



European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

# **Case Study on Diversity Policy in Employment and Service Provision**

## **Tallinn, Estonia**



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## Foreword

This report is part of the Eurofound project ‘Cities for Local Integration Policy’ (CLIP), which commenced in 2006. Tallinn is one of the 25 European cities that cooperate within a European network that exchanges information about their respective integration policies. The network implements thematic modules for its research. The first module implemented focused on the issue of housing (2006/2007), the second (the subject of this report) focuses on diversity (2007/2008). Further areas are covered in forthcoming modules.

The project aims at collecting and analysing innovative policies and their successful implementation at the local level, supporting the exchange of experience between cities and encouraging a learning process within this network of cities. Another goal is supporting the further development of a European integration policy by communicating the policy relevant experiences and outcomes of the network to: European organisations of cities and local regional authorities, the European and national organisations of social partners, the Council of Europe and the various institutions of the European Union.

The CLIP network is also a cooperation between cities and research institutes. Five research institutes (efms Bamberg, IMES Amsterdam, ISR Vienna, CEDEM Liege and COMPAS Oxford) are conducting the research of the CLIP project. The efms researchers at the University of Bamberg are responsible for this report on Tallinn. Together with the contact person of the municipality of Tallinn, Ervin Trofimov, considerable effort has been undertaken to accumulate all necessary data for this report. We want to thank all those who contributed information and particularly Ervin Trofimov for coordinating the search of data and the interviews with experts.

The issue of diversity policy in staff management and service provision is prominent among western European metropolises with a large population of foreign migrants. Since immigration to Estonia is still a marginal issue, and since the significant proportion of the Russian speaking population in Estonia (about 50% in Tallinn) is the most relevant issue related to diversity, this case study on diversity policy is not directly comparable to most others in the CLIP network.

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# 1 The country: Estonia

## 1.1 Background information: Estonia at a glance

The Republic of Estonia lies in the Baltic Region in Northern Europe. The territory covers 45,227 square km and the border's perimeter has a total length of 1,450 km. The territory includes 1,521 islands (the largest of these are Saaremaa and Hiiumaa). Estonia is a green land, with roughly half of the territory consisting of various types of forests, dominated largely by birches, the national symbol of Estonia. Additionally, several thousand lakes dot the countryside.

Estonia's population is ranked as one of the smallest in the world. As of the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2008, 1,340,935 people live in Estonia. About two thirds of them live in urban areas, most of them in the capital Tallinn. With a population of 396,900 inhabitants (29.6% of the total population) Tallinn is the largest Estonian city. Other large cities are the university town Tartu (102,000 inhabitants), the industrial border towns of Narva (66,700) and Kohtla-Järve (45,400), and the summer vacation resort Pärnu (44,100) (data dating from 1.1.2008).

*Graph 1 Estonia in Europe*



Source: <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/en.html>

The largest ethnic groups in Estonia are Estonians (69%), Russians (26%), Ukrainians (2%), Byelorussians (1%) and Finns (1%) (2006). The official language is Estonian, which belongs to the Finno-Ugric language family.

Estonia is a parliamentary democracy with a president as the head of state, who is elected to serve for five years by the parliament or an Electoral body (if the parliamentary majority is not high enough). Currently the president – who is required to be Estonian – is Toomas Hendrik Ilves, who was elected in 2006. The national legislature is the *Riigikogu*, a

unicameral parliament of 101 members, which is elected every four years. The head of the government is the Prime Minister, currently Andrus Ansip, from the Reform Party. The electoral system is one of proportional representation. Municipal elections are held every four years and all permanent residents who are over 18 years old, regardless of their citizenship, are eligible to vote in municipal elections. The last elections for local authorities were in 2005 and the next local elections are going to take place in October 2009.

On the 29<sup>th</sup> of March 2004, Estonia joined NATO; on the 1<sup>st</sup> of May 2004, it became a European Union member state.<sup>2</sup>

## 1.2 History of migration to Estonia and characteristics of minorities

A major feature of Estonia's history is the foreign rule: between the 12<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the territory was mainly occupied by the Danes and the Teutonic Knights<sup>3</sup> and parts of today's Estonia belonged to the Hanseatic League. In the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century, Estonia became the battleground for a war involving Denmark, Sweden, Russia and Poland, after which most parts of the territory fell into the hands of the victorious Swedes. The Great Northern War (1700-1721), which was fought between Russia and Sweden for supremacy in the Baltic Sea, left Estonia under Russian rule until 1918.

It was only in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that Estonians came to acknowledge themselves as a nation deserving the right to govern themselves: an Estonian nationalist movement developed influenced by the French Revolution, the ideas of Romanticism and the emerging German national consciousness. The 'Estonian Age of Awakening' led to the declaration of the Republic of Estonia on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February 1918.<sup>4</sup> Initially, this was merely a decision made on paper. Genuine independence was fought for in the War of Independence, waged from 1918 to 1920. In 1920, a treaty was signed with Soviet Russia, revoking in perpetuity all claims over Estonia.

Estonia's volatile history was reflected in the population structure: in 1922 there were 969,976 Estonians (~88%), 91,109 Russians (~8%), 18,319 Germans (~2%), 7,850 Swedes (~1%) and 19,074 of other nationalities (~2%). Following the Tartu Peace Treaty (1920), however, Estonian citizenship was granted to the whole population. Furthermore, the government promoted cultural autonomy for national minorities.

The relatively short period of first sovereignty was curtailed by the Soviet-German non-aggression Pact in 1939: Estonia was first occupied and then incorporated into the USSR in 1940, to become the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic (SSR). Mass deportations of the local population began. The Soviet period was interrupted by German occupation (1941-1944): Jews were severely persecuted, while most Swedes and about 70,000 Estonians fled the country. After the War, the re-establishment of Russian rule involved further deportations. According to the commission established by the *Riigikogu* (parliament), direct human losses reached 180,000 people (17% of the Estonian population) between 1941 and 1949.

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<sup>2</sup> Main sources for the section 1.1: Press and Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2008 and Estonian Institute 2008.

<sup>3</sup> The Teutonic Knights are members of a German Roman Catholic religious order, which is also known as the 'Teutonic Order'.

<sup>4</sup> This event is still celebrated on the Estonian National Day.

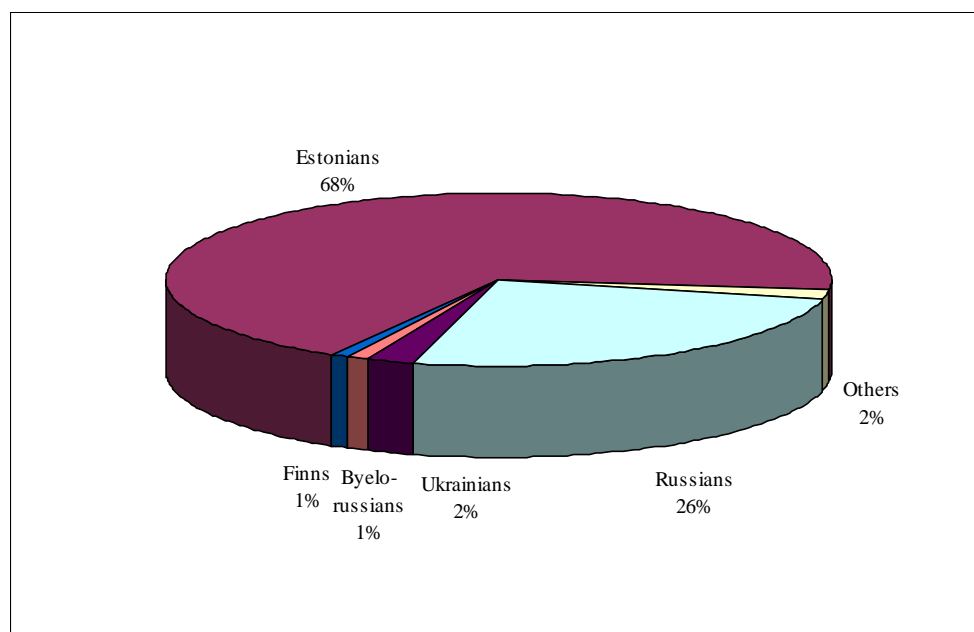
During the Soviet period, 1.4 million people immigrated to Estonia. The immigrants came from across the entire territory of the Soviet Union. Taking demographic features into account, they had a major impact on the composition of Estonia's population. Since an overwhelming number of the migrants were young, the natural increase in their numbers was larger than that of the native population. As a result, the share of Estonians among the population continuously declined: from 1945 to 1989, the percentage of non-Estonians grew from 2.7% to 38.5% of the total population. Additionally, this immigration process involved a 'russification' process in many spheres of life – government, administration, economy, education.

In August 1991, the Estonian Supreme Council, in coordination with the Congress of Estonia, adopted a decision on national independence. National statehood and sovereignty were restored and the country re-established all diplomatic relations. In September 1991, Estonia became a member of the United Nations. A new constitution came into force in 1992, replacing the old one that had remained in force de jure during the Soviet period.

In 2006, 83.6% of Estonian residents are Estonian citizens, while 7.4% are citizens of other countries (most of them are Russian citizens) and 9% are citizens with undetermined citizenship (2006).

When talking about differences in population, 'citizenship' is not the category generally used: additional to the category 'citizenship', the Census as well as the Statistical Database on population use the category 'ethnic nationality'. The latter is based on self-determination, which means that a person has the right to consider him-/herself to be a member of a particular ethnic nationality – usually the nationality with the closest ethnical and cultural connection. The mother's ethnic nationality was taken as a basis for determining the ethnic nationality of the child.

*Graph 2 Estonia's population according to ethnic nationalities (2007)*



Source: compiled by efms according to data from Statistics Estonia 2008

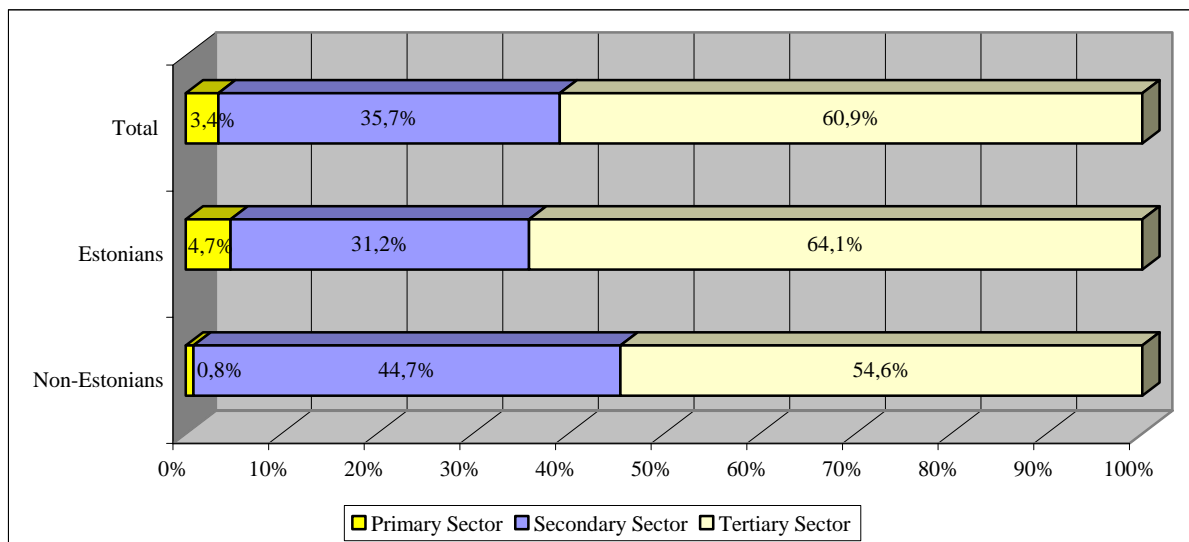
Today, Estonia's population is composed of more than 100 different ethnic nationalities. As of the end of 2007, people with Estonian ethnic nationality make up 68% of the population

(921,062 people). Russians constitute the second largest group: 344,280 people with Russian ethnic nationality live in Estonia, which amounts to a percentage of 26%. Other ethnic nationalities only account for smaller proportions of the Estonian society: the 28,158 Ukrainians make up 2% of the population; 1% are Byelorussian (16,133 people) and another 1% is of Finnish ethnic nationality (11,035 people). A further 2% of the population (21,741 people) have another ethnic nationality (cf. graph 2).

Of the ethnic minorities living in Estonia (2006), 39% are citizens of Estonia and 20% are citizens of Russia. Only 2% of the ethnic minorities have citizenship other than Estonian or Russian. A striking 39% of the ethnic minorities living in Estonia are people with an undefined citizenship – most of them of Russian origin.

The Estonian society, however, has remained ethnically divided, with marginal contact between Russian immigrants and their descendents and the Estonian population. This is enhanced by a large variety of Russian language media in Estonia<sup>5</sup> as well as the school system. Estonia is one of the few European Union countries that finance a multi-lingual school system: about 23% of all Estonian schoolchildren are attending Russian-language primary and secondary schools. Not only has the private sphere remained ethnically divided, but also the employment situation of Estonians and non-Estonians differs: according to the experts interviewed, the labour market is divided into an Estonian side and a Russian one. This is true for both job types and for wages. Far more Estonians than non-Estonians work in the primary sector (4.7% compared to 0.8%) and in the tertiary sector (64.1% versus 54.6%). The opposite applies to the secondary sector, in which 31.2% of Estonians but 44.7% of non-Estonians work (cf. graph 3).<sup>6</sup>

*Graph 3 Employed persons by ethnic origin and economic sector (2007)*



Source: compiled by efms according to data from the Ministry of Social Affairs

Concerning wages, there are no official national statistics that have an ethnic focus. The only data existing are based on questionnaires, i.e. are less reliable. According to these data,

<sup>5</sup> Including Russian language newspaper, magazines, TV and radio.

<sup>6</sup> This is mainly due to the economic policy of the USSR: during the Soviet period, Russians were employed en masse in large-scale industrial enterprises which often had – typically at that time – a military orientation.

however, there is a gap of up to 15% percent between Estonians and Russians. Hence, Russians in Estonia exercise blue-collar jobs slightly more often and get lower wages than Estonians.<sup>7</sup>

### **1.3 National policy context: law and policy on diversity and integration**

After the occupation of Estonia in 1940, immigrants did not have to adapt to Estonian conditions. On the contrary, learning the Estonian language and culture were considered unimportant: for the migrants, living in Estonia was the same as living in any other random region of the Soviet Union, as they were ensured that life was arranged in the Russian language, and institutions operated in Russian. Hence, they did not consider themselves to be immigrants or a minority, but just citizens of the Soviet Union.

The restoration of Estonian independence in 1991 caught the migrants off guard, bringing about a significant change in their status – the dominant Russian population became a minority. The passage of the Aliens Act (1993), the Citizenship Act (1995) and the Language Act (1995) was a shock for the majority of the immigrants in Estonia: according to these acts, the Estonian citizenship is based on the *ius sanguinis* principle, i.e. the Estonian nation is considered a community of descent. Hence, not even migrants that have been living permanently in Estonia can acquire Estonian citizenship automatically, but have to go through a naturalisation process, which requires basic Estonian language proficiency and to pass a citizenship test.

Attempts have been made to integrate minorities into Estonian society on the basis of the ‘State Programme ‘Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007’’, which was adopted by the Government of Estonia in 2000. The Estonian integration model presumes, in one respect, that minorities will learn the Estonian language and will participate in local cultural and political life, just like the Estonians do. On the other hand, the model presumes that minorities will preserve their cultural uniqueness and language. The main focus of the state programme is, however, on language proficiency.

The state programme was followed by an action plan for governmental and other institutions which work in the field of integration: the ‘Integration Strategy 2008-2013’ (approved in 2008). The strategy defines the term ‘integration’ as follows:

- friendly and secure coexistence that is based on the mutual acceptance and respect of various social groups
- all of Estonia’s residents have an equal interest, desire and opportunity to contribute to public life, regardless of ethnicity or native language
- integration is a long-term process
- the premise of policy is that more active promotion of participation of minorities in social life is needed.

One aim of the strategy is to achieve conditions where all permanent residents of Estonia, irrespective of their ethnic origin, (a) feel secure in Estonia, (b) are competent in the state

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<sup>7</sup> Main sources for the section 1.2: Estonian Institute 2008, European Commission 2008, Press and Information Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs 2005/2006a/2006b/2006c, Statistics Estonia 2008 and expert interviews.

language, (c) share the values underlying the Constitution and (d) are able to lead a fulfilled life by participating in the societal, economic and cultural life of the country. Additionally, everyone is guaranteed the right to preserve and develop his/her language and culture.

The strategy will be implemented in three areas: educational and cultural integration, social and economic integration and legal and political integration. The Integration Strategy, however, also emphasizes Estonian Language proficiency. Therefore, some experts interviewed criticised that the new strategy is just more modern and has more ‘decorative words’, but is too limited to be successful, due to the narrow focus on language proficiency.<sup>8</sup>

## **2 The city: Tallinn**

### **2.1 Brief description of Tallinn**

Tallinn is the capital of the Republic of Estonia. It is located in the north-east of the country, covering an area of approximately 159 km<sup>2</sup>. With its 396,852 inhabitants (January 2007), it is Estonia’s biggest city. Since 1991 – the year the country regained its independence from the former Soviet Union – Tallinn has experienced a steady decline of its population. The number has decreased from 476,591 people in 1991 to an all-time low of 396,010 inhabitants in 2005. During the last two years, population figures have begun to increase again.

In 1997, Tallinn’s medieval Old Town was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List, acknowledging its long-standing history and notable architecture. Tourism is an important branch of industry for the city and besides this, Tallinn has a long history of trade and business. Its harbour is the third largest in the Baltic Sea and owing to its location and proximity to Scandinavia and Russia, Tallinn is attracting foreign investment.

The economic situation of Tallinn – like the rest of the country – has alternated during the last 10 years. Examining the unemployment rate of the city, an increase up until 2001 (from 8.5% in 1997 to 12.5% in 2001) is noticeable. Since then, unemployment in the city has decreased to 3.4% in 2007. Compared to the average of Estonia as a whole, Tallinn has a slightly lower unemployment rate (Statistics Estonia 2008).

### **2.2 Tallinn’s migrant population, its history and characteristics**

For centuries, Tallinn has been an attractive destination for immigrants, above all for Germans and Russians. The mass immigration to Tallinn, however, began in the 1940s after the occupation of Estonia by the Soviet Union (cf. section 1.2): most immigrants who came from the Soviet Union congregated in north-east Estonia and in Tallinn.

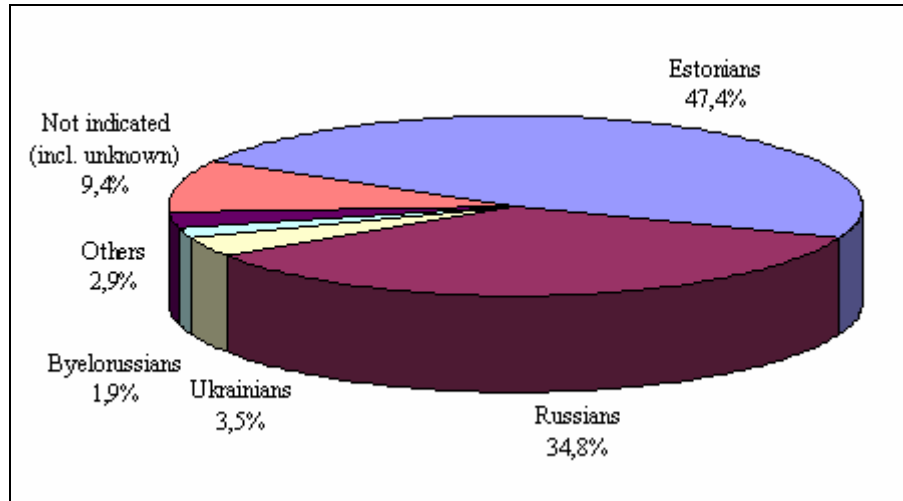
Today, only half (47.4%) of Tallinn’s population are ethnic Estonians (2007). Consisting of 34.8% of the city population, ethnic Russians make up the second largest group. 3.5% of the people living in Tallinn have the ethnic Ukrainian nationality, 1.9% Byelorussian. Other ethnic nationalities amount to a percentage of 2.9% of all the citizens of Tallinn. For 9.4% of the population, the ethnic nationality is not indicated or unknown. This group mainly consists

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<sup>8</sup> Main sources for the section 1.3: Estonian Institute 2008, Office of the Minister for Population and Ethnic Affairs 2008, Government of Estonia 2008, OSCE 2008 and expert interviews.

of Russian speaking people. Hence, the Russian speaking group is almost as important as the Estonian speaking one (according to data of the Tallinn Population Registry 2007).

*Graph 4 Population of Tallinn by ethnic nationality (2007)*



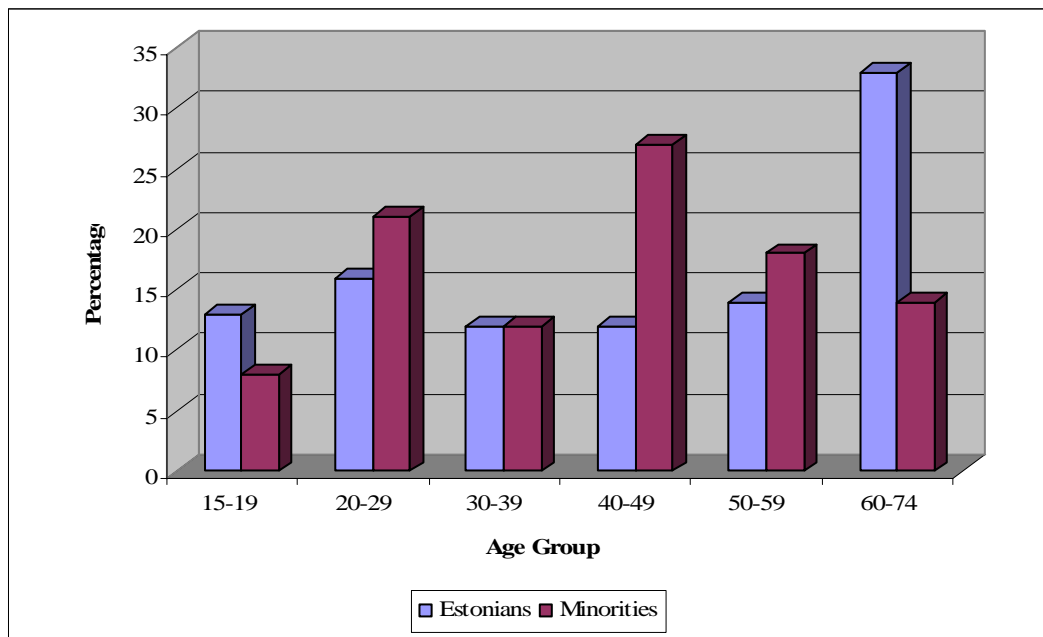
Source compiled by efms according to data from the city of Tallinn (Tallinn Population Registry 2007)

99% of the ethnic Estonians living in Tallinn were born in Estonia, while only 58% of the ethnic minorities (with ethnic nationality other than Estonian) living in Tallinn were born in the country they are currently living in. The percentage of new immigrants (who arrived in Tallinn after 1991) in comparison to other European capitals is very low, remaining below 1% (according to data from the city of Tallinn).

According to the 2000 census, 71.1% of the about 400,000 people living in Tallinn had the Estonian citizenship and another 8.7% had the Russian citizenship. Only 2.2% of Tallinn's population held a citizenship other than the Estonian and Russian one or an unknown citizenship. For 18% of the population, the citizenship was not determined. The latter group has assumedly decreased by now, for Estonia has enforced naturalisation processes since the year 2000.

Concerning the age structure of Tallinn's population, only two age groups have a higher share of Estonians than minorities: whereas more than 10% of Estonians are between 15 and 19 years of age, only about 6% of minorities are within this category. The difference between the two groups is even more acute in the oldest age group: more than 30% of Estonians are between 60 and 74 years old yet less than 15% of minorities fall into this category. Within the age group '30-39' the percentage of Estonians and minorities is equal. The other three classes demonstrate higher percentages of minorities. The biggest difference is evident in the age group '40-49', where slightly more than 10% of Estonians and about 26% of minorities fall into this category (according to data from the city of Tallinn).

Graph 5 Population of Tallinn by ethnicity and age group (2007)



Source: compiled by efms according to data from the City of Tallinn

The unemployment rate of Estonians living in Tallinn is 2%, the unemployment rate of the 'minorities' living in Tallinn makes up 7% (according to data from the city of Tallinn).

### 2.3 The city authority: tier of government, responsibilities and structure

The city of Tallinn is governed by the City Council (*Linnavolikogu*) and the City Government (*Linnavalitsus*).

The City Council is the representative body of Tallinn and is elected directly by the citizens. As an independent unit, it defines the duties and responsibilities of the local government. Currently, the City Council has 63 members (as of August 2007): the majority are from the Centre Party Faction (32 members), 15 are from the Reform Party Faction, nine members of the city council belong to the Pro Patria Faction, another four to the Estonian Social Democratic Party and three members are independent.

Affiliated with the City Council are a City Council Office, eleven Committees (e.g. education and culture, health and social care, environment) and other separate City District Councils. The latter are administrative agencies within the eight districts of *Haabersti*, *Centre*, *Krisiine*, *Lasnamäe*, *Mustamäe*, *Nõmme*, *Pirita* and *Northern Tallinn*. Their statutes, structure, personnel and salary levels are proposed by the City Government and subsequently have to be approved by the City Council.

The City Government is the executive body and is composed of the Mayor and six Deputy Mayors. Each of the Deputy Mayors is responsible for up to three of the twelve municipal departments, which are: cultural heritage, sports and youth, education, social and health care, housing, land issues, city enterprises, environment, public engineering services, transport, city planning and the municipal police.

Associated with the City Government is the City Office, which is responsible for another two municipal departments (city archives and vital statistics) as well as for administrative tasks. The office's 181 employees mainly work in areas like PR, IT or financial and human resources services.<sup>9</sup>

### **3 The city's approach to diversity**

#### **3.1 Historical background of the policy approach**

To date, the city of Tallinn lacks its own diversity policy. Until recently, aspirations were placed on the state integration programme mentioned above (cf. section 1.3). Unfortunately, this programme has not delivered the desired results. According to research conducted in 2007, three quarters of the Tallinn residents consider the integration that has taken place so far to be unsuccessful; minorities feel that they are excluded and treated like 'second-rate people' (according to information from the city of Tallinn, based on data from a study conducted by the Estonian Open Society Institute from 2007).

Due to this feedback, the city of Tallinn considered developing its own local integration policy. These convictions have come to the forefront as a result of riots and disputes surrounding the relocation of a Soviet World War II memorial, in April 2007. The respective Soviet war memorial is a bronze statue of a Soviet soldier, mourning the fallen soldiers. In 1947, it had been installed in a centrally located place in the city of Tallinn. Today, this 'bronze soldier' highlights two different perceptions of history in Estonia: while for many Russian residents the memorial mainly symbolises the Soviet victory over Nazi Germany, many Estonians consider the 'bronze soldier' to be a symbol of Soviet occupation and repression. In 2007, the Estonian government decided to relocate the statue to the Military Cemetery (out of the centre). Disagreement over this action led to mass protests on April 26, which culminated in rioting and looting in downtown Tallinn, on the night of April 27. Hundreds of people were arrested, about 70 were hurt and the riots even claimed the life of a young Russian. After the clashes, coined the 'Bronze Night', the whole Estonian society was out of balance: tensions escalated and relations became somewhat hostile. Today, the problems have not disappeared but the situation has regained stability.

The 'Bronze Night', however, provoked impetus to establish a local policy concept that aimed to re-establish peaceful coexistence between Russians and Estonians, and to securing it for the future. Hence, the city is currently developing a comprehensive local integration programme, including diversity approaches as well as the former minority policy: the 'Tallinn Civic Peace Programme 2008-2013' (*Tallinna Kodurahuprogramm*).<sup>10</sup>

#### **3.2 Objectives of the policy approach**

The city shares common objectives with the state integration programme and the national integration strategy, but strategically goes beyond these. The emphasis does not only remain on language proficiency but also on peaceful intergroup relations and the coalescence of the

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<sup>9</sup> Main sources for the chapter 2: City of Tallinn 2006, Statistics Estonia 2008, data and information from the City of Tallinn and expert interviews.

<sup>10</sup> Since research showed that the term 'integration' is not well received by the general public, the city changed the label and chose this more neutral term.

‘two Tallinns’: the ‘Tallinn Civic Peace Programme’ aims at enhancing the peaceful coexistence of Russians and Estonians. It pledges to ensure the minority population’s equal rights and opportunities relative to the primary population. The policy includes all groups living in Tallinn.

As part of the programmes’ development, the city initiated a regular seminar series in 2007, known as ‘Civic Peace Forums’, where politicians, representatives of different groups and scientific researchers discuss topics of integration and coexistence and prepare basic principles for the new strategy. Listed below are the five working groups that have been established, involving about 50 people:

1. Discrimination and legislation
2. Quality of education and the future of Russian youth
3. Cultural relations between Estonians and non-Estonians
4. Analysis of previous integration programmes
5. Information and the Media

The participants of these five working groups identified nine topics of particular importance for the integration policy of Tallinn:

1. Managing segregation of Russian and Estonian youth and support for more joint activities
2. Equal treatment and opportunities for every citizen of Tallinn
3. Increased support of the nationwide reform in Russian-speaking schools: in the Russian higher level schools, the main language of instruction has to shift successively from Russian to Estonian.
4. Developing and supporting dialogue between Estonian and Russian communities
5. Providing information to both communities on the respective other
6. Developing Estonian media channels for both groups
7. Improving trust between communities
8. Identifying the common issues in cultural life
9. Supporting the coalescence of the ‘two Tallinns’.

The ‘Tallinn Civic Peace Programme 2008-2013’ is deemed to be finalised until the end of 2008.

### **3.3 Responsibility: elected representatives and officials**

Responsible for the diversity policy in Tallinn – which is currently under development – are the City Office and one of the Deputy Mayors.

As described above (cf. section 2.3), the City Office is affiliated with the City Government. It is led by the City Secretary who is appointed by the Mayor of Tallinn. The office generally performs administrative tasks and will be concerned with the coordination of the city’s diversity policy.

The unit that will be primarily in charge of developing an overall integration and diversity strategy is the office of the Deputy Mayor responsible for the three departments Cultural Heritage, Sport and Youth as well as Education. This post is currently held by Kaia Jäppinen. In collaboration with the integration advisor Ervin Trofimov and members of the City Council, municipal employees, representatives of NGOs and scientific experts, diversity measures will be formulated.

### **3.4 Collaboration with social partners and NGOs in policy development and implementation**

The city of Tallinn cooperates closely with all of the larger national minority organisations. (a) In Tallinn, a Consultative Counsel (created in 2003) was formed alongside the city government, whose representatives are members of the largest minority organisations. (b) Representatives of minority organisations participate directly in the development of the ‘Tallinn Civic Peace Programme’. This programme will be established and implemented in close cooperation with NGOs, encompassing both consultations as well as more in-depth collaboration. The collaboration with social partners in regard to diversity policy is currently under development.

### **3.5 Policy and practice on monitoring progress**

Since 2002, Tallinn has commissioned public opinion surveys from market research institutes regarding the opinion and satisfaction of residents. This involves sociological quantitative research, where typical satisfaction scales are used. The research highlights the opinions and assessments of all city residents, including ethnic groups.

### **3.6 Key challenges faced in implementation and broad lessons learnt**

The diversity policy of Tallinn and its implementation principles are currently under development. The progress and ideas of the development of the programme are reflected in Tallinn forums, where it is of great interest, above all, to the Russian language media. The attitude of the Russian language media has been positive, while the attitude of the Estonian media has been indifferent and at times negative. The city departments of Tallinn are cooperative, although they share different views on the implementation of the policy. The challenges the city will face in implementing its ‘Tallinn Civic Peace Programme’ have yet to be seen.<sup>11</sup>

## **4 Employment policy, practice and outcomes**

### **4.1 Profile of city employees: data**

The city of Tallinn employs a total of 13,304 people. They work in the public sector, including schools, administration and hospitals. 1,500 of them are directly employed in the municipal administration of the City of Tallinn.

Estonian municipalities are only allowed to hire people with Estonian citizenship. Since in Estonia, employers cannot gather data on migration background or ethnicity/ethnic nationality, no official data are available that could indicate which occupations, and at which

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<sup>11</sup> Main sources for the chapter 3: City of Tallinn 2006, data and information from the City of Tallinn (e.g. unpublished municipal documents) and expert interviews.

level of seniority and skill the city employs people with a migration background. According to experts interviewed, however, the city administration employs a large number of Russian speaking people, among them a large proportion of native speakers, i.e. people of Russian ethnicity.

#### **4.2 Employment diversity policy**

The city of Tallinn employs its staff according to applicants' qualifications and competence; it aims to neither favour nor discriminate against certain groups in its recruitment procedures. The decision to offer employment for both employees and civil servants has to be made regardless of the applicant's sex, faith or ethnic origin. Of importance is only the qualifications, expertise and experience a (prospective) employee possesses. These principles apply equally to all individuals and groups; the municipal employment policy is the same for every employee, irrespective of nationality or ethnicity.

This approach implicates that the overall personnel policy does neither use positive actions, set quotas or target figures to boost the number of people with a migration or minority background within the administration, nor conduct measures to improve the employment or career situation of employees with a migration or minority background. Hence, a diversity approach in employment policy has not been elaborated on. It is seen as an asset, however, to have not only Estonian language skills, but also Russian language skills.

#### **4.3 Challenges and tensions in development and implementation of policy**

Over the course of the development of a municipal integration concept, the 'Tallinn Civic Peace Programme', there have also been discussions on the implementation of a diversity approach. In both the City Council and the municipal administration there seems to be a consensus that diversity in employment and the provision of services is reasonable. Hence, a future development and implementation of such policies should not cause any tensions in the city administration. However, this has yet to be seen.

#### **4.4 Recruitment, training and promotion**

As stated above, the decision to offer employment has to be made based on the applicant's experience, qualifications and performance on the job; irrespective of gender, origin, beliefs, etc. Non-discrimination in recruitment and promotion procedures is of high priority for recruiting and managing staff. The same can be said concerning staff training and career development: the short-term goals of the municipal personnel policy include training of the administrative staff and that these training provisions are the same for every employee.

Despite promoting equality, the city does not seek out people with a migration or ethnic background for particular posts in its recruitment or promotion procedures and similarly does not employ any positive actions or set quota targets. Neither does the city conduct specific measures to improve the professional career of employees with a migration or minority background.

#### **4.5 Equal pay and working conditions**

According to Estonian law, an employee's salary and working conditions do not depend on the ethnicity or migration background of the employee, but rather on the position and activity performed within the municipality. Hence, equal pay and working conditions for equivalent job titles are principally guaranteed for all employees. However, there are no measures or policies for positive action in place. In addition, over the course of this study, it has been

impossible to judge whether the pay scale *classification* is always implemented in a non-discriminating manner.

#### **4.6 Harassment, discrimination and complaints**

Owing to the above-mentioned policy of equal opportunity, the Tallinn City Government has employed Russian Deputy Mayors and Russian speaking employees occupy relevant positions in various areas of the city administration. However, according to the experts interviewed, discrimination and harassment are taking place, making it more difficult for people with a migration or ethnic minority background to foster a career in some occupations.

This expert opinion is not based on reliable figures: there are no statistical data and there have not been any complaints due to ethnic discrimination in recent years. This may be attributed to the policy and atmosphere of equal opportunity. Although this may also be due to a nonexistent culture of ‘fishing complaints’: how someone could or should react after being subjected to harassment or discrimination, or after having noticed discrimination against somebody else, has not been institutionalised by the city. If an employee is subject to harassment or discrimination, this employee can lodge a complaint with his/her boss, to the Personnel Office, or to the NGO ‘Legal Information Centre for Human Rights’ that is in close contact with the municipality. These bodies should respond to complaints in the form of counselling, support, documentation or recommendations for countermeasures or consequences. Consequently, the city can execute measures such as instruction, admonition, or legal and disciplinary proceedings. This ‘procedure’ (as it may be called) is identical for every employee, irrespective of a possible migration or minority background, or a racist motivation behind the harassment or discrimination.

The city of Tallinn is aware of the challenges regarding discrimination and aspires to increase the tolerance of municipal employees. To achieve this goal, the city plans educational training session for employees, in particular for educational and social workers as well as for administrative employees that have direct contact to citizens.

Besides the above strategies, social surveys on discrimination are scheduled for 2008 and the implementation of a monitoring system covering discrimination due to ethnicity is planned. This monitoring system will be accompanied with information material and supervision.

#### **4.7 Accommodation of cultural and religious needs**

The city makes no general arrangements to accommodate particular cultural or religious requirements of its employees. Since this is not an issue for the employees, the city is not planning to introduce such arrangements. In the few cases that have arisen, the city makes individual arrangements within its capacity.

#### **4.8 Health and safety**

The city is aware that employees have to be adequately informed about health and safety conditions in the workplace. Since all employees are required to have at least mid-level Estonian language proficiency, there are no employees with serious language problems. Hence, the city does not take any steps to ensure this information is conveyed in a systematic, institutionalised manner. If an employee, however, has language problems, a practical briefing is done on site.

#### **4.9 Induction and language tuition**

The city does not offer any introductory programme of training, information, advice or language tuition targeting employees who have newly arrived in the country. In Estonia, these types of services are provided by private companies and NGOs.

However, language tuition of the city is not deemed necessary, since in Estonia, “public servants and employees of state agencies administered by government agencies and of local government agencies (...) must [already by hiring] be able to understand and shall se Estonian at the level which is necessary to perform their services or employment duties” ((Language Act, chapter 1, §5 (2)).

#### **4.10 Recognition of qualifications**

The municipality of Tallinn welcomes job applicants with qualifications obtained abroad. If necessary for the job performed, the qualification has to be officially recognised. In Estonia, the process of accreditation of prior qualifications is not arranged at the city level but has to be processed by a national institution.

#### **4.11 Monitoring**

The appointment, employment and careers of people with a migration or minority background are not monitored. Since in Estonia employers are not allowed to ask about ethnicity or cultural background, the city is not planning to introduce such monitoring.

#### **4.12 Impact of policy and lessons learnt**

To date, the municipal personnel policy is the same for every employee, irrespective of nationality or ethnicity. The city advocates an equal opportunity approach, but not a diversity approach in relation to personnel policy that could have an impact on the employment of people with a migration or minority background.<sup>12</sup>

## **5 Diversity in service provision**

### **5.1 Services provided and contracted out**

The municipal service provision is the same for every resident of the city of Tallinn, irrespective of nationality, ethnicity or migration background.

The city of Tallinn spent a total amount of 3268.6 million Estonian 'kroons' of its 2006 budget on public services. The biggest share was spent on education (32.7%), followed by transportation (17.7%), public administration (9.6%), social services (9.3%) and roads (8.4%). Another 5.5% was spent on culture, 4.9% on sport and 4.2% on public weal and municipal engineering. The rest of the money (7.7%) was expended for housing, city planning, enterprises, health care, public security, business premises and environmental care.

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<sup>12</sup> Main sources for the chapter 4: data and information from the City of Tallinn (e.g. unpublished municipal documents) and expert interviews.

According to the city, the most important social welfare services are (1) lodging and shelter services, (2) rehabilitation and resocialisation services for underprivileged people, (3) counselling and rehabilitation services for addicts and people who are HIV-positive, (4) diagnostics and health services and (5) support for persons with coping difficulties.

For some years, the social welfare services of the city of Tallinn have been in constant development. In particular, social services and health care are progressing rapidly. Thereby, the city provides every document in both Estonian and Russian, and pays strong attention that the information reaches both target groups (Estonian and Russian residents) equally. Recent examples of these services are a bilingual information campaign on fire risks and fire alarm (since Estonia is a country with a disproportionately high number of fire victims) and the translation of infosheets on over-the-counter drugs that have been of great concern for the Russian speaking population. Currently, the city of Tallinn is planning a programme on the active inclusion of young residents (especially Russian youth) into the labour market. This will be conducted in collaboration with trade unions and private companies.

A variety of social and, particularly, cultural services are supplied by minority organisations, such as The International Association of National Cultural Societies Lüüra, Estonian Peoples Union, Fenno-Ugria Foundation, Slavic Educational Society and the Slavic Culture Society. Most of them are funded by the city of Tallinn (Source: Cultural Heritage Department 2007).

## **5.2 Diversity policy in, and access to services**

A large majority of non-Estonians in Tallinn are Russians. According to all officials interviewed, these people have, in general, the same needs as autochthonous people. Hence, it is not necessary to offer Russian specific programmes or to conduct special measures. Nonetheless, they have to tackle a specific challenge: their literacy in the official language, Estonian, is often insufficient to communicate adequately in Estonian.

To facilitate the access to municipal services for residents with Russian ethnicity, the city of Tallinn provides an outstanding service (insinuated above): every official publication and service is not only offered in Estonian, but also in Russian!

## **5.3 Employment profile of service providers**

As discussed above, employers in Estonia cannot inquire about data on migration background or ethnicity. Hence, no official data are available that could highlight which occupations, and at which level of seniority and skill the city employs people with a migration background. The same can be said of external service providers.

## **5.4 Monitoring of access and outcomes identified**

The city of Tallinn conducts social surveys to monitor its residents' access to distinctive municipal services. The city, however, has neither differentiated between ethnicities, nor asked about migration backgrounds.

## **5.5 Cultural awareness of staff**

According to officials interviewed, most, if not all, employees of the municipality are aware of cultural differences of distinct ethnic groups. Nonetheless, the City of Tallinn aspires to improve the intercultural competence of its service providers and sensitise them to the specific needs of certain groups. The future integration and diversity policy will probably include the provision of training programmes focused on intercultural competence. Until

now, such training has been run by singular establishments of the city, like hospitals, kindergardens and the police.

### **5.6 Discrimination against service users**

The Estonian law forbids discrimination due to ethnicity by municipal service providers. An individual who nonetheless feels discriminated against has the opportunity to lodge a complaint with the municipal hotline as well as at the NGO ‘Legal Information Centre for Human Rights’, which is in direct contact with the municipality.

### **5.7 Impact of policy on access to, and quality of, services and lessons learnt**

Since every official publication and every service is not only offered in Estonian but also in Russian, the city can assure that the large Russian ‘minority’ (that consists of nearly half of the capital’s population) have the same access to municipal services as the native Estonian population.<sup>13</sup>

## **6 Conclusion: key challenges, lessons and learning for CLIP**

Mass immigration began in the 1940s after the occupation of Estonia by the Soviet Union: immigrants came from all parts of the entire territory of the Soviet Union. The immigrants, in particular the Russians, played a significant role in the socio-economic structure and in cultural and social life of Estonia. Immigration, together with the immigrant population’s natural increase (which was larger than that of the autochthonous population) resulted in a continuous decline in the percentage of ethnic Estonians among the population.

Today, Tallinn’s population composition differs significantly from those of Western European cities: Estonians make up 47% of the city’s population. 35% of Tallinn’s residents have Russian ethnic nationality and 9% do not have an official ethnic nationality – most of them with a Russian background as well. Combined with the people originating from Byelorussia, the Russian speaking residents make up about half of the population. In contrast, immigration from countries other than the former Soviet Union is still a marginal issue.

The entry of migrants did not require their adaptation or integration into Estonian conditions. On the contrary, learning the Estonian language and culture was considered unimportant. For the migrants, living in Estonia was equivalent to living in any other random region of the Soviet Union.

This ‘russification process’ stopped with the restoration of Estonian independence in 1991. Since then, Estonian society has remained ethnically divided, with limited contact between immigrants and the Estonian population.

As late as in the 1990s, the question of integrating residents with Russian ethnicity into Estonian society arose. In 2000, the state programme ‘Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2007’ was adopted, followed by the ‘Integration Strategy 2008-2013’. Both the state

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<sup>13</sup> Main sources for the chapter 5: City of Tallinn 2006, data and information from the City of Tallinn (e.g. unpublished municipal documents) and expert interviews.

programme as well as the Integration Strategy emphasise the importance of Estonian language proficiency among ‘Russians’.

In 2007, the City of Tallinn started to develop its own municipal integration policy – the ‘Tallinn Civic Peace Programme 2008-2013’. Impetus for the development of such a programme resulted from the ‘Bronze Night’ in April 2007: ethnic riots due to the relocation of a bronze Soviet war memorial. The future programme is still under development. It is intended to ensure the minority population’s equal treatment, to enhance peaceful intergroup relations and to encourage the meeting and integration of the ‘two Tallinns’, forging a relationship between the Russians and the Estonians.

A diversity approach in personnel policy has not been implemented yet. In service provision, on the contrary, one should take note of a special service that is offered by the city: in order to facilitate access to municipal services for residents with Russian ethnicity, the city provides every official publication and every service not only in Estonian, but also in Russian. This is deemed very useful – and could be the first step of further integration and diversity activities.

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## Interviews

During the city visit, which took place from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> of April, the following ten experts were interviewed:

Asari, Eva-Maria; Office of the Minister for Population and Ethnic Affairs, Counsellor to the Minister

Jäppinen, Kaia; Tallinn City Government, Deputy Mayor

Kuldjärv, Maarja; Ministry of Social Affairs, Labour market department

Lepikult, Marika; Tallinn City Government, Director of Personnel

Mätlik, Tanel; Integration Foundation, Director

Pettai, Iris; Open Society Institute, Sociologist, head researcher of integration policy of Tallinn

Poleshchuk, Vadim; NGO Legal Information Centre for Human Rights, Legal advisor, analyst

Semjonov, Aleksei; NGO Legal Information Centre for Human Rights, Director; leader of the municipal integration group on equality

Taliga, Harri; Estonian Trade Union Confederation, President

Trofimov, Ervin; Tallinn City Government, Advisor on integration and related issues