) The performance of Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, and Spain is below that of the EU average. These countries are *Moderate Innovators*.
4) Bulgaria and Romania are *Modest Innovators* with performance well below that of the EU average.

Figure 2. Performance of EU Member States' innovation systems in the period 2010–2016



Source: EIS, 2017, p. 4

Coloured columns show Member States' performance in 2016, using the most recent data for 27 indicators, relative to that of the EU in 2010. The horizontal hyphens show performance in 2015, using the next most recent data for 27 indicators, relative to that of the EU in 2010. Grey columns show Member States' performance in 2010 relative to that of the EU in 2010. For all years the same measurement methodology has been used. The dashed lines show the threshold values between the performance groups in 2016, comparing Member States' performance in 2016 relative to that of the EU in 2016.

As the article's focus is a topical research area in the context of migration and mobility processes, the author has chosen a scientific method to approach the matters of collaboration between universities and business, and has applied statistical bibliometric analysis as the secondary method of data collection in this study. All bibliometric estimates are based on information obtained from the database of European Innovation Scoreboard or are indexed on the basis of EIS data.

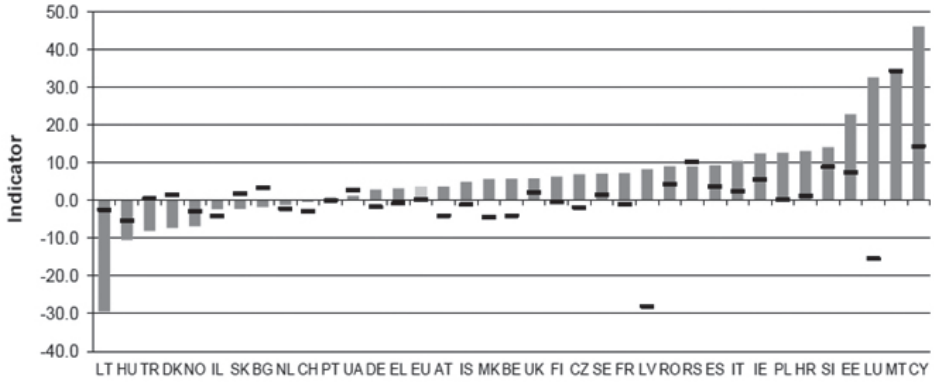
According to the 2015–2016 European Innovation Scoreboard, some of the negative impact is clearly seen in Poland, Lithuania and Latvia. The findings of the most recent EIS report suggest that the rapid advance of Poland and Latvia in innovation performance may be maintained not only owing to the severity of the economic crisis but through the loss of highly skilled labour force in large-scale migration. Such losses in academic human capital through the fast diminishing of the number of researchers and doctoral students will result in difficulties in the technological and academic innovation process in the future.

• The total number of academic publications by countries of the Baltic Sea Rim

Among the very negative results, according to European Innovation Scoreboard data on Latvia and Poland (see Fig. 1.2.1 in EIS, 2017, p. 7), is the number of scientific publications, as these countries have less than 250 international scientific co-publications per million population. In Lithuania the number of publications is 400, while in Estonia the number was 1,500 co-publications per million population in 2016.

The position of Lithuania, Latvia and Poland is very low on the indicator, with 4% (Latvia and Lithuania) and 5% (Poland) among the top 10% most cited publications worldwide. As Figure 3 shows, Lithuania has ranked the lowest among all EU countries for the last 10 years and compared to the 2010 performance, the position of Lithuania has fallen most significantly in 2016—about 70% (*sic!*) (EIS, 2017, p. 8).

Figure 3. Scientific publications among the top 10% most cited, performance in 2010–2016



Source: EIS, 2017, p. 8: Annex B - Performance per indicator 2017

Columns show the performance of the normalised indicator scores in the most recent year compared to the situation six years earlier, i.e. the normalised score used for calculating the SII in 2016 is compared to the normalised score used for calculating the SII in 2010. The horizontal hyphens show the performance of the normalised indicator scores in the most recent year compared to the previous year, i.e. the normalised score used for calculating the SII in 2016 is compared to the normalised score used for calculating the SII in 2015.

This indicator is a very important impact factor for the Baltic Sea Rim countries and some others from Central and Northern Europe—for example, Hungary

and Denmark. Thus, we can conclude on the basis of the analysis of European Innovation Scoreboard 2017 that the first cause for the highly negative tendencies in Lithuania and Hungary is the emigration of academic people abroad.

For the study, the author has also drawn on secondary data on a number of key parameters that are important for assessment, in particular:

• **Data from the Forum's Global Competitiveness Index and GEM's Adult Population Survey (December 2016)** to analyse the associations between the competitiveness of European economies (by country case for comparison) and the types of entrepreneurship exhibited. The analysis highlights the impact of intrapreneurial activity and how it changes the overall picture of European entrepreneurship (World Economic Forum, 2016).

Estonia tops the ranking for overall entrepreneurship, owing to its high rate of TEA, for which it ranks second in the sample. Meanwhile Estonia's Early-Stage Entrepreneurial Activity (EEA) rate is slightly above average—4.3%, while TEA is 12.6% (the total is 15.8% with Estonia ranking first in Europe, Sweden occupying the second position and Latvia the third position). Editors of the report summarised that in Estonia almost 80% of started businesses are opportunity-driven and Estonia is often cited as a model for entrepreneurially-oriented policy (World Economic Forum, 2016, p. 19).

• **Budget cuts in higher education in the years of financial crisis (2008–2010), during the post-financial crisis (2011–2012), in the EU Member States, and today**

Budget cuts in higher education in the years of the financial crisis (2008–2010) in the EU Member States was not a uniform response to the crisis, but in all the Baltic States these budget cuts took place. According to large statistical reviews, public expenditure on tertiary education decreased considerably in Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in 2008–2009, making up 20.6%, 18.5% and 6.6%, respectively (*EHEA*, 2012, pp. 25–27). Nevertheless, having cuts in budget allocations to higher education in 2008–2010, does mean fewer resources in higher education in Poland and Latvia, but not in Lithuania and Estonia in 2011–2012 (see *EHEA*, 2015, pp. 41–42).

As findings of the recent human resource mobility index in Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania (see *EHEA*, 2015, pp. 239–240) show, the lack of investments in the education system has had a negative effect on universities achieving higher level because growth in outward mobility by students with university degrees is the negative result in the higher education process in general.

Geographical proximity, the share of common languages of instruction or historical legacies may not be negligible in determining the origin of incoming students in some countries. For instance, such factors may explain the pattern of students arriving in Estonia (from Finland and Ethiopia, but not from Russia and Latvia) and Finland (from Sweden, Russia, and Estonia but not from Latvia and Lithuania).

According to Professor Jüri Allik's (2018) estimation on the dilemma of financial development in Estonian science, there is only one solution for the future—either to restore sustainable financing in Estonian universities or continue on the inevitable downward path of recent years (because owing to the reforms the budget of the universities has unexpectedly become negative).

Allik argues that the situation is particularly complicated in the largest universities. According to him, the result based on the rhetoric of "transparent financing" and "increase in research funding" by providing more research funds for universities has not been achieved and these promises have been forgotten (Allik, 2018).

Based on the data of the Estonian Statistics Office, one can argue that especially during the last few years (2013–2016) the financing of research and development in Estonia (from the local and national budget) has shown a dangerous decrease—from 154 million to 102 million euros by the year 2016 (*Statistics Estonia*, 2017).

4. Reasons for large university reforms in Estonia

In Estonia, the number of students continues to decrease. While in 2011 there were 69,113 students in Estonia (*Eesti Statistika aastaraamat*, 2011, p. 78), according to the Ministry of Science and Education (2018, p. 4), the number is currently 47,800. The most recent period shows a very negative tendency in the matriculation of students in Estonia—from 2011 to 2017 the drop in the number of students was 30%.

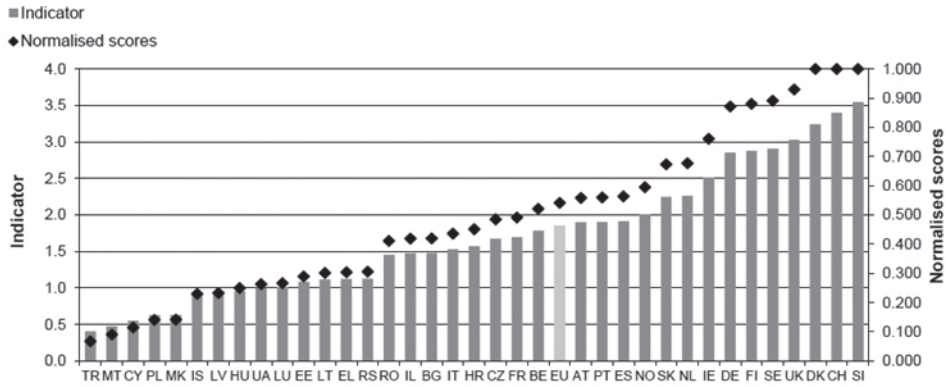
In Poland the situation is better, and also in Lithuania and Latvia the statistics are not as negative as in Estonia. However, some complicated or very negative effects exist in the labour development of innovative economy in Latvia, Poland, Estonia and Lithuania. The potential reasons for this process are the following.

The first reason for this process with negative effect is the following: as labour migration processes have been very active in the past five to seven years, there

is an increasing deficit in academic labour resources in countries of the southern Baltic area. The negative impact, in turn, has resulted in a very low number of doctorate graduates per 1,000 population aged 25–34 (see Fig. 4).

According to Eurostat data (EIS, 2017, p. 4), experts have concluded that in 2015, on average 1.8 new PhD degrees were awarded in the EU per 1,000 population aged 25–34. The highest scores are observed in Slovenia, Switzerland, Denmark, and the United Kingdom, with at least 3 new PhD graduates per 1,000 population aged 25–34. In Malta, Cyprus and Poland (only 0.6 new doctoral students per 1,000), the performance is relatively weak with 0.6 or less new PhD graduates per 1,000 of population aged 25–34. In Lithuania and Estonia there is no more than 1 new doctoral student and in Latvia—0.9 doctoral students per 1,000 population aged 25–34 (EIS, 2017).

Figure 4. New doctorate graduates in 2010–2016



Source: EIS, 2017, p. 4: Annex B – Performance per indicator

The situation was alarming for Poland in 2010–2016 when the number of PhD graduates dropped 13% as the academic educational process in Poland was in this period at an unsatisfied stage and labour migration processes have exerted a strongly negative impact in the last five to seven years. For Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia and Hungary, the situation with new doctoral graduates aged 25–34 is also problematic.

The second very essential problem in the flow of students and doctoral graduates is the lack of continuity in the provision of educational services at the level of the best European universities. As recent academic research (Lauristin, 2011, and others) has concluded, the traditional structures of higher education in Estonia are ineffective for higher competitiveness in Estonian universities. Among

the most crucial problems are the lack of continuity in providing educational services at the level of the best European universities.

To resolve these contradictions, a very aggressive plan, initiated as a state programme, was worked out by the Estonian Ministry of Education and Science. The higher education reform can be seen as a counter-argument to making the period of study more optimal for students and professors. Government has planned to expand the concept to a fully state-commissioned study.

For Estonian universities additional contribution to the budget for the period of three years (2013–2015) was 60 million euros. With the basic state-commissioned student places, this could be beneficial for students participating in Estonian language study groups, including students with about 170 euro stipend per month, and post-doctoral students with a stipend of no more than 600 euros.

Thus it can be concluded that in autumn 2017, the university innovation program was not so efficient as initially planned in the cabinets of the ministry and rectors—life in Estonia shortly corrects all ideal plans. As a negative result, the number of new students recruited in autumn 2017 decreased in the natural and economical sciences. However, this was not the case in the Faculty of Information Technology of Tallinn University of Technology (TUT) as the department was integrated from outside when the former IT College was merged into TUT on the initiative of Rector Jaak Aaviksoo (TUT, 2017).

One reason for the decrease in the number of students in Estonia (and Latvia and Lithuania as well) is the demographic gap in population in the past 20–30 years. In Estonia, the younger population has decreased for the last 25 years, falling in the period following 1990 to one third of today's (2017) demographic estimates. While in 2000 there were 16,000 Estonian schoolchildren in the first grade, in 2010 the number of Estonian first-graders had dropped to 12,000, and in August 2017 there were only 9,600 Estonian first-graders plus 5,000 Russian speakers and of other nationalities (the author's estimation based on data from Statistics Estonia, 2015, pp. 21ff).

In the southern Baltic EU member countries, modernisation of the education system and the academic development in universities are not regarded as key elements of enhancing competitiveness in the whole society. Science is not regarded in the university system as the primary instrument for innovation. There is a need to strengthen the link between the different parts of the higher education system, science and government, but it is also necessary to strengthen each part individually—these are the main tendencies of the development of the *knowledge triangle* (Kirch, 2009, pp. 40–47).

In Estonia, the main issue is the predominance of structural changes of global economy and especially how these changes will affect the relationship between the underlying patterns of competitiveness (and the economic outcomes that they lead to), which are at the final stage in today's Estonia.

A good indicator of these trends is a recent assessment based on the bibliometric analysis of regional university–industry interaction in the Baltic Sea macro-region. This allows us to conclude that in the last ten years Poland, Latvia and Estonia have suffered from a negative image in university–industry interaction research. As to the 2010–2015 period, Murashova and Loginova (2017) conclude:

> *An important role in the formation of this tendency is played by researchers from Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark, and Germany, the share of publications of which accounts for 95.5% of the total number of articles published by the countries of the Baltic Sea Region.* (Murashova & Loginova, 2017, p. 53)

According to this assessment, only about 5% of the total number of articles are published in the southern Baltic countries. In the coming years it will be a difficult time for academic collaboration, as it is an important factor of competitiveness between the northern and southern Baltic countries in the whole Strategy of the Baltic Sea Macro-Region of European Union.

This larger process would require the creation of hundreds of new highly qualified jobs over the next years in home countries. A favourable factor for Estonia is that ca 40,000 new workplaces can be established for ICT people up until 2020, and ICT could become Estonia's main industry (Kotka, 2012).

However, until today only half of this large program has been completed. In this situation, an important role must be attributed to the 'knowledge triangle' which is concerned with creating innovative E-technological mechanisms—large platforms such as X-road and e-residents (Pau, 2017)—and an institutional network (between scientific institutions and high technology centres) for larger innovation process in Estonia.

Higher level research is carried out not only in universities (there are 6 universities and 15 other academic institutions in Estonia), but also in research centres of excellence and competence centres. The centres of excellence are composed of internationally highly regarded research groups who work under clearly defined common goals. Currently in Estonia there are 12 centres of excellence and 8 competence centres, and the total number of positively evaluated Estonian R&D institutions is 40 (Research in Estonia, n.d.).

5. Conclusions

First, modernisation of the education system and academic science development in universities today are the two key elements of enhancing competitiveness in the whole society. In the Baltic Sea macro-region, an important role must be attributed to the 'knowledge triangle', which is concerned with creating new economic mechanisms and creating a structure of institutions to carry out the new comprehensive and dynamic innovation model.

For Estonia, the final challenge was to create a new aggressive plan for a university and science reform in Estonia in 2013–2016. The results of the reform, however, showed that it was ineffective—alongside the reform there emerged new major unresolved problems for the future political decisions. Since there have been no effective academic reforms in science and higher education in Poland and Lithuania and, as a result, no labour resource formation in the country, a very large share of young post-graduates (about 35–55%) leave their homeland.

It can be concluded that in all the countries analysed here—Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania—there exists a negative factor for a national demographical crisis in the nearest future, in the period of ten-twenty years in 2027–2037, as the decrease in the populations of the countries will be huge in Latvia and Lithuania (30–40%) and some 10–20% in Estonia and Poland.

Second, the migration of highly skilled labour force from all the Baltic Sea countries (Poland, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia) today will have a negative impact on the economic potential of the region. The trend of migration flows of young and educated people is currently predominantly northward—to the Scandinavian countries—rather than the UK, as in the past ten years. This means that, broadly speaking, half of the emigrated skilled labour people (150,000 out of 300,000) in Northern Europe (Sweden, Denmark, Finland and Norway) came from the Baltic States—Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

Therefore, in the future it is inevitable to implement effective policies that would encourage networking and innovative cooperation within the Baltic Sea macro-region. A good political measure for this would be to turn the outward mobility in the southern Baltic countries to inward mobility. In the last five years, Latvia and Estonia have shown some positive trends of re-immigration—in 2012–2016 the number of repatriates to Latvia was 31,850 and to Estonia 20,000. (Statistics Estonia, 2018).

The final conclusion is that there are very optimal results for the whole political and technological connectivity—for example, the development of the macro-region benefits the whole macro-region of the Baltic Sea Rim, both the destination countries of the northern Baltic region as well as the donor countries of the southern Baltic. The destination countries acquire new high-educated labour force, while the benefit for the donor countries is the opportunity to be integrated into the research and innovation networks of countries that have already performed well and given good results in the field of innovation.

As said in article's introduction, the key issue is the predominance of structural changes in the global economy and especially how these changes will affect the relationship between the underlying patterns of competitiveness and the economic outcomes that they lead to. The coming years will be a very difficult time for collaboration and competitiveness across the Baltic Sea macro-region. As concluded in the analysis about migration losses in all the Baltic countries, they all have major problems with the formation of working resource—about half of the young educated population plans to migrate from Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Estonia to other European countries.

The overall economic recession in the EU in 2008–2010 (and the financial crises in 2011–2014) have largely expanded to a "competitiveness shock", as described in connection with France's economy (see *The Economist*, 2012). In Estonia we have a chance to expand this competitiveness shock at the minimal level— it can be reduced to a large extent with successful repatriation (re-emigation) of Estonian youth to home.

This larger process would require the creation of hundreds of new highly qualified jobs over the next years in home countries. Also, stability in innovation process is highly important as this stability process can exist only in cooperation with Estonian national governmental (institutional) juridical structure, as Estonian experts Jüri Raidla and Urmas Varblane (2018) have claimed.

Aksel Kirch, PhD has been Director of the Institute for European Studies (Tallinn, Estonia) since 2015. In 2009–2014 he held the position of professor and Head of the Chair of European Studies at Tallinn University of Technology.

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