



LINGUISTIC HUMAN RIGHTS AND SECURITY

3. SURVEY RESULTS

3.1 Human rights and discrimination on the basis of language or ethnicity

The survey ascertained opinions regarding legal aspects, including attitude to linguistic human rights.

The goal of any democratic and free state is to ensure human rights for its inhabitants. In addition to guarantees of the rights, inhabitants of a country are expected to be knowledgeable of the existence of human rights and the ideas behind them. In this regard, non-citizens could be expected to stand out from citizens, as the non-citizens would be presumed to be not sufficiently integrated or necessarily aware of the legal system of the relevant country and its functioning. The respondent's level of education can also influence their answers, as paucity of knowledge can extend to general awareness about human rights. It should also be noted that while it cannot be assumed that there are no human rights violations anywhere in a country, it is the state's responsibility to make sure that these cases are marginal and not of a systematic nature.

The question "Are human rights guaranteed in Estonia for inhabitants with a different native language?" examined general opinions about human rights in Estonia, based on the respondents' views.

More than 60% of Russian-speaking respondents considered the human rights of speakers of languages other than Estonian to be always or mostly guaranteed, while slightly over one-fourth consider human rights not guaranteed at all or mostly not guaranteed. Among Estonian-speaking respondents, 88% consider the human rights of speakers of languages other than Estonian to be always or mostly guaranteed. This is an important difference in the attitudes of Estonians and other nationalities. At the same time, there is a lack of a significant difference when the answers are viewed with respect to citizenship.

Unfair treatment based on ethnicity or native language was examined through the question "Have you been treated unfairly due to ethnicity or native language?". Of Russian-speaking ethnic non-Estonians, 19% (in the 2015 survey) and 15% (2014 survey) said they have frequently or sometimes experienced this. Eighty per cent answered in the negative. Some 14 to 20% of Russian-speaking inhabitants thus find that they have been unfairly treated on the basis of ethnicity or native language, and this is a very large share of the target group.



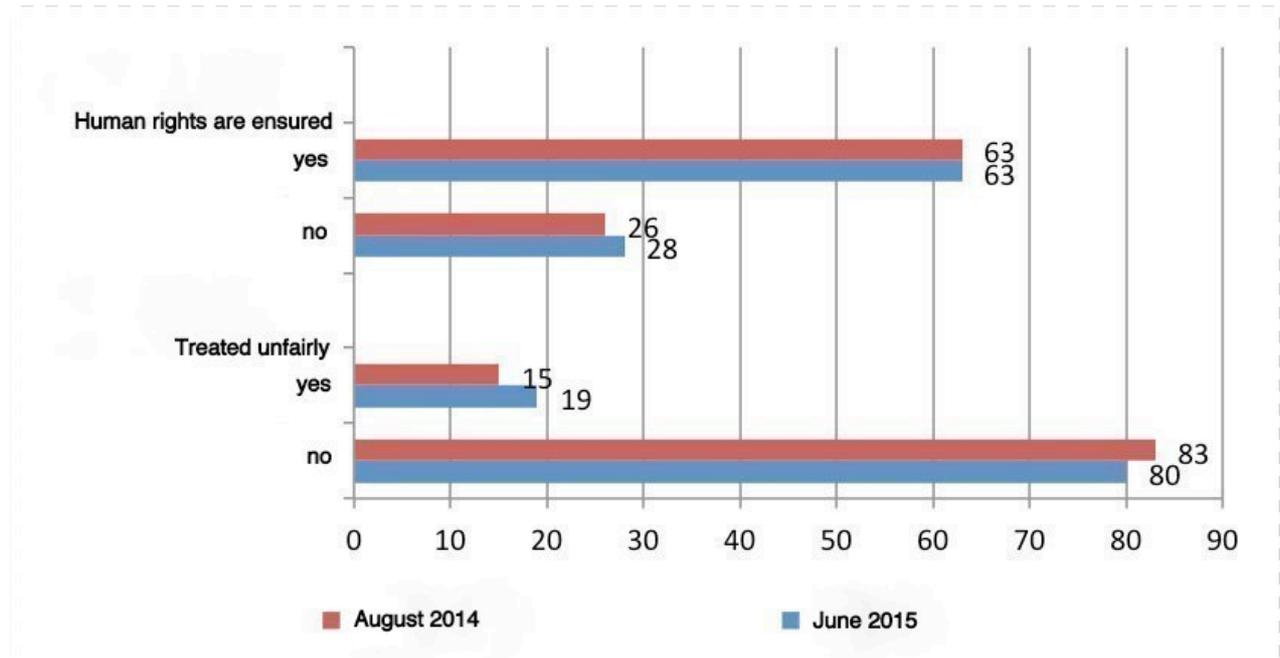
4% of Estonian respondents have perceived themselves to have been treated unfairly for use of Estonian or being an Estonian. Here the experience of 18% of Estonians in Ida-Viru County in the northeast stands out, which probably expresses disappointment with the limitation/impossibility of conducting business in Estonian in this region.

The previous EIHR study from 2012, “Human Rights in Estonia,” pointed up that Estonians and native speakers of other languages shared the view that it was a human rights violation for a person to have an insufficient income or low social benefits. This showed that many Russian-speaking inhabitants lacked an adequate understanding of human rights, leading them to misclassify inconveniences and difficulties in using the Russian language, which in Estonian are areas unrelated to human rights.

These are a rather entrenched set of attitudes and experiences, as compared to the 2014 study, there has been no change in perceptions of what constitutes human rights and guarantees for human rights.

Figure 1 – Views on the extent to which human rights are guaranteed and perceived violations of one’s own rights

(%, Russian-speaking respondents)



While Russian-speaking respondents aged 35 and up see more problems with guarantees for human rights, it is more frequently the younger age groups (15-34) who mention violation of rights due to ethnicity or native language. A noteworthy 5% rise in those who perceive discrimination occurred in the 15-24 age group of people entering study programmes or joining the workforce. It is especially notable in Tallinn where the environment of segregated communities allows one community to get by without having to use Estonian. At the same time, language requirements are high in the workplace. The reason is probably the insufficient Estonian proficiency instilled by the Russian-language education system (although conforming to the national curriculum), as a result of which graduates of such schools are not



capable of competing for jobs and participating in further education. Several other studies (such as IM 2013) have found the same embitterment and general anti-Estonian attitude among current graduates of Russian schools. The Institute of Human Rights has issued a public letter in this matter (2012), which the Ministry of Education and the Cabinet have not responded to. Pensioners and people with lower educational attainment have the least problems, as they do not compete for jobs that require better language proficiency.

Ida-Viru County has a greater than average share of people who express doubts that human rights are guaranteed, yet the Russian-speaking inhabitants in the county are the least likely to perceive violation of rights due to language or ethnicity. The reason for this may be the influence of the Russian media, which make similar claims; at the same time, in real life, inhabitants of the county have the least amount of contact with such situations.

To a greater extent than average, Russian-speaking respondents with undetermined citizenship see problems with guarantees for human rights and perceive violations of human rights. It is possible that their opinions are influenced by a misconception disseminated by the Russian Federation – that members of this social group have the right to Estonian citizenship even if they do not meet the requirements (the claim being that the Estonian state has allegedly deprived or “stripped” them of citizenship) as well as by the personal inability to receive Estonian citizenship due to low language proficiency.

Opinions regarding guarantees for human rights and perceived violation of their own human rights, with respect to age, region and citizenship of the respondent, are presented in figures 2 and 3.

Figure 2 – Are human rights guaranteed in Estonia for inhabitants with a different native language?
(%, Russian-speaking respondents with respect to background data, June 2015)

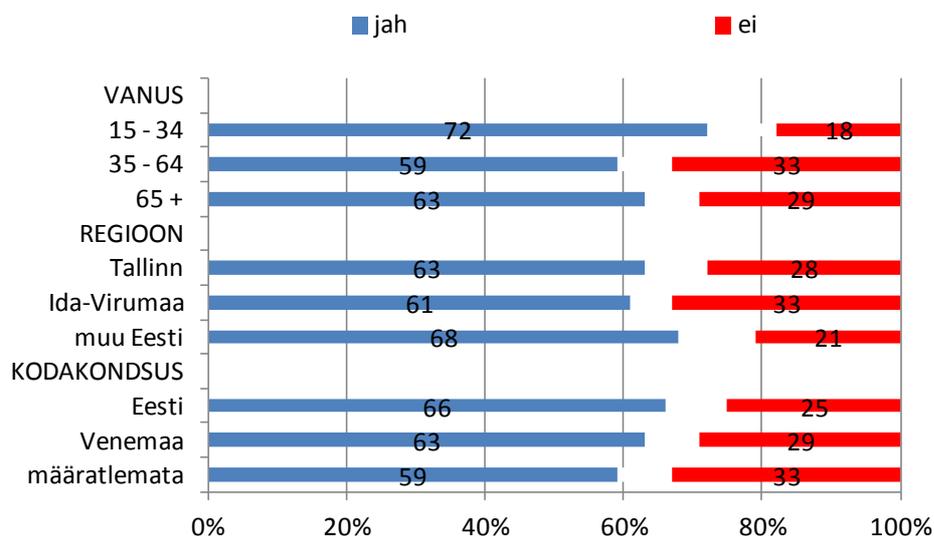
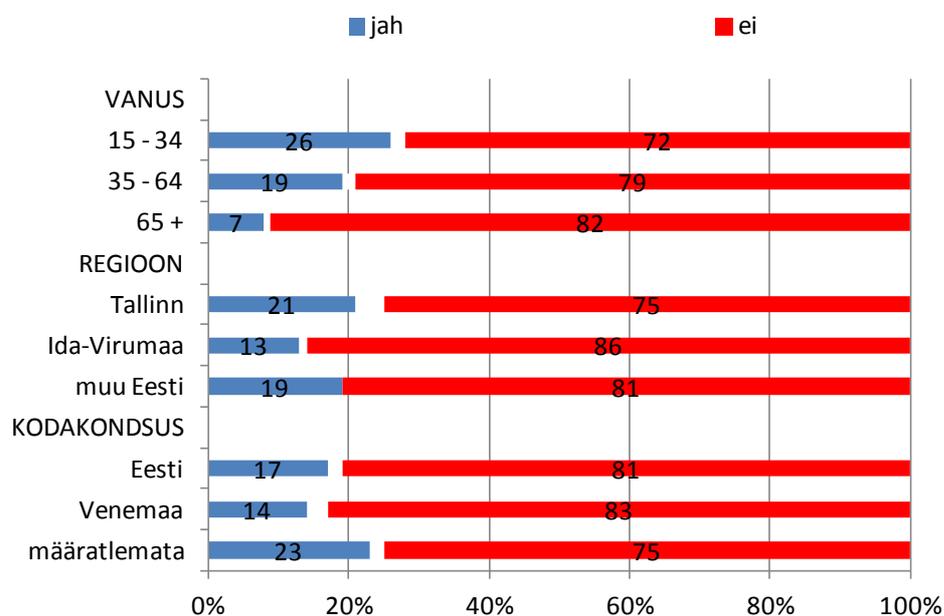




Figure 3 – Have you been unfairly treated due to ethnicity or native language?
(%, Russian-speaking respondents with respect to background data, June 2015)



On the basis of the aforementioned two questions, we created a composite characteristic, a typology, the results of which are shown on Figure 4.

The majority of Russian-speaking respondents (60%) represent a type that considers the rights of native speakers of languages besides Estonian to be guaranteed and have not perceived violation of their own rights.

Twenty-one per cent find that human rights are not guaranteed but have not themselves perceived a violation of rights. It is entirely possible that they ascribe such an assessment to human rights due to opinions commonly voiced in their social circles or on the basis of information from the media.

A contingent of close to 10% includes those who consider human rights to be guaranteed but have experienced what they perceive as a violation of their rights, and those who do not consider human rights to be guaranteed and say their rights have been violated.

Young respondents living in Tallinn (15-34 years of age) include a greater than average share of those who consider human rights to be guaranteed but assert that their rights have been violated based on language or ethnicity – 20%. This attitude is least common in Ida-Viru County (4%).

Finally, the last type (rights are not guaranteed and they have been violated) occurs equally in Tallinn and Ida-Viru County and this position is represented to a greater than average extent by younger respondents in particular (15-34 years of age).



Figure 4 – Typology on the basis of perceptions of guarantees for human rights and violations of one’s own rights

(%, Russian-speaking respondents)

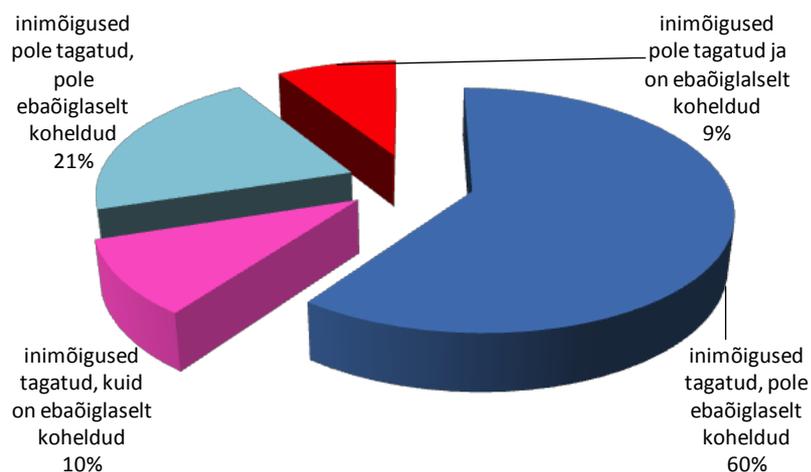


Table 3 – Composition of types formed on the basis of guarantees for human rights and perceived violations of one’s own rights

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

	ALL Russian-speaking	Rights guaranteed, not violated	Rights guaranteed, but violated	Rights not guaranteed, but not violated	Rights not guaranteed, have been violated
AGE					
15–34	27	28	43	12	32
35–64	52	48	50	61	56
65+	22	24	6	27	12
REGION					
Tallinn	48	46	58	43	55
Ida-Viru County	33	35	13	43	34
Elsewhere in Estonia	18	18	28	14	11
CITIZENSHIP					
Estonian	46	48	51	44	39
Russian	25	27	13	28	16
Undetermined	25	23	26	24	43



The response that human rights are guaranteed yet one has been subjected to unfair treatment on the basis of ethnicity or language is more correlated with younger respondents who have Estonian citizenship and live in Tallinn and elsewhere in Estonia.

The position that human rights are not guaranteed yet the respondents themselves have not experienced unfair treatment is expressed more by respondents in the middle age group in Ida-Viru County.

The view that human rights are not guaranteed and that unfair treatment on the basis of ethnicity or language is also encountered is also more likely to be seen in the case of younger respondents with undetermined citizenship who live in Tallinn.

We asked the respondents who claimed that their rights had been violated on the basis of native language or ethnicity to explain in the form of a short answer what the nature of the violation was.

Although very few ethnic Estonians had perceived violation of their rights (only 4% of respondents said they had perceived this frequently or sometimes, and slightly more than average in Ida-Viru County), of the total of 105 short-answer explanations, several dozen were provided by Estonians whose rights had been felt to be violated by store sales staff who were unable or unwilling to speak to them in Estonian. This is undoubtedly a case of a human rights violation where the state must intervene. There were also some people who had experienced difficulties finding a job due to lack of Russian language proficiency. It is hard to pass judgment without knowing the precise circumstances of the case; international linguistic human rights conventions hold that foreign language ability is something that can only be required by reason of the nature of the post to be filled. In three of the cases reported by Estonian respondents, the perceived violation of rights due to ethnicity took place whilst abroad (two in Finland and one in the Netherlands).

The responses from Russian-speaking respondents cite cases where salespeople and service associates, doctors and policemen were not willing or able to speak in Russian. In fact there is no human right in Estonia that would entitle one to demand the use of a foreign language to conduct business; this right to access public administration in a specific language only exists in the case of Estonian (Section 8 of the Language Act). Several respondents considered their rights to have been violated due to the fact that they were not granted citizenship even though they had lived all their lives in Estonian and paid taxes. But this is not a human right; citizenship is a legal covenant between individual and state predicated on loyalty; taxes are to be paid even in the absence of loyalty. A negative attitude from Estonians is also cited by Russian-speaking speakers (for example, being urged in Internet comment sections to move back to Russia). In more than 10 cases, respondents complained that it was hard to find work due to insufficient Estonian proficiency. Thus the Russian speaking inhabitants were unable to identify any specific human right violation on linguistic or ethnic grounds; however, they did consider inconveniences related to use of Russian in Estonia to be human rights violations even though they cannot objectively be categorized as such.



3.2 Necessity of proficiency in Estonian, the official language

Estonian is the official language of Estonia. Teaching the language is obligatory in Estonia, and being able to learn the language is also one of the principal linguistic human rights. Respondents were polled as to the necessity of Estonian proficiency. As under Section 8 of the Language Act everyone has the right to access public administration in the Estonian language in oral or written form (in state agencies), the state has the obligation to guarantee the corresponding human right in practice. Under Government of Republic regulation no. 84 enacted under the Language Act – “Requirements for proficiency in and use of Estonian for civil servants, employees and self-employed persons”, people in certain posts are subject to compulsory requirements for Estonian proficiency, which it is the duty of the Cabinet to enforce.

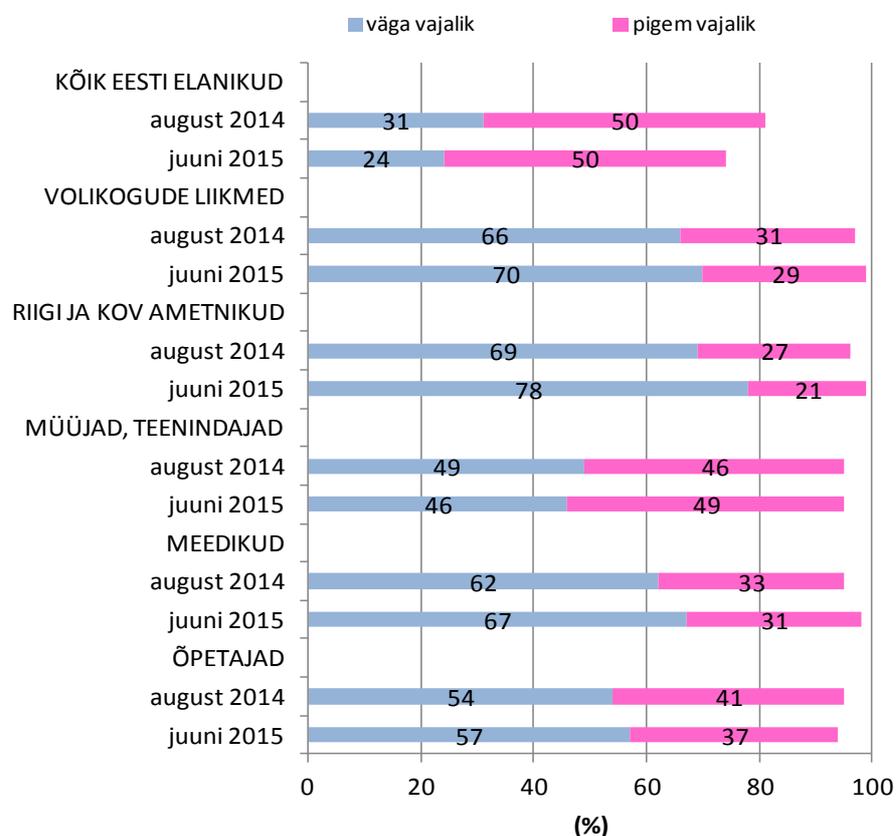
The question regarding necessity of proficiency in the official language, Estonian, presupposes not just awareness of the principle of human rights but some degree of personal familiarity with a situation where the official language is not spoken (and challenges stemming from it). Estonian proficiency is considered necessary in the case of all of the categories enumerated in the questionnaire. As proficiency in Estonian as the official language is considered by 75% of Russian-language respondents as very necessary or somewhat necessary for all Estonian inhabitants, it is to be expected that even a higher share consider it so for city council members and state and local government officials (99%), medical personnel (98%), sales and service staff (95%) and teachers (94%).

Estonian respondents are even more likely to consider proficiency in Estonian necessary: 98% of Estonians consider proficiency in Estonian to be very or somewhat necessary in the case of all inhabitants, while 100% of Estonians said it was necessary for the rest of the categories.

Here “needed” should be distinguished from “required” the former is a concrete need to use Estonian in communication and business and the latter is a legal requirement. Whereas legally, Estonian proficiency is required of officials, medical workers, teachers and sales and service staff (the categories we asked), quite a few respondents do not consider it necessary in real-life and work circumstances, especially in the predominantly Russian-speaking setting in Ida-Viru County. At the same time, Estonian proficiency is not a legal requirement in the case of any individual, including Estonians. However, it is needed to be able to get by in real life in most Estonian regions. The respondents have apparently largely based their responses on their own actual needs based on experience. On the other hand, the legal requirements are unknown to many of the respondents, as indicated by the responses in the human rights related question module.



Figure 5 – How necessary do you consider for the following people to have Estonian proficiency at the necessary level? (% , Russian-speaking respondents)

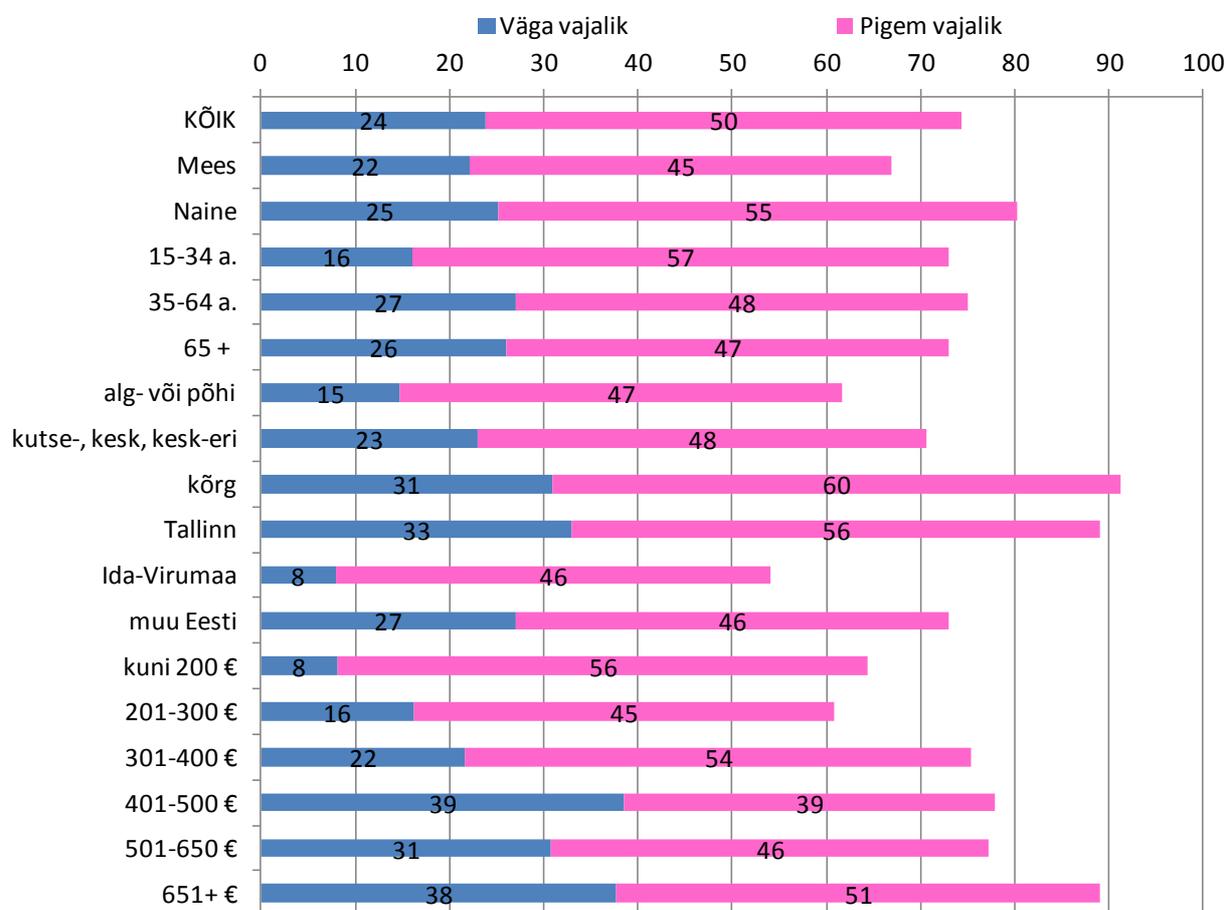


Yet here we see large disparities between the various language environments, and in regions with poorer proficiency in the official language, fewer people consider proficiency in the official language to be particularly important. Ninety per cent of the Russian-speaking respondents in Tallinn and just over half (54%) of Ida-Viru County residents find that all Estonian inhabitants should be proficient in Estonian at the necessary level.

Ninety per cent of Russian-language respondents with higher education and Russian-language respondents in the highest income bracket (over 650 euros per family member, see figure 6) consider proficiency in Estonian to be very or somewhat necessary in the case of all inhabitants. And women in particular emphasize the necessity, their views being a case of a well-known psycholinguistic principle whereby women adapt more rapidly to and adopt a new culture, including language. Among schoolchildren, 9% consider Estonian proficiency very necessary, which above all shows antagonism toward the state. In central and western Estonia, where people generally do not come to grips with the language problem, respondents were less adamant in their opinions.



Figure 6 – How necessary do you consider it for all Estonian inhabitants to have Estonian proficiency at the necessary level? (% , June 2015, Russian-speaking respondents)



3.3 Estonian language proficiency among native speakers of other languages

Although Estonian proficiency is considered important, Russian-speaking respondents do not perceive their own Estonian proficiency to be very high: 13% are fluent in it and 25% have good proficiency (understand, speak and write). A further 25% is proficient at a conversational level (they comprehend and speak some Estonian). Twenty-five per cent can understand Estonian and 12% have no proficiency. These figures are from a June 2015 survey.

We obtained the same proportions in August 2014, which certainly increases the reliability of the self-perceived proficiency.

Table 4 – How do you rate your Estonian proficiency? (%)

	August 2014	June 2015
Fluent	13	13
Understand; speak and, to a limited extent, write	19	25
Understand and, to a limited	27	25

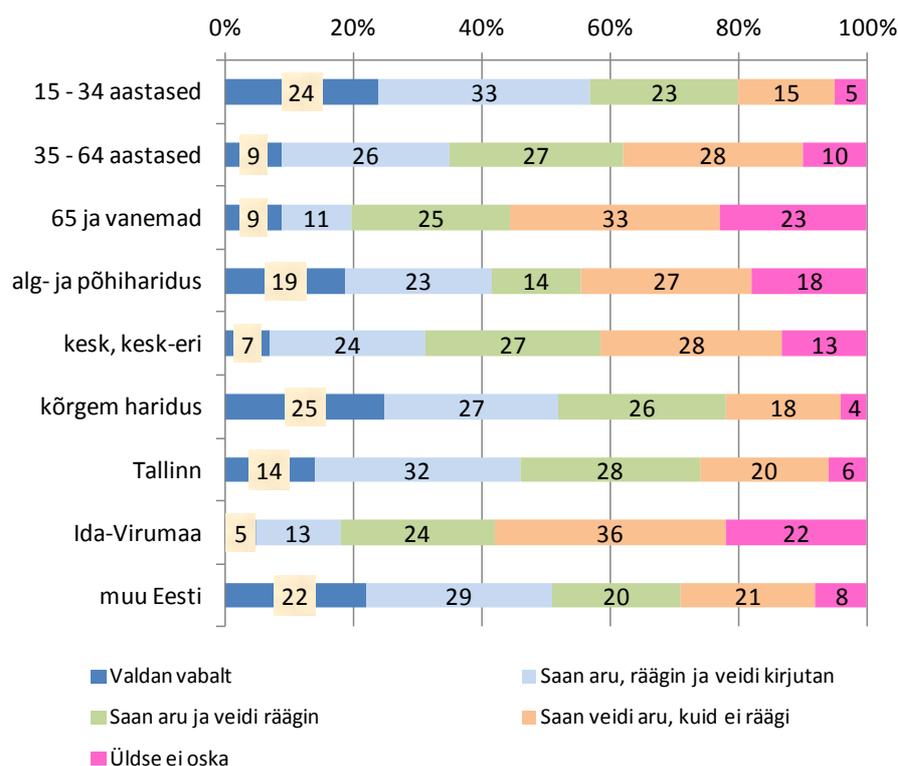


extent, speak		
I understand a little, but do not speak the language	31	25
No proficiency	9	12

These indicators are depending greatly on the age, place of residence and educational level of the respondents: more than half of respondents who are under 35 and have higher education have good proficiency in Estonian, even as only 42% in Ida-Viru County are capable of speaking basic Estonian. In comparison, a census taken a generation ago (1989) found that only 14% of people of other nationalities spoke Estonian. Comparing the data from the current survey to a number of previous studies (e.g. IM 2015, IM 2013 etc), we see that Estonian proficiency among Russian-speakers has been greatly overestimated based on previous studies and strengthening language studies and fostering greater motivation for learning Estonian continue to be relevant concerns.

Figure 7 – How do you rate your Estonian proficiency?

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)



In August 2014, we also asked how the interviewee had acquired their Estonian proficiency. The greatest share of Russian-language respondents has acquired proficiency through practice (57%). A total of 39% had picked up the language in Russian-language schools, and 23% at language courses. It appears that the most important factor contributing to acquisition of Estonian is Estonian language study in general educational schools, which is also shown by the high Estonian proficiency in the 34 and under age group. At the same time, the segregated environment is a key impediment to improving and reinforcing Estonian proficiency, as it does not promote the retention of Estonian proficiency by way of practice.



The better language proficiency, the more the language has been learned in school and through practical communication and, in the case of younger respondents, in early childhood at school and pre-school. Language courses have been more important than the average for people who have medium proficiency in Estonian.

Of those who have attended courses and taken the official Estonian examination, the greatest share have attained B2 (33%) or B1 (24%) level.

Table 4 – How did you acquire your Estonian proficiency?

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

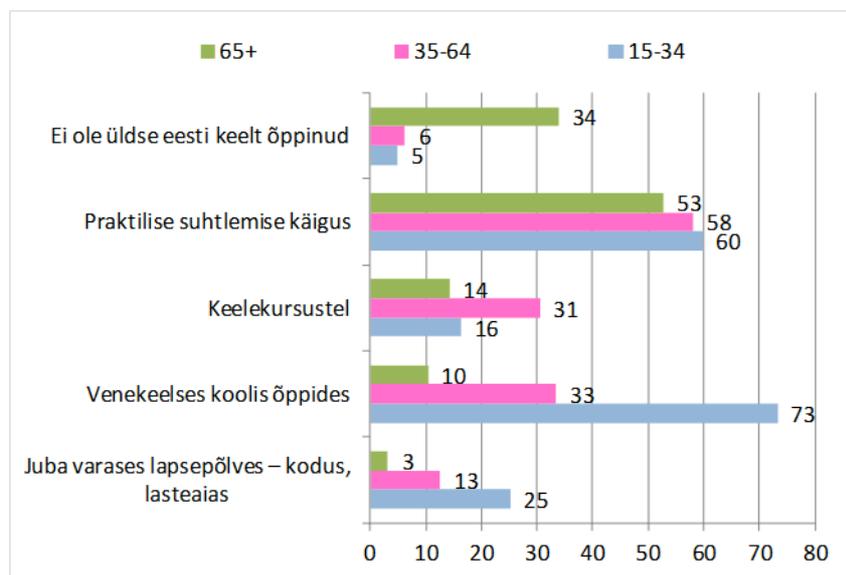
	ALL Russian- speaking	Fluent	Understand, speak and, to a limited extent, write	Understand and, to a limited extent, speak	I understand a little, but do not speak the language	No proficiency
In the course of practical communication	57	76	71	61	51	11
Studying in Russian-language school	39	47	59	43	27	12
Language courses	23	20	31	29	22	0
Early childhood at home, nursery school	14	45	22	11	2	0
Studying in Estonian-language school	3	12	4	2	0	0
Have not studied Estonian at all	12	0	0	2	14	80

Acquisition of Estonian varies significantly by age of respondent. The younger the respondent, the more likely they are to have acquired Estonian proficiency in early childhood and school where the requirements and level of teaching Estonian have risen significantly in the last couple decades. 30% of respondents over the age of 65 had not learned Estonian at all. The reason for this is often that they are part of the first generation of immigrants who have acquired an education outside Estonia. In the Soviet period, there were many possibilities for skipping Estonian as an “unnecessary” subject for the respondent. Legal acts of the time afforded such an opportunity and a number of Russian-language schools also encouraged this.



Figure 8 – How did you acquire your Estonian proficiency?

(%, Russian-speaking respondents with respect to age groups, August 2014)



Estonian proficiency and the importance ascribed to the proficiency are also correlated. Respondents who do not consider Estonian proficiency to be important do not make efforts to acquire the language, either. It is likely that Estonian proficiency is not necessary for them in their professional lives and thus there is no instrumental motivation for learning the language.

Table 5 – Estonian proficiency with respect to importance ascribed to language proficiency

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

	ALL Russian-speaking	Very important	Somewhat important	Somewhat unimportant
Fluent	13	35	6	2
Understand; speak and, to a limited extent, write	19	29	24	4
Understand and, to some extent, speak	27	17	37	28
I understand a little, but do not speak the language	31	18	30	51
No proficiency	9	3	3	15

In August 2014, we asked respondents to rate whether the Estonian state is doing enough to make it possible for people of different ethnicities to acquire the necessary level of Estonian proficiency. Negative views of the government's activity are in slight majority (Figure 9), with the more critical ratings coming



from those with poorer proficiency (Figure 10). These are entrenched attitudes that are not linked to knowledge about the actual state of opportunities for learning the language.

Figure 9 – Is the Estonian state doing enough to make it possible to acquire Estonian proficiency?
(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

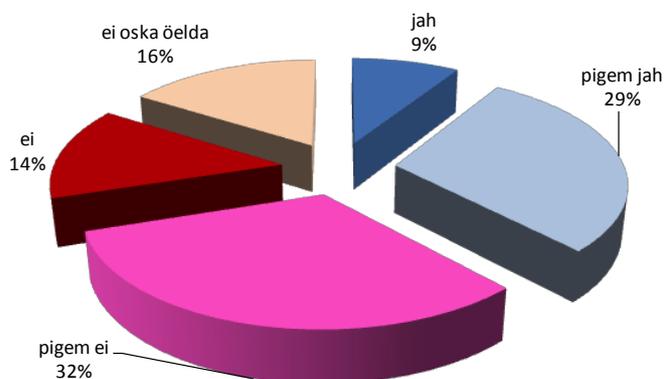
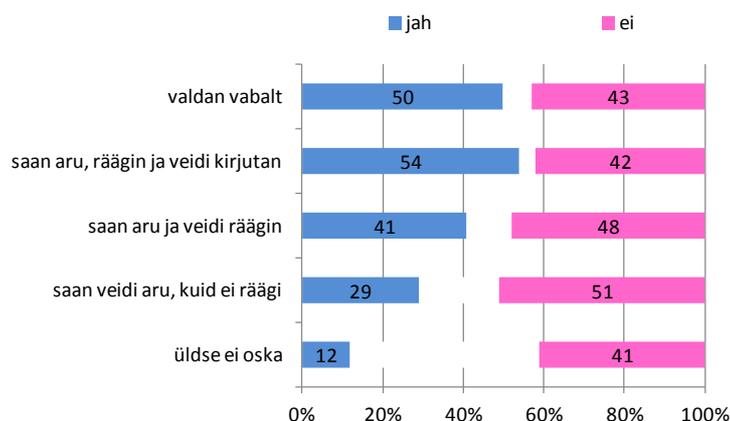


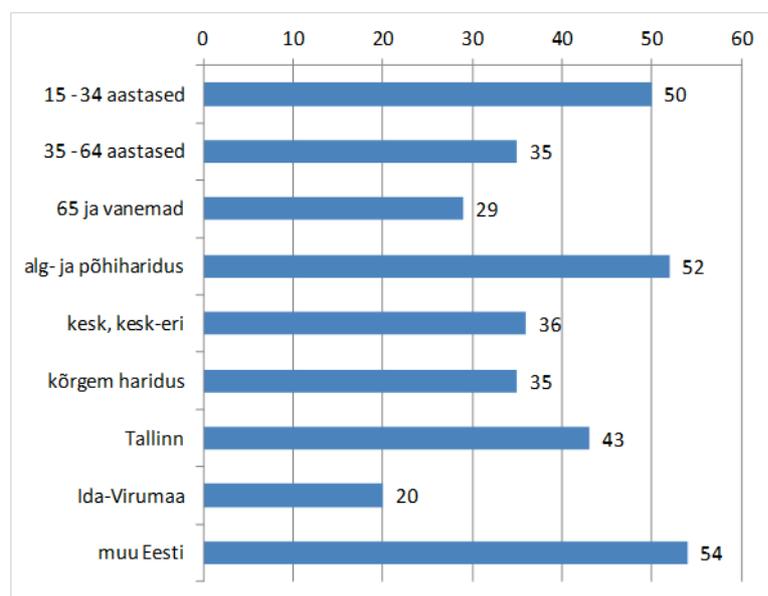
Figure 10 – Is the Estonian state doing enough to make it possible to acquire Estonian proficiency?
(%, Russian-speaking respondents with respect to language proficiency, August 2014)



While 54% of Russian-speaking respondents outside Tallinn and Ida-Viru County give a positive rating to the government's activity in organizing language education, the respective figure for Tallinn is 43%, and only 20% for Ida-Viru County. The state's activity is viewed negatively by 58% in Ida-Viru County. At the same time, free language courses have been organized from year to year in Ida-Viru County, and several dozen people per year begin studying at beginner level (much fewer at higher levels of proficiency), and only a fraction of those who started finish study. For years, language course fees have been compensated after the learner takes the Estonian language examination. Language courses are organized to a sufficient degree in every county. Ordinarily the challenge is the low number of participants and high dropout rate. Male participants are particularly low in number. Thus the actual situation and the views do not coincide.



Figure 11 – Is the Estonian state doing enough to make it possible to acquire Estonian proficiency?
(yes + somewhat yes %, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)



The perception as to the state's activity in ensuring language study is very strongly related to whether the respondent feels that their rights have been violated in recent years on ethnic or linguistic grounds. Thus the negative attitude toward the state's activity is broader, spanning attitudes on various issues.

Table 7 – Assessment of the government's activity with respect to perception of violations of one's rights

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

Does the state contribute enough to learning Estonian by people of other ethnicities?	ALL	Rights have been violated	Rights have not been violated
Yes	38	21	42
No	46	74	41
Can't say	16	5	17

3.4 Use of language to communicate

As can be seen from the foregoing, Estonian proficiency is acquired most often through practical relations. The degree to which Estonian speakers and Russian-speaking people interact with each other is thus of key importance.

22% of the Russian-speaking population has contacts with Estonian speaking people within their family, 35% has contact with Estonian-speakers among their other relatives. On the other hand, 63% of

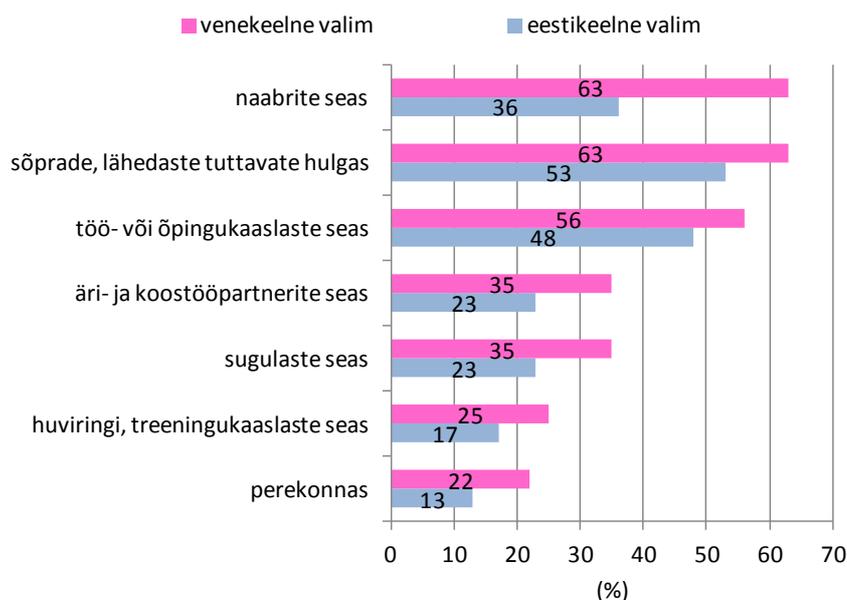


respondents have friends and close acquaintances who are Estonian, 63% have Estonian neighbours, and 56% have Estonian co-workers or fellow students. Avocational and business activity seems to remain more centred on native language, on the other hand: only one-fourth of Russian-speaking respondents have Estonians among their fellow participants in hobbies or sports, while 35% have Estonians among business and cooperation partners.

Estonians have fewer contacts with Russian-speaking people: within the family, 13%; among relatives, 23%; among friends and close acquaintances 53%; among co-workers or fellow students 48%; among neighbours 36%, among business and cooperation partners 23%, and among fellow hobby and sports participants 17%.

Figure 12 – Are there Russian-speakers/Estonian-speakers among the people you have the most frequent contacts with?

(%, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)



The higher the language proficiency of Russian-speaking respondents, the more contacts they have with Estonians: 46% of non-Estonians who speak Estonian fluently have Estonians in their family; 53% of them have Estonians among their relatives; 82% among friends and close acquaintances; 84% among co-workers or fellow students; 85% among neighbours; 65% among business or cooperation partners and 56% among hobby and sports co-participants.

The correlation here undoubtedly goes both ways: people of other ethnicities who have better Estonian proficiency more easily strike up a relationship with Estonians, and closer interactions with Estonians also contributes to improved language proficiency.

On the other hand, those who do not speak Estonian at all are most likely to contact Estonians among their neighbours (30%), only 27% have friends and close acquaintances who are Estonian.



Russian-speaking respondents have the most contact with Estonian-speaking people outside Tallinn and Ida-Viru County, but there is much less interaction with Estonians in Ida-Viru County than in Tallinn (see figure 11). It also makes a difference whether the person has citizenship: Russian-speaking Estonian citizens have much more contact with Estonians than do Russian citizens or stateless persons (see Figure 12).

Figure 13 – Are there Estonian-speakers among the people you have the most frequent contacts with?
(yes %, Russian-speaking respondents with respect to region, June 2015)

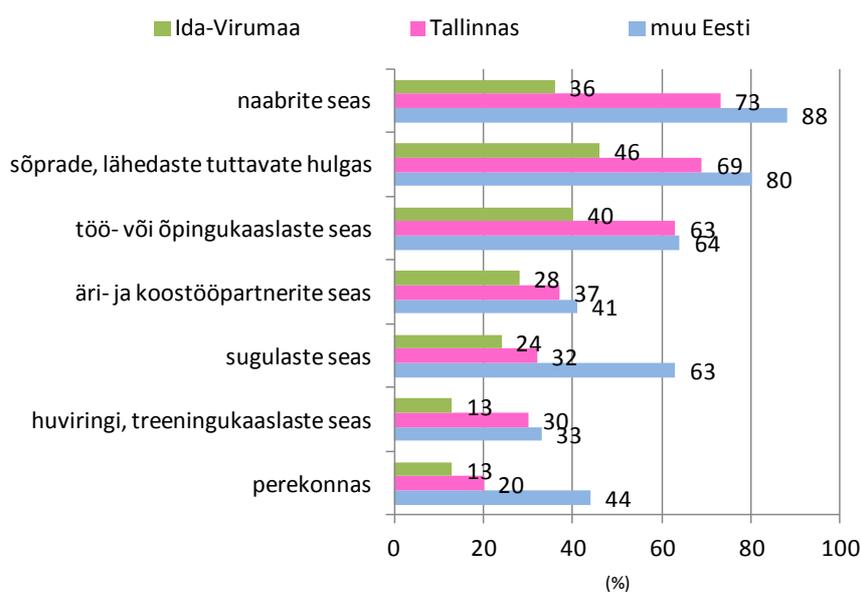
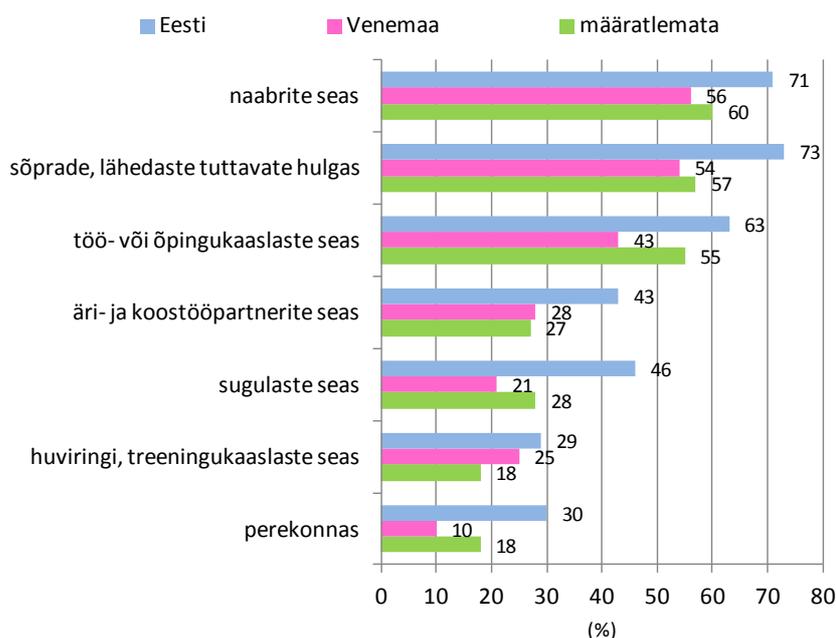


Figure 14 – Are there Estonian-speakers among the people you have the most frequent contacts with?
(yes %, Russian-speaking respondents with respect to citizenship, June 2015)





It is interesting to note that the Russian-speaking respondents who perceive their rights as having been violated or who say they have been treated unfairly due to language or ethnicity have more than an average number of contacts with Estonians in connection with work and studies or business and cooperation (Table 9), thus in a situation where language has an instrumental, and not an integrative function and where poorer language proficiency may exert a negative influence on competitiveness, subsequent career and positive developments.

Table 8 – Contacts with Estonians and violation of rights

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)

Do they have contacts with Estonians...	ALL	Rights have been violated	Rights have not been violated
Among friends, close acquaintances	63	70	62
Among co-workers or fellow students	56	67	53
Among neighbours	63	69	62
Among business and cooperation partners	35	50	31

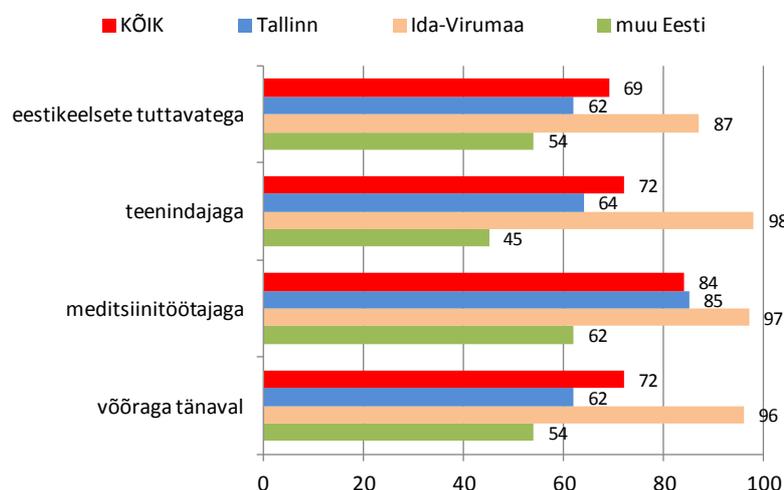
3.5 Preferences as to language of communication

In various social situations, Russian-speaking respondents prefer to use mainly Russian, while Estonians prefer Estonian.

In dealings with their Estonian-speaking acquaintances or co-workers, 69% of respondents use mainly Russian, while only one-fourth prefers to communicate in Estonian. Of the respondents, 72% use primarily Russian to talk with a stranger on the street or sales and service staff, while 84% use primarily Russian to talk to medical workers (Figure 13).

Figure 15 – Do you prefer to use mainly Estonian or mainly Russian in communication?

(Russian %, Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)





Non-Estonians living outside Tallinn and Ida-Viru County are more likely to use Estonian in communication, and the same is true for younger respondents (up to 34 year olds have a fairly equal preference as to language in communicating with friends and co-workers: 48% prefer to use Russian and 43% Estonian). In general, if possible, Russian-speaking people do not try to speak more in Estonian and thereby improve their Estonian ability. They prefer strategies of convenience and will use Russian even if they are fluent in Estonian. Such situation where the official language is unable to fulfil the function of the general language of communication and business is telling evidence that integration policy has fallen short of its goals.

Naturally, the choice of language in various situations depends on the respondent's language proficiency as well. People who are fluent or proficient in Estonian are also more willing and able to converse in Estonian with an Estonian conversation partner (Table 10).

Figure 9 – Do you prefer to use mainly Estonian or Russian if you need to interact with Estonian-speaking people...

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)

	Chosen language of communication	ALL Russian-speaking	Fluent	Understand, speak and, to a limited extent, write	Understand and, to some extent, speak	I understand a little, but do not speak the language	No proficiency
acquaintances and co-workers	Estonian	25	70	49	11	2	0
	Russian	69	21	42	79	96	98
service staff	Estonian	24	62	41	16	6	0
	Russian	72	34	54	75	93	100
medical workers	Estonian	10	39	16	5	2	0
	Russian	84	49	77	89	98	100
strangers on the street	Estonian	18	49	30	13	2	0
	Russian	72	30	54	74	95	100

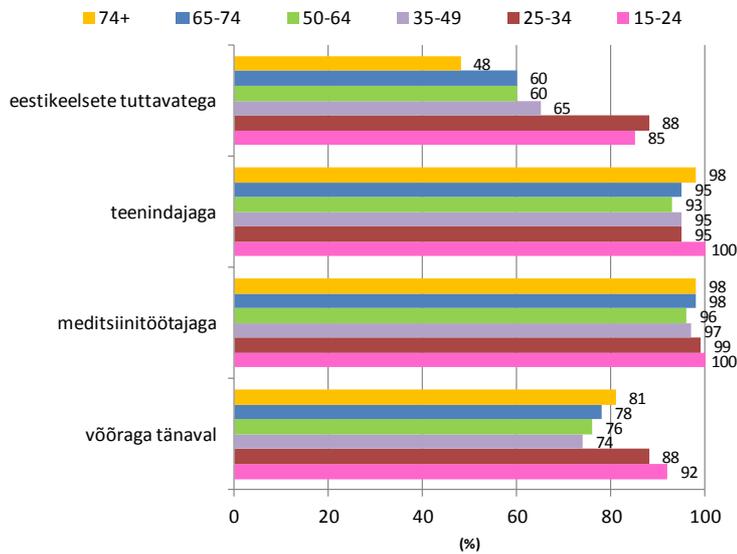
* does not total 100%; the rest answered "can't say"

Of the Estonian respondents, 68% use primarily Estonian to communicate with their Russian-speaking acquaintances and co-workers (26% in Russian), 96% with sales and service staff, 98% with medical workers and 81% with strangers on the street. It appears they resort to Russian if their partner does not know Estonian. At the same time, it is normal that they would use Estonian as the initial language or to get someone's attention; it is after all the official language.

A greater than average number (one-third) of Estonians 35 years of age and up would be willing and able to use Russian to communicate with Russian-speaking friends and co-workers. Under one-tenth of Estonians under the age of 35 prefer to use Russian to talk to Russian-speaking acquaintances. The reason here is probably low proficiency in Russian.



Figure 16 – Do you prefer to use mainly Estonian or mainly Russian in social relations?
(Estonian %, Estonian-speaking respondents with respect to age, June 2015)



3.6 Attitudes towards Estonian language education and school system

A question on which the Russian-speaking population is split is the partial transition of Russian-language upper secondary schools to instruction in Estonian: 50% consider it very necessary or somewhat necessary, but 38% consider it somewhat or completely unnecessary. The share of those in different positions has not changed since August. The youngest respondents (15-24 year olds) express the greatest opposition to the reform, part of whom have experienced it personally; 52% of them are against the move to Estonian as the language of instruction. The situation has apparently developed through a combination of several factors, including segregated behaviour and positions spread by Russian information sources and the media, as well as personal negative experiences related to their low competitiveness in Estonian education and vying for job positions.

Among Estonians, 86% support the transition to Estonian as the language of instruction in Russian-speaking upper secondary schools.



Figure 17 – How necessary do you consider the transition to Estonian as the language of instruction at Russian-language upper secondary schools? (% , Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)

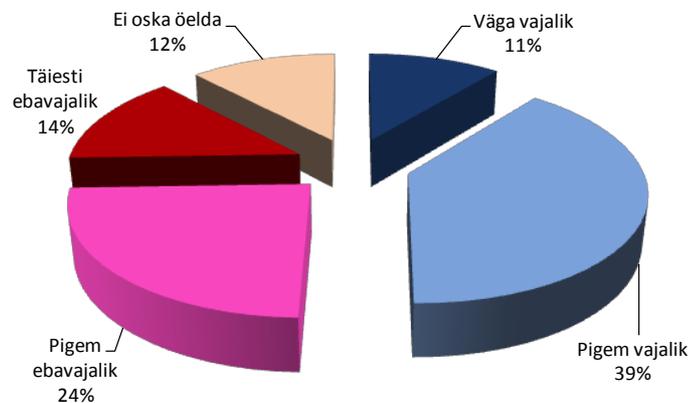
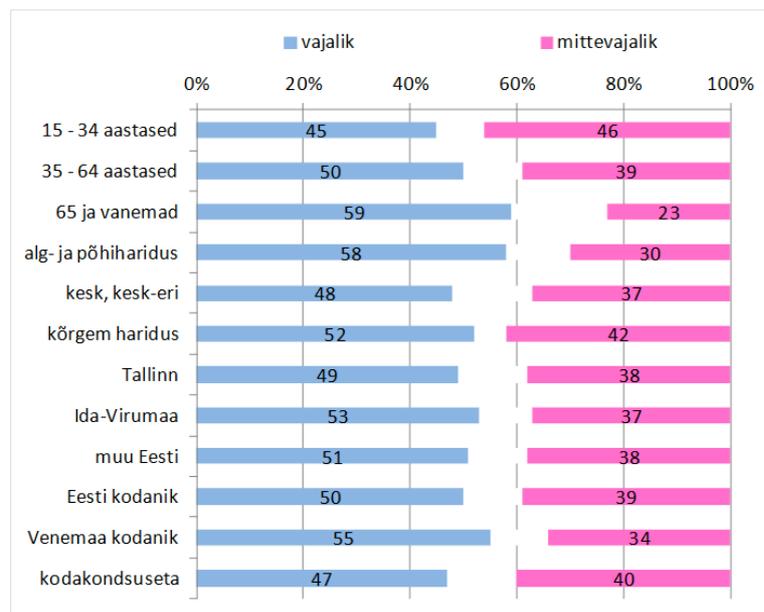


Figure 18 – How necessary do you consider the transition to Estonian as the language of instruction at Russian-language upper secondary schools? (% , Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)



This question was purely political and above all indicates which country's media is the basis for forming one's opinions. Considering the transition began to be talked about back in 1993 (a generation ago) and the critical number of students in the relevant system is low (under 4,000 students) this can be hardly be painted as a case of state assimilation pressure. Proficiency in Estonian would allow students to exit the current segregated environment and be competitive in pursuing further education and vying for jobs. These rational arguments have been subsumed by propaganda from Russia. At the same time, the idea that in future all students could study together in Estonian-language schools where Russian study would be one area that could be chosen, is supported by most Russian-speaking respondents – in the case of basic school (60%) and in the case of the upper secondary school level (67%). Estonian backing for this idea is 81% and 86%, respectively (Figure 17). A broad (beginning in pre-school with Estonian both as a



subject and language of instruction) and challenging (B2 level proficiency as a minimum in basic school) solution would be acceptable to the majority of people in Estonian society. For current students, the more extensive transition to Estonian at the upper secondary school level probably comes too late, and thus the poor proficiency in the official language is compensated for by greater resistance in society.

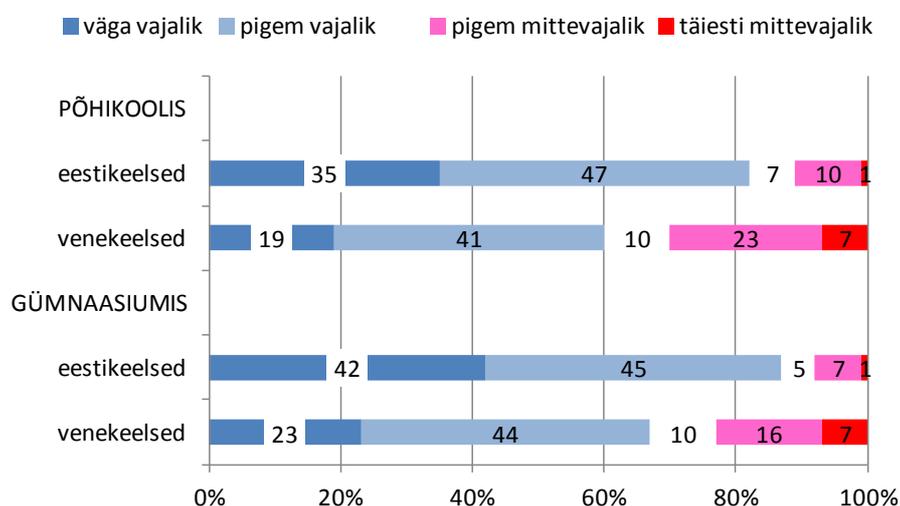
Above all, poor Estonian proficiency is correlated with low required level of Estonian on the national curriculum, which does not ensure competitiveness in Estonian society. Only a level of at least B2 enables the ability to draft written Estonian-language documents, general formalized use of language and business; only 60% of upper secondary school graduates attain this level. As only half of basic school graduates go on to upper secondary school, fewer than one-third of Russian school students achieve the minimum level of B2, which also explains the low competitiveness, greater unemployment and resulting disillusionment, more extensive emigration, greater number of offences and many other problems for this community.

In particular, the segregation of Estonia's Russian schools should be emphasized, this being a relic of the Soviet education system. This education system has been criticized also by the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities in the Ljubljana Guidelines.

People of non-Estonian ethnicity living in Ida-Viru County take a more sceptical attitude toward this (39% consider it not necessary in basic school, 33% unnecessary at the upper secondary school level) but supporting attitudes are predominant also in their case.

Figure 19 – Could all students study in Estonian-language schools in the future, where Russian-language studies would be one of the areas that could be chosen?

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015) ²



3.7 Necessity of proficiency in Russian

In August 2014, a question was also asked regarding the necessity of Russian-language proficiency. In Estonia, Russian is legally considered a foreign language, one that is spoken as a native language by the second-largest contingent of inhabitants after Estonians. It is predominantly an immigrant language. Having legal status as a minority language, it is used in traditional areas of Russian settlement in the Lake Peipus region, where the number of inhabitants is marginal compared to the overall number of Russians



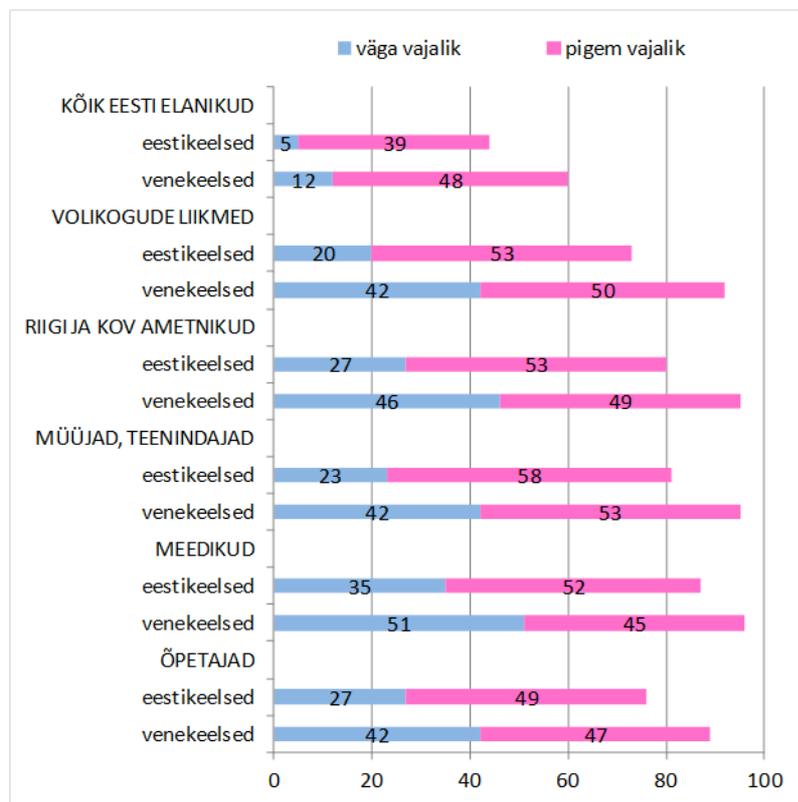
in Estonia. Russian proficiency is not compulsory, even though it is mainly taught in schools as the second foreign language after English.

Russian proficiency for all Estonian inhabitants is, as expected, considered less important than Estonian proficiency – 60% of Russian-speaking respondents consider it very necessary or somewhat necessary; the figure is 44% for Estonians. However, state and local government officials, city council members, sales and service staff, medics and teachers are expected to be proficient in Russian – i.e. categories of workers who need to communicate with the Russian-speaking population (Figure 6). Russian-speaking respondents in particular (ca 90%) consider it important, being inclined to prefer Russian in communication even if they are proficient in Estonian. It is precisely this habit as regards choice of language (and the state's lack of success in establishing the official language as the general language of business and communication) that has led to an artificial demand for Russian proficiency in the service sphere (outside tourism, foreign trade, customs and other related areas). Actually, the demand that service staff and civil servants be proficient in Russian is to be treated very cautiously: it must be precisely stipulated in employment contracts, proportional to the actual need and the resulting level of know-how and be related to a specific job duty. In general, proficiency in the written language is not necessary.

Increasing the unified communication space through use of translation into Russian and people proficient in Russian in service and business is nevertheless only a temporary measure for ensuring better functioning of the government. As seen from this study, this reduces the motivation of people of other ethnicities to use Estonian and thus develop their language skills; poorer language proficiency also results in less cultural and social integration and greater political confrontation with the Estonian state. For this reason, the supply of bilingual services cannot be the solution for integration policy in the longer-term.



Figure 20 – How necessary do you consider it for ... to be proficient in Russian at the necessary level?
(%, all respondents, August 2014)



Among Russian-speaking respondents, females, older people and Ida-Viru County or Tallinn residents (Figure 8) are more likely than average to say that all Estonians should have Russian proficiency at the necessary level.

Of Estonians, the ones who stand out in considering Russian proficiency important are males, those in the middle age group (35-64) and those with secondary or vocational secondary education (Figure 9).



Figure 21 – How necessary do you consider it for all Estonian inhabitants to have Russian proficiency at the necessary level? (% , Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

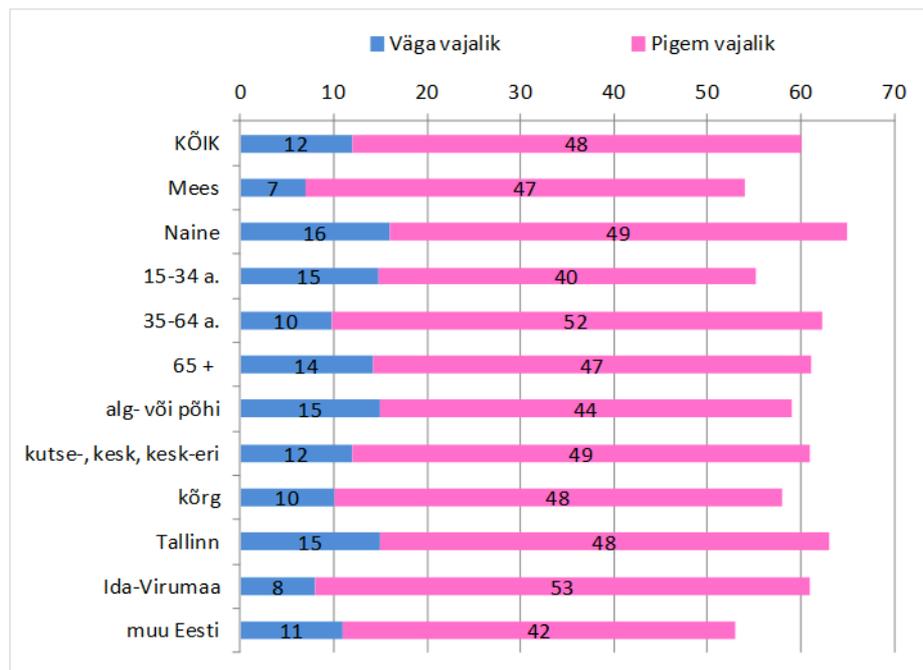
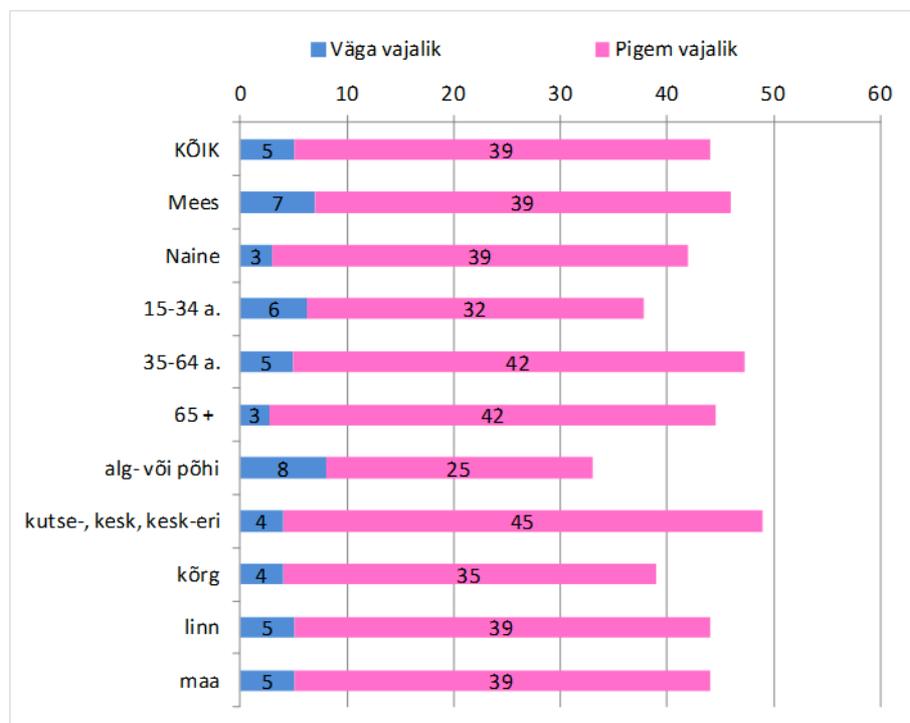


Figure 22 – How necessary do you consider it for all Estonian inhabitants to have Russian proficiency at the necessary level? (% , Estonian-speaking respondents, August 2014)





3.8 Integration into Estonian social and cultural life

Integration into Estonia's social and cultural life is directly linked to language proficiency level. To verify this, we constructed a test of knowledge consisting of five questions to find out how familiar respondents were with the animated character Lotte (there is a theme park devoted to the series), Estonian singers, film directors, composers and political parties. Of five questions, 3% of Russian-speaking respondents gave the right answer to all. One-third were unable to come up any correct answers. Estonian parties were most familiar to respondents: 52% of Russian-speaking people of other ethnicities knew that EKRE was not (as of August 2014) one of parties in parliament. One-third knew of the most internationally famous Estonian composer currently, Arvo Pärt, and also that the Estonian animated film character Lotte was a dog. Pop singer Uku Suviste was less known (24%) and only a few were able to identify Elmo Nüganen as director of the film *1944*.

In comparison, Estonian respondents' figures: 89% knew that Uku Suviste had not represented Estonia at Eurovision, 87% knew who Arvo Pärt was and that EKRE was not in Parliament at that time, 78% knew what animal Lotte was and 62% identified Nüganen as the director of *1944*. Thus 48% of Estonian respondents knew all five right answers, 25% knew four of five, 14% answered three correctly, 10% two and 2% got one right answer. Thus knowledge about Estonian society and cultural life varied extremely widely among Estonian-speakers and the Russian-speaking population, which shows the persistent segregated state of the Russian population. There is a correlation between Estonian proficiency and performance on the quiz. Of the responses from people proficient in Estonian, more than half were correct.

Table 8 presents the scores for Russian-speaking respondents with respect to Estonian language proficiency.

Table 10 – Correlation between right answers on the test and language proficiency
(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

	ALL Russian- speaking	Fluent	Understand; speak and, to a limited extent, write	Understand and, to some extent, speak	I understand a little, but do not speak the language	No proficiency
0 right answers	32	9	17	34	35	81
1 right answer	26	8	21	38	32	13
2 right answers	21	30	30	16	21	4
3 right answers	11	31	12	6	8	2
4 right answers	7	14	17	3	3	0
5 right answers	3	7	4	3	1	0



The test results were better in respondent groups with better language proficiency: younger, better educated, living elsewhere in Estonia (Table 11). Thus linguistic and cultural integration are interrelated.

Table 11 – Average test result with respect to respondent group
(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

	Average
15–34-year-olds	1.50
35–64-year-olds	1.52
65 and older	1.15
Primary or basic education	0.96
Secondary, vocational secondary education	1.30
Higher education	2.15
Tallinn	1.49
Ida-Viru County	1.18
Elsewhere in Estonia	1.68

3.9 The media and information consumption

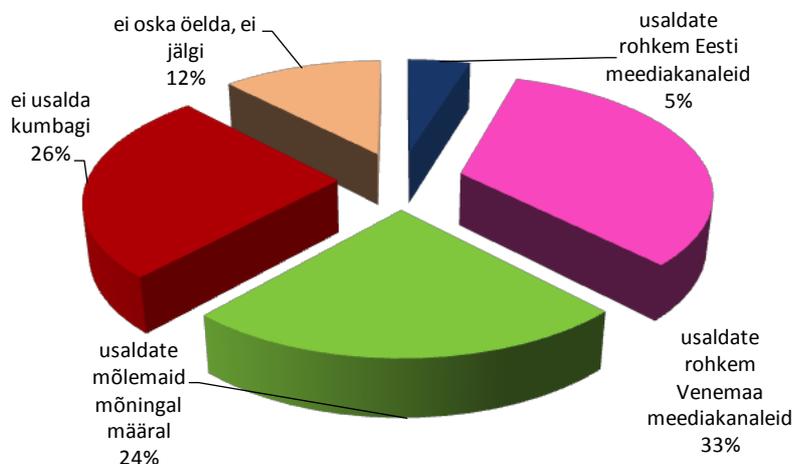
When international news stories develop, Russian-speaking respondent say they trust Russian Federation media channels significantly more than Estonian ones. Often the countries' media stake out opposing positions in terms of news selection and the content transmitted. 33% of the respondents favour Russian channels, only 5% Estonian channels. 24% puts stock in both to some degree, but 26% say they do not trust the information from either. This shows that the Russian-speaking population predominantly lives in a different information space, one that is in opposition to Estonia, and that social integration is marginal in Tallinn and Ida-Viru County.

Estonian-speaking respondents' put their trust, as expected, in Estonian media channels (63%), 11% trust both Estonian and Russian channels, and 12% trust neither.



Figure 23 – When news is reported differently, which do you trust more – Estonian or Russian media channels?

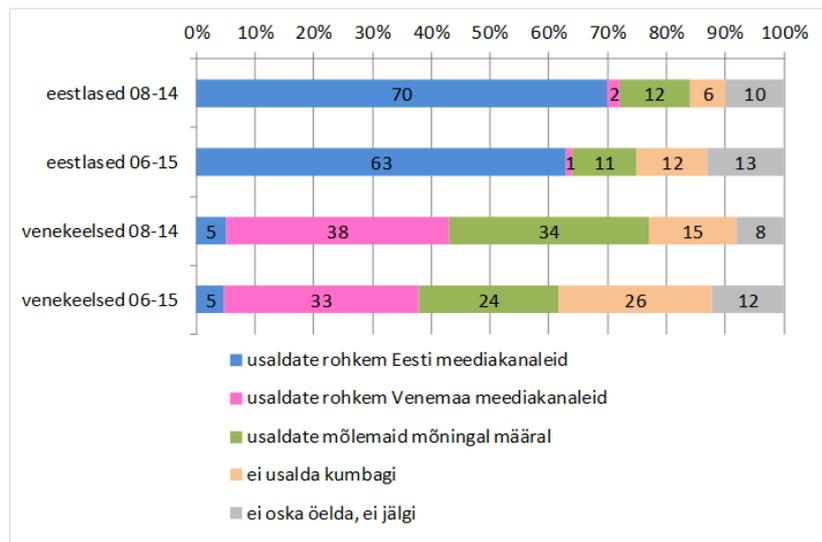
(%, Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)



Compared to the survey conducted in August 2014, Russian-speaking respondents' trust in Russian information sources dropped 5% and the share of those who trusted both to some extent is down 10%. The general mistrust has grown (15% to 26%).

Figure 24 – When news is reported differently, which do you trust more – Estonian or Russian media channels?

(%, August 2014 and June 2015 in comparison)

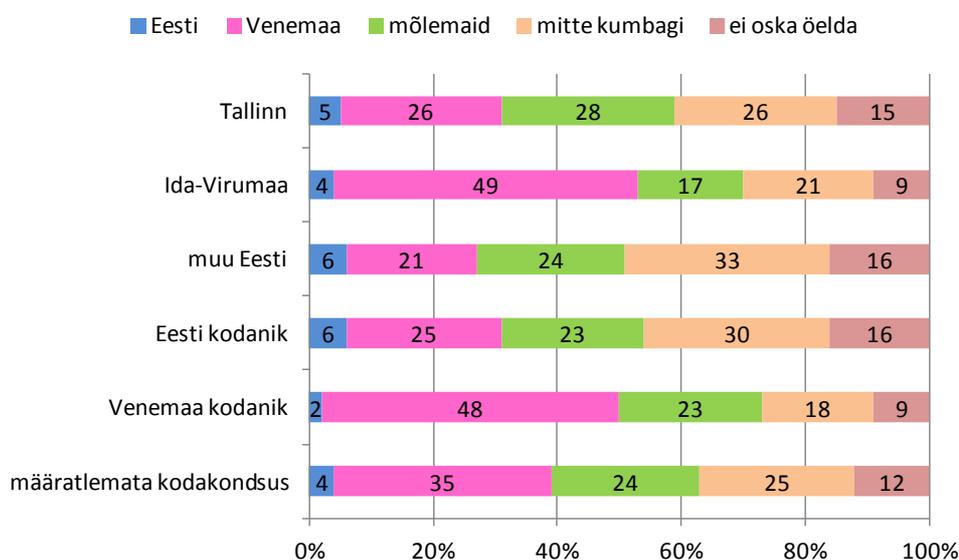


Trust in the Russian media is very clearly related to the respondent's place of residence: close to half of the Russian-speaking respondents living in Ida-Viru County (49%), 26% of Tallinners and 21% of those living elsewhere in Estonia trust the Russian media more.

Of Russian citizens, 48% trust the information originating from the Russian media, as do 35% of respondents with undetermined citizenship and 25% of Russian-speaking Estonian citizens.

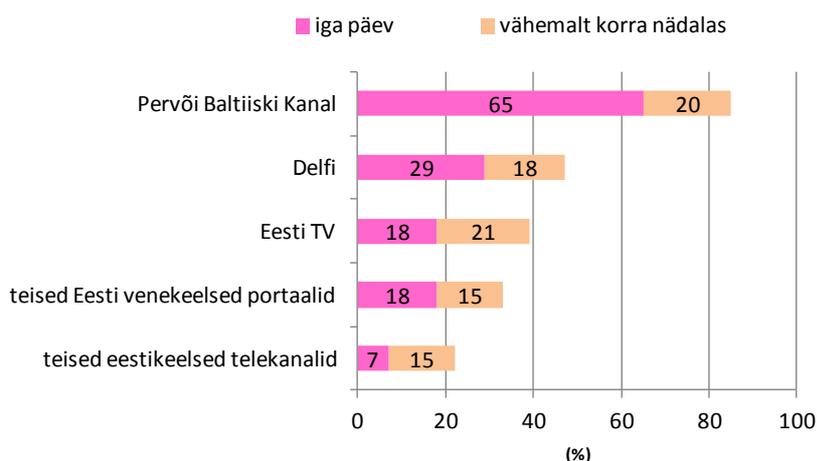


Figure 25 – When news is reported differently, which do you trust more – Estonian or Russian media channels? (% , Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)



The 2014 survey included a more larger-scale module of questions that mapped media use: respondents were asked about the importance of various media outlets as a source of information and news. Trust was greater in channels that are used daily and the top spot in the Russian-speaking population's use of the media belonged to Pervyi Baltiyskiy (PBK).

Figure 26 – How often do you follow the following channels? (% , Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)



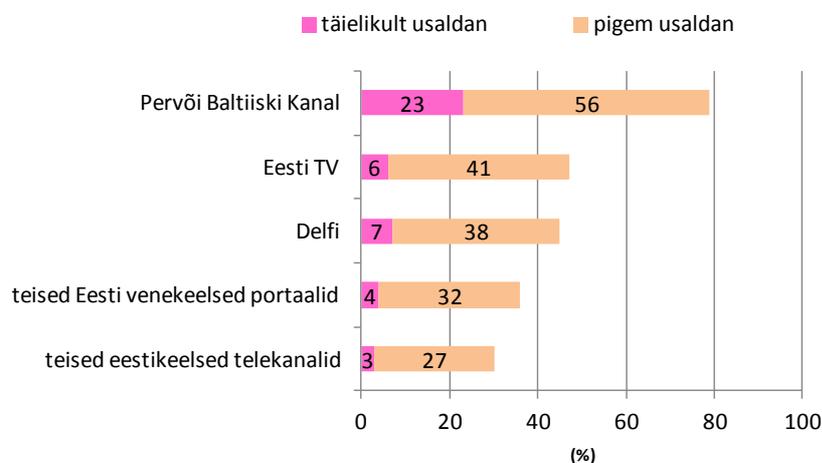
Of Russian-speaking people who have no Estonian proficiency, 81% watch PBK every day, but only 1% watch Estonian TV. On the other hand, 55% of those who are fluent in Estonian watch PBK daily and 29% of them also watch Estonian TV daily.

We also asked to what extent respondents trust these channels (Figure 21).



Figure 27 – To what extent do you trust the information transmitted on these channels?

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)



There is a very clear correlation between language proficiency and trust placed in Estonian TV and other Estonian TV channels. The lower Estonian proficiency, the lower the trust in these channels (Table 11).

Table 11 – Trust in media channels with respect to language proficiency

(% who trust completely or trust somewhat, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

	ALL Russian-speaking	Fluent	Understand; speak and, to a limited extent, write	Understand and, to some extent, speak	I understand a little, but do not speak the language	No proficiency
Pervyi Baltiyskiy Kanal	79	73	69	84	81	87
Estonian TV	47	57	65	49	37	24
Delfi	45	55	56	50	40	18
Other media websites	36	50	51	38	28	7
Other Estonian TV channels	30	53	52	25	14	11

Two-thirds of the local Russian-speaking population belong to the three groups with the lowest language proficiency, of whose members over 80% trust the information transmitted by PBK. To what extent Estonian Public Broadcasting's new Russian-language TV channel ETV+ is able to break into this media space will become apparent in the near future. Judging by the survey data, the Russian population's appears to have high interest in the Russian-language programming service to be launched by ETV. Thirty per cent they will definitely be watching it, and 40% say they will probably watch it (the respective figures for Estonians are 9 and 28%).

This is probably more of an initial position taken with regard to the new channel, and to actually win over audiences, the viewers must also like the programming service. Of the survey findings, it can



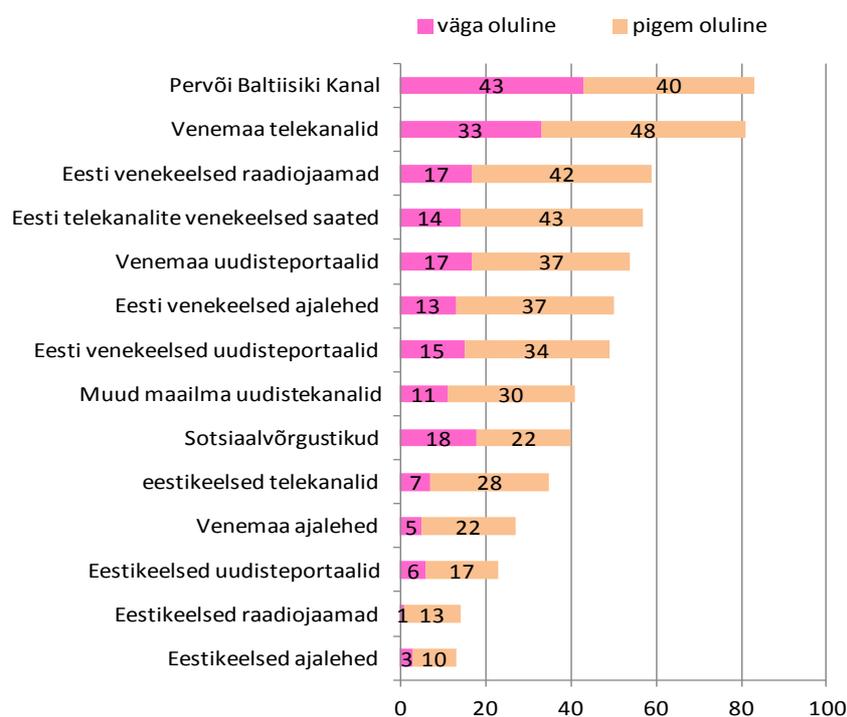
unfortunately be seen that the interest among younger respondents (chosen by ETV+ as its main target group) is more lukewarm. 20% of under 35s, 30% of 35-64-year-olds and 41% of those over 64 say they will definitely be viewers.

Interest in the information and society programmes on the ETV service has tended to be on the low side. According to the findings of the survey conducted in August 2014, only 3% of the Russian-speaking population watches subtitled re-broadcasts of current events programmes (“Foorum“, “Vabariigi kodanikud“ etc) and 19% do so sometimes.

The questionnaire in August 2014 also included a longer list of different information sources, the importance ascribed to each of them is shown on Figures 28 and 29.

The most important information channels for Estonia’s Russian-speaking population are Russian TV channels and PBK, Estonians’ information space is made up of various Estonian-language sources: TV and radio channels, newspapers and the Internet. Estonians only rarely stray into Russian-language information space; Russian-speaking respondents have slightly more contact with Estonian-language information channels (Estonian-language TV channels 35%, Estonian-language information websites 23%).

Figure 28 – How important are the following channels for you as a source of information and news? (very important or somewhat important %, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)



Thus the importance of the Estonian media and news for the Russian-speaking population is quite modest. Russian TV channels are the most important, then Estonian Russian-language media, then news channels from elsewhere in the world and social networks. Estonia’s Estonian-language media (TV channels, news sites, radio stations, newspapers) bring up the rear in viewership, even though in an integrated society these should be at the top.



Figure 29 – Importance of Estonian- and Russian-language programmes on Estonian TV channels as a source of information and news (very important or somewhat important %, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

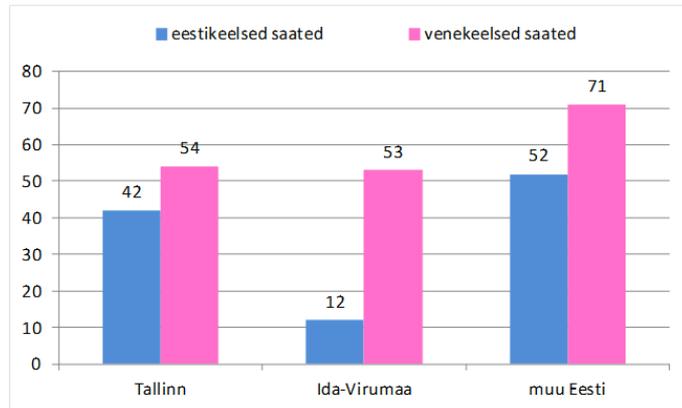
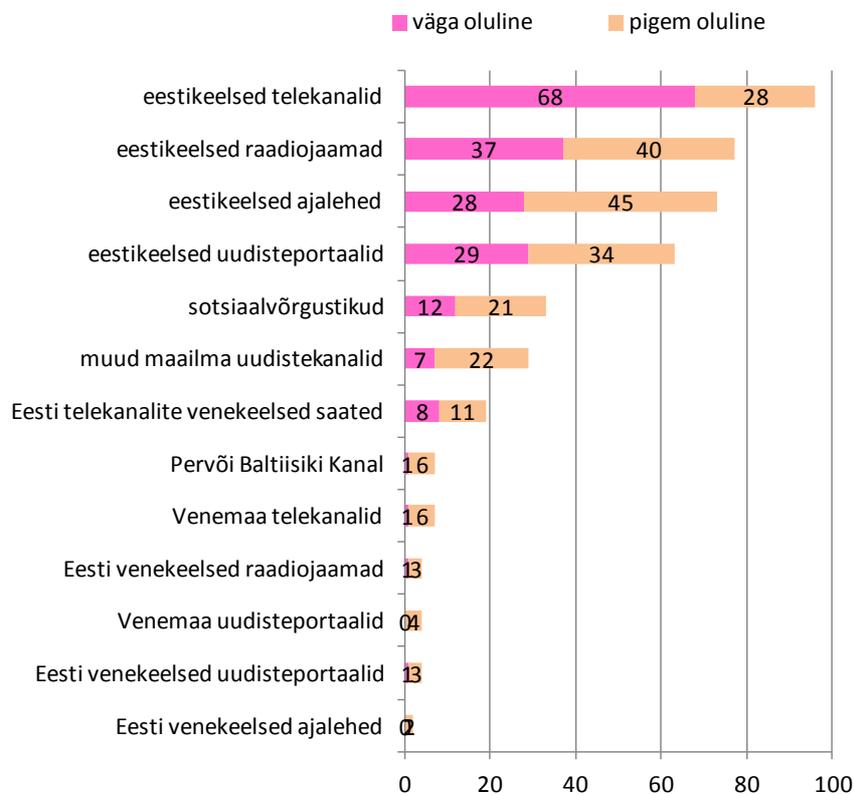


Figure 30 – How important are the following channels for you as a source of information and news? (very important or somewhat important %, Estonian-speaking respondents, August 2014)





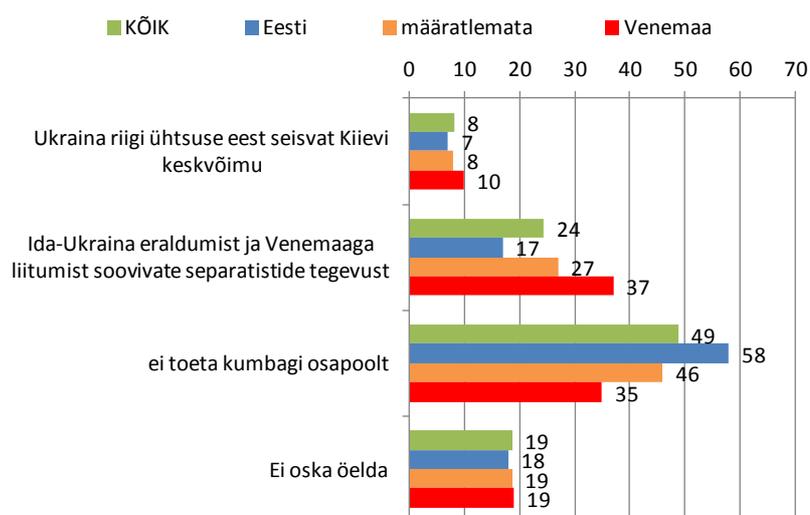
3.10 Opinions on issues related to security and foreign policy

Most Russian-speaking people avoid taking categorical positions on issues related to security and foreign policy. Most Russian-speaking respondents prefer to remain aloof amid the current ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine. 49% do not support either side. Yet the supporters of the Russia-backed separatists hold a clear edge over those in the Kyiv central government's corner (8%).

Whereas Russian-speaking Estonian citizens predominantly avoid picking sides (58% do not support either side), Russian citizens' loyalty belongs to Russia in the conflict (37%). In Ida-Viru County as well, support for Russia is higher than the average – 36% (this is partially due to the higher percentage of Russian citizens among the region's population). Of Tallinn's Russian-speaking population, 22% believe Russia to be in the right, but most (54%) does not support either side. Of Russian-speakers living elsewhere in Estonia, 20% support Ukraine and 11% support Russia.

Figure 31 – Which side do you support in the Ukraine conflict?

(%, Russian-speaking respondents with respect to citizenship, June 2015)



Estonians' sympathies lie clearly with Ukraine. Kyiv's central government is supported by 65%, separatists by only 1%. Twenty-three per cent do not support either side.

The opinion on the Ukraine-Russia conflict is related to which media space the respondents reside in. The Russian-speaking respondents who consider information obtained from Estonian TV channels as important show a slightly greater than average support for Ukraine and less support for separatists and Russia.



Table 12 – Opinions on developments in Ukraine with respect to importance ascribed to Estonian TV channels

(%, Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

	ALL Russian-speaking	Estonian-language TV channels		Russian-language programming on Estonian TV channels	
		Important	Unimportant	Important	Unimportant
Support Ukraine's central government	10	17	7	14	5
Support separatists and Russia	25	11	34	21	32
Support neither	45	49	44	45	45

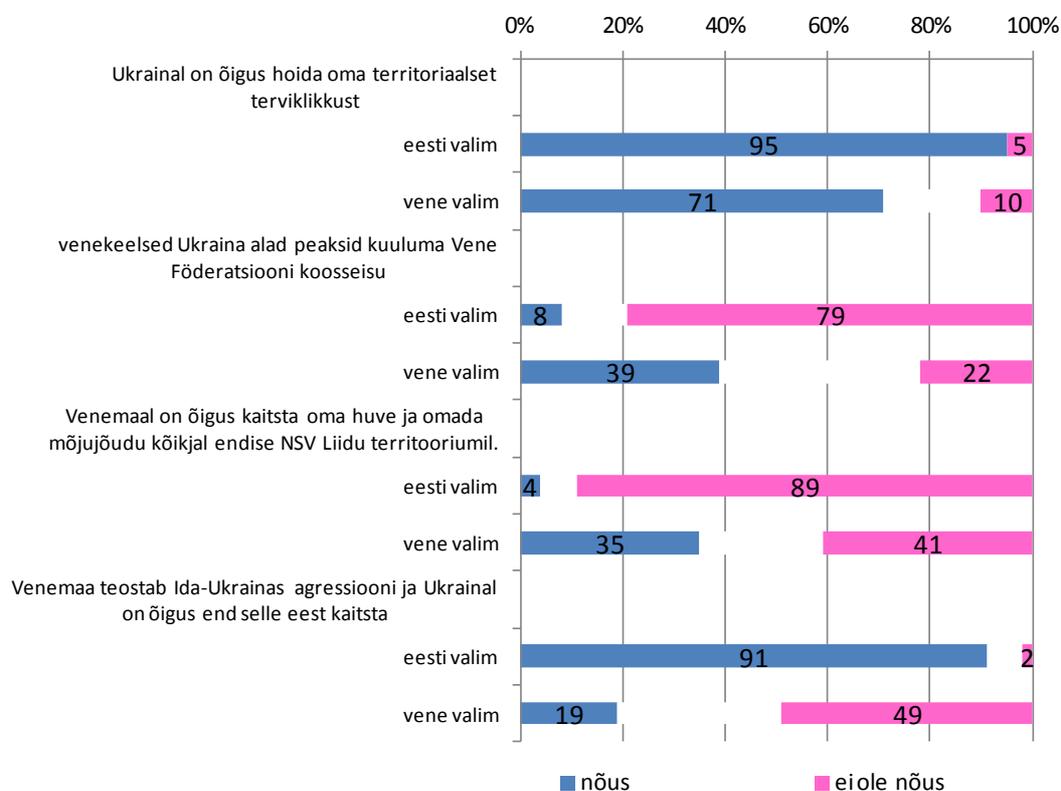
The different statements regarding the role of Ukraine and Russia in the conflict elicit a very wide range of responses from Russian-speaking respondents. Whereas 72% of Russian-speaking respondents agree completely or somewhat with the statement that Ukraine has the right to maintain territorial integrity, 39% support the position that Ukraine's predominantly Russian-speaking regions should be part of Russia and 35% say Russia has the right to have influence throughout the entire former Soviet Union. And only 19% agree with the statement that Russia is committing aggression in eastern Ukraine and that Ukraine has the right to defend itself against such aggression (Figure 25).

The attitude of Estonian-speaking respondent toward these four statements is logically consistent: 95% supports the right of Ukraine to territorial integrity; 79% do not accept Ukrainian territory with Russian-speaking population to be annexed by Russia; 89% oppose Russia's claims to have influence throughout the former Soviet Union and 91% considers Russia the aggressor and believes Ukraine has the right to defend itself.



Figure 32 – Contacts with Estonians and violation of rights

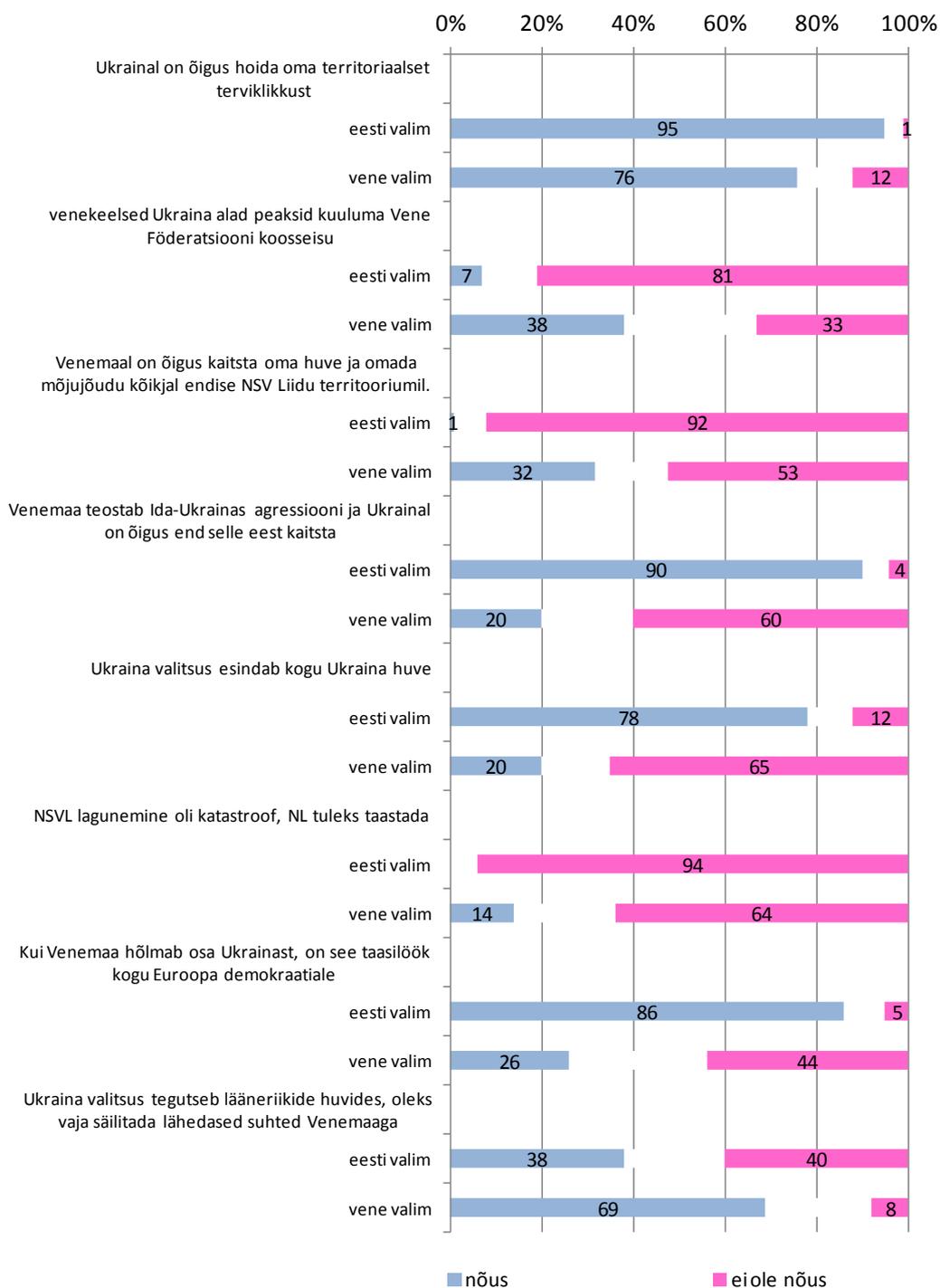
(%, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)



In August 2014, there were 50% more statements. They are shown in Figure 26.



Figure 33 – Opinion on statements about the Ukraine conflict
(%, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)

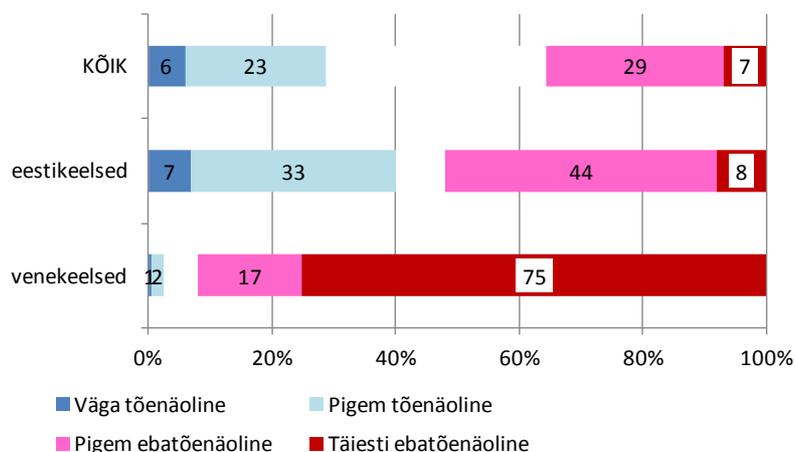


The Russian-speaking population has never considered potential Russian aggression against Estonia to be very likely. The contingent that considers this unlikely has even grown since 2014. In August 2014, 56% considered Russian aggression against Estonia to be completely unlikely. Their share is now (in June 2015) 75%.

At the same time, 7% of Estonians considered military aggression on the part of Russia against Estonia very likely and 33% considered it somewhat likely. Yet the percentage of such responses has not grown compared to August 2014; it has in fact dropped by a few percentage points.

Figure 34 – Likelihood of Russian aggression against Estonia

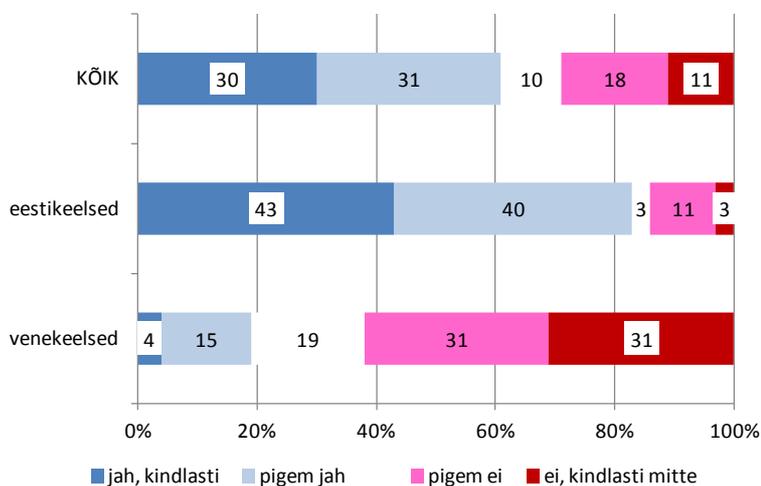
(%, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents, June 2015)



Based on the assessment of the threat from Russia, measures for protecting Estonian national security are also seen differently by the respective linguistic communities. Whereas 83% of Estonians support a greater NATO presence in Estonia, only 19% of Russian-speaking people of other ethnicities do, and 62% of Russian-speakers oppose a greater NATO presence.

Figure 35 – Will a greater NATO presence contribute to ensuring national security?

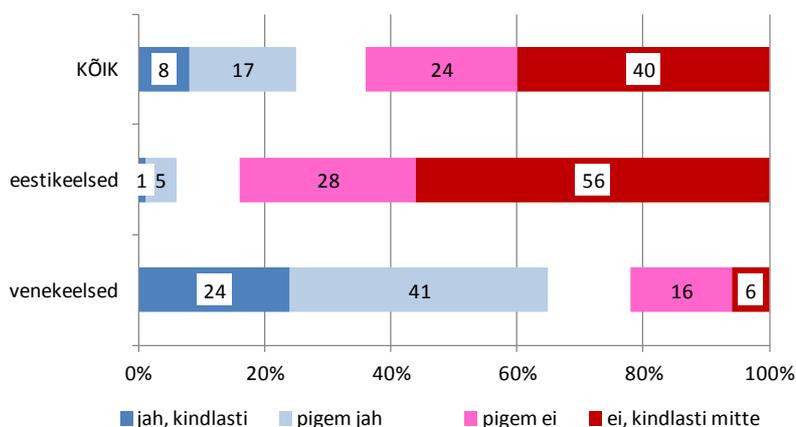
(%, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)



The attitudes of the two linguistic communities toward Russia's compatriots policy – which is intended to reinforce cultural ties and increase influence among Estonia's Russian-speaking community and create a base for the policy – are completely opposite. Attacks on Estonian citizenship and language policy, antagonism to integration processes, groundless accusations of Nazi sympathizing and general criticism of Estonia have often been added to the mix. Russian-speakers predominantly support compatriots policy (65%) while Estonians do not (6%).



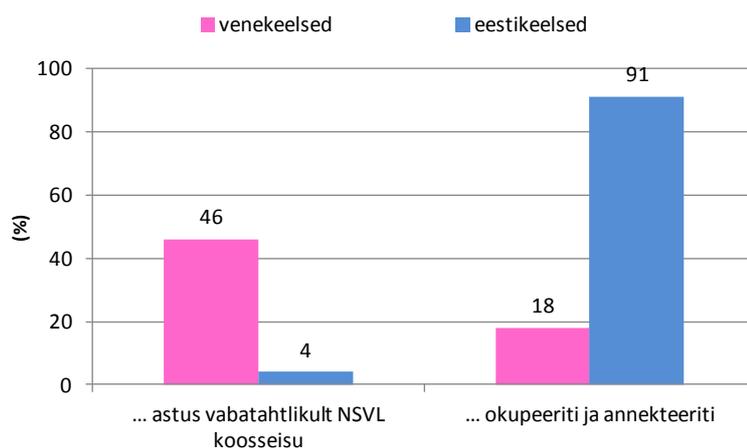
Figure 36 – Do you support Russian compatriots policy in Estonia?
(%, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)



The Russian-speaking community continues to be reluctant to acknowledge the occupation of Estonia by the Soviet Union. Entirely 46% of Russian-speaking respondents said in August 2014 that Estonia voluntarily joined the USSR in 1940, and only 18% considered the reason to be occupation. Some 36% of Russian-speaking respondent refrain from taking a position on the matter. The reason can hardly be lack of knowledge in the area; it is a specific attitude that is clung to, something that is part of their identity as it has developed.

Figure 37 – What is your opinion, did Estonia join the USSR voluntarily, or was it occupied and annexed?

(%, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents, August 2014)



It is somewhat surprising that this statement received overwhelming support in all age groups. The only category in which those who recognize the occupation of Estonia are in the majority are respondents with higher education, of whom 32% find that Estonia was occupied, but 29% find that Estonia joined voluntarily. At the same time, 39% of these were "can't say" answers, which indicates that talking about the occupation of Estonia is an uncomfortable topic for respondents with higher education, and one that



is avoided – it is hard to believe that university-educated respondents lack the information they need to make a decision on the subject.

The study shows that in opinions on security policy as well, Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking respondents have little common ground; they have mostly opposing views. This also shows the general divide in mindset and lack of integration between these groups in society.

Gruyter, 71–110.