

# STUDY VISIT ESTONIA

26-27 May 2011  
Narva, Estonia

## Introduction

The study visit has been organized within the framework of the project “Breaking Stereotypes - Building Tolerance”.

The project is co-funded by the European Union’s Fundamental Rights and Citizenship Programme.



**European Commission**  
Justice

The main objectives of the study visit were as follows:

- to examine and exchange experience and good practise of combating racism and xenophobia,
- to examine and analyse situation in Estonia with anti-discrimination policy, anti-racist education and actions.

## The programme of the visit

### 26 May

09.00	Narva College of Tartu University
11.00	State Vanalinna School
12.30	Narva Youth Centre
16.00	Narva College of Tartu University, participation in students event, Narva Castle
18.00	Language Cafe

### 27 May

09.30	Narva Municipality
11.00	Narva Social Department
13.00	Ministry of Culture of Estonia
14.30	NGO “VitaTeam”

We used information of ENAR Shadow Report 2009/2010 Racism and Discrimination in Estonia, Julia Kovalenko and “Non-Citizens in Estonia”, Vadim Poleshchuk, Legal Information Centre for Human Rights.

## Participants of the visit

Ilona Ignatuhhina and Jana Kondraševa (Vitateam, Estonia)  
Dmitrijs Bočarovs, Natalja Mickeviča (Culture. Tolerance. Friendship., Latvia)  
Marija Osun and Oksana Treščenko (KLAMC, Lithuania)

## Ethnic composition of population of Estonia and Narva

Estonia is a small European country with the population of approximately 1,323,323 persons (data for 01.01.2010). Since 1 May 2004, it is a member of the European Union. This country has a complicated resent history that unfortunately still plays an important role in shaping national policies and attitudes within society.

The Estonian population is ethnically diverse and this is to a large extent one of the heritages of the Soviet period that lasted for about 50 years and had an established system of forced migration of the labour force.

	Estonia		Narva	
	Number	%	Number	%
Estonians	921484	69,63	2498	3,86
Russians	342966	25,92	53039	82,02
Ukrainians	27878	2,11	1652	2,55
Belorussians	15717	1,19	1377	2,13
Finns	10767	0,81	477	0,74
Tatars	2646	0,2	318	0,49
Others	1865	0,14	5306	8,21
<b>Total</b>	<b>1323323</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>64667</b>	<b>100</b>

Ethnic non-Estonians reside in all of the country; however, there are regions where they might constitute a vast majority. For example in Ida-Viru region (the North-East) non-Estonians make up about 4/5 of the total population (total number of residents 169,688, Estonians – 33,347, non-Estonians - 136,341, as of 1 January 2009)<sup>3</sup>.

Despite the fact that approximately 1/3 of the Estonian population consider Russian to be their mother tongue Estonia is a monolingual state, where Estonian is the only official language. This creates a lot of tension between the majority and minority population and constitutes one of the main factors as to why some of the minority population feels alienated and unhappy.<sup>1</sup>

## Discrimination

Despite the fact that there is extremely limited information regarding racism in Estonia in general, we assume that ethnic minorities become victims of multiple discrimination quite often.

According to the data, available regarding gender and employment non-Estonian women receive the lowest wages in Estonia<sup>16</sup>. Secondly, the biggest group of unemployed persons is young people aged between 15-24 and of minority origin – 35%<sup>17</sup>. Should one assume that in general the unemployment rate among non-Estonians is much higher than among Estonians, it is reasonable to assume that young people belong to this age group and being ethnic minorities are also in a rather disadvantaged situation.

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<sup>1</sup> ENAR Shadow Report 2009/2010 Racism and Discrimination in Estonia

There is very little official or unofficial information about discrimination on the grounds of race and religion in various areas. The assessment of the situation is further hampered by a general lack of data disaggregated by race, ethnicity, mother tongue, religion, citizenship and legal status regarding the situation in areas such as housing, income and occupation, education, health, access to goods and services in the public and private sector. The situation is also hampered by the fact that in general very few NGOs work with human rights and even less on equal treatment and countering racism. This makes it even difficult to receive unofficial data regarding cases of discrimination.

Importantly it is rather traditional that Estonian political leaders deny that the problem of ethnic discrimination might be problem for Estonia. In most of the cases, even if they accept that such cases might be present they would never agree to accept that the problem is a large-scale one. The Estonian equality bodies report a very insignificant number of complaints on equal treatment in general, but there are in particular very few ethnic discrimination cases.<sup>2</sup>

## **Non-citizens of Estonia**

The term “non-citizens” refers to all Estonian residents without domestic citizenship. Almost all of them resided on the territory of Estonia before 1991 when the country restored independence. Sometimes, such persons will be specially referred to as “Soviet era residents”. The term “stateless” will be used for Soviet era residents who have not any citizenship. Estonian authorities normally call them “persons with undetermined citizenship”. In November 1991, the Supreme Soviet of Estonia decided that only pre-WWII Estonian citizens and their successors will be automatically recognized as Estonian citizens.<sup>3</sup>

After the three Baltic States joined the united Europe, the EU had to urgently develop a directive to legalize the status of this huge amount of “non-citizens”. They implemented the concept of the “permanent EU resident”. The non-citizens of Estonia can count on the automatic accordance of the status of a permanent EU resident thanks to the directive № 2003/109/EU. It was passed on November 25th 2005, and the EU countries, including Estonia, will implement it in their national legislation by January 23rd 2006.

The mentioned directive defines the status of citizens of third countries who live on the territory of the country in question for a longer period of time. All non-citizens of Estonia are in this category. The new status is essential for the non-citizens to work legally, to study and to live in another EU country for more than three months or visit without a visa (once Estonia joins the Schengen treaty). Additional advantages are the right to hand in petitions to the European Parliament and ombudsmen and in some cases the right to get official EU documents.

The directive was developed to bring the rights of non-citizens closer to the rights of citizens, to enable people to move freely within Europe and to make the labor-market more mobile.

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<sup>2</sup> ENAR Shadow Report 2009/2010 Racism and Discrimination in Estonia

<sup>3</sup> Non-Citizens in Estonia, Vadim Poleshchuk, Legal Information Centre for Human Rights

## KULTUURIMINISTEERIUM



## Ministry of Culture of Estonia

### **Presentation by Artjom Tepljuk, specialist**

Within the Estonian Government, the Ministry of Culture is responsible for organising and coordinating state cultural policy. The task of the Ministry of Culture is to make sure that necessary and favourable conditions, both legislative and financial, are created for the functioning of culture, heritage and sports from the culture professionals' as well as the general public's point of view.

The areas the Ministry of Culture is responsible for are: literature and publishing, theatre, music, fine arts, cinema, folk art, museums, libraries, cultural heritage, creative industries, broadcasting and audiovisual policy, copyright and neighbouring rights, sports, cultural diversity and integration.

One of the missions of the Ministry of Culture is to support the cultural life of ethnic minorities and to contribute to the preservation and development of their languages and cultural authenticity. The Ministry of Culture supports the activities of cultural societies of ethnic minorities by assisting the promotion of their cultural life in compliance with legal acts currently in force.

### **Integration policy**

In 2010 the Bureau of the Minister of Population Affairs, known also as the Minister of Integration was closed. The tasks of the minister are now shared between other ministries, with integration falling under the mandate of the Ministry of Culture.

### **The State Integration Programme for 2008–2013**

The Ministry of Culture coordinates the work of the Estonian Integration Program 2008-2013 (Eesti Loimumiskava aastateks 2008-2013). The document provides for goals and objectives of official and non-official bodies in the field of minorities integration. The Programme was adopted after public consultations with civil society in 2008.

The Integration Programme has set the goal that by 2013:

- Knowledge of the Estonian language will have improved on all levels;
- Contact and communication between people with different mother tongues will increase, and the difference in the number of Estonians and Russian- speakers participating in non-governmental associations and in the public sphere has decreased;
- The ratio of people with undetermined citizenship among Estonia's population will consistently decrease;
- A majority of inhabitants of Estonia trust people of other nationalities and the state of Estonia itself;



- The majority of people whose native language is not Estonian will regularly get information from Estonian-language media and trust it;
- Differences in the employment rate and incomes of employees of different nationalities will be decreased.

**Main integration fields are:**

Educational and Cultural integration

The overall goal is to guarantee equal educational opportunities for all the residents of Estonia in a shared educational system, and also to provide conditions for the preservation of other languages and cultures.

Legal and political integration

The overall goal is to guarantee law-based equal opportunities for participation in public and political life for all residents of Estonia, regardless of their ethnic background or mother tongue.

Social and economic integration

The overall goal is to guarantee equal opportunities in the labour market for all of Estonia's residents regardless of their ethnic background, mother tongue, or where they live.

The programme will put more emphasis on social and economic aspects of integration as compared with the previous national programme "Integration in Estonian Society 2000-2008" approved in 2000.

Yet, a lot of attention is paid to the language training and little or no attention is paid to other goals. However, despite of all efforts, the proficiency of non-Estonians in Estonian language continues to be rather moderate.

It should be noted that no separate integration programme exists for new immigrants. This should be considered as a big omission as the current integration programme is developed for and covers the needs of the long-term immigrants, i.e. those who arrived to Estonia during Soviet time or if they arrived after 1991, from former Soviet Republics. One of the main issues that new immigrants have to deal with is language training. Most of the courses offered in Estonian are designed for those who speak Russian, and those who do not, are bound to seek a private teacher, which makes it rather expensive.

In 2010, two new initiatives were launched. The quasi-official NGO Estonian Cooperation Assembly, who organised an Estonian Roundtable of Nationalities, launched one of the initiatives. The goal of the round table is to engage Estonian inhabitants of different ethnic backgrounds, mother tongues, and nationalities in discussions on important issues related to Estonian society. Interestingly among the members of this initiative, there are very few ethnic minorities and even less specialists on integration.

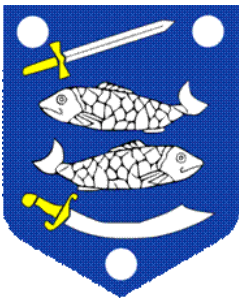
Secondly, the Roundtable of Nationalities of Estonia has been created by the Ministry of Culture and later in 2010 also the Youth platform of national minorities.

It should be mentioned that these two mechanisms are marginalised and lack competent people who would have skills and desire to work for an improvement acceptable by the majority of the minority population.

The field of Integration is closely related to the sphere of interests of the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of the Interior and other ministries, which are occupied with the subject of integration.

Complex approach to cultural diversity is stipulated in the UNESCO's "Convention on the protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions", which was approved by the government on 23 November 2006 and came into effect on 18 March 2007. The convention has been ratified by over 50 states. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the implementation of the Convention in Estonia.

Artjom noted that it is important to create the atmosphere of communication and cooperation. This will help to create the civil society and the state identity of Estonia. Regarding the stereotypes in the Estonian society Artjom admitted it is not possible to break them. It is possible to sit down at the round table in order to discuss an interesting topic. The aim is to find this topic, which would be interesting for different minorities in the society. The inter minority-majority cooperation can be strengthened also by doing simple activities together. To create one common aim for all – that is the best solution for uniting different groups and thus making stereotypes not important.



## Narva Municipality

### Presentation by City Secretary Ants Liimets

Narva municipality Secretariat is the part on Narva City Council. The main function is organisation of record keeping and documentation flow in Narva municipality.

This institution has many different tasks including work with city inhabitants (if it comes to the problems, deals with them cooperating with different institutions). The Secretariat:

- registers letters, claims and requests coming from Narva citizens and controls the process of their review;
- organises publication of Narva City Council official documents publication;
- ensures the efficient work of informational systems and organises customer service;
- participates in the legislative process on issues regarding work of local municipality;

- receives information from Narva citizens and legal persons on the development needs and requirements, resource allocation and partnerships necessity;
- cooperates with informational agencies and other informational institutions in Estonia and abroad.

The Secretary is not a “political person” and is not changed when new political parties come to power. His main function is to ensure sustainability. The Secretary cannot influence the work of the City Council directly. However, he can participate at the meetings of the Council and even veto the decisions of the Council. He has never done it so far as all the opinion collisions were settled in the communication process.

The Secretary shared that the integration and Estonian language policy for Narva was supposed to be very efficient. The state subsidised the relocation of Estonian language teachers to Narva and granted them flats in the town. However, at the present moment only half of the relocated teachers are actually working as teachers at schools. One fourth of the former teachers have found another work in Narva and another one fourth has left the town. The main reason for that is low wages for teachers.

The civil servants of the City Council must speak Estonian according to the requirements. Nonetheless, the City council meetings are mostly held in Russian

On the issue of stereotypes, the Secretary noted that most of the stereotypes address Russians (soviet people and their life style), Tatars and Estonians. Mostly these stereotypes and also discomfort connected with them is felt by the elder citizens



## **Narva Social Department**

### **Presentation by Julia Perevalova, senior inspector**

The employees of the department organise work with children with no parents guardianship and orphans, ensure protection of the personal, property rights and interests of minors and organise social work for families included in the risk group.

The main objective of the Department is to protect the legal rights of children, ensure their welfare by supporting their families and affecting the environment the child is living in. The Department works with risk families, namely socially inadapted, support needing, low income, poor families, large families, guardian families, and families having disabled children.



The Department organises allocation of benefits, social services and other types of social help and as well protection of persons having special needs. The work is organised through nine branch offices in different Narva suburbs.

The main problems faced by the employees of the Department in their work are alcoholism, unemployment, drug using of parents which creates risk for the development and safety of their children.

The Department ensures help to risk families and children without any discrimination. Within its experience, the Department has not worked with any families who would have suffered from discrimination. The biggest case practice was a Japanese family who occurred to come for living in Narva. They faced a lot of challenges due to language inefficiency as their mother tongue was Japanese. The family spoke neither Russian nor Estonian. As a result the development of their children in Narva was slow. However, this wasn't due to the discriminating behaviour of Narva citizens but more due to the lack of ability to communicate between the family and Estonian and Russian citizens.

Julia noted that the main stereotypes in Narva could arise not on the basis of ethnical origin or language but more due to religious confessions' differences, namely if there would be more Muslim families.



## Narva College of the University of Tartu

TARTU ÜLIKOOL  
NARVA KOLLEDŽ

### **Presentation by Vladimir Izotov, Project manager, Administrative and Support Structure**

Narva College, located in the North-East of Estonia is a regional faculty of University of Tartu. The College was founded in 1999. It is the only institution of higher education in Estonia which focuses mainly on the preparation of teachers for Estonian schools with Russian as language of instruction (the state language of Estonia is Estonian). The role of the College is special because 26 % of the population in Estonia, 76% in Ida-Virumaa County and 96% in Narva town are Russian native speakers.



The mission of Narva College is:

- to act as the leading force driving the development of knowledge-based society and to be the guarantor of its continuity in Ida-Viru County;
- to serve the society through study and research work,
- to offer its students the best opportunities for self-development and decent education, to help them apply their knowledge in the society; and to promote development of connections between various cultures in Estonia.

Narva College also participates in different educational projects of the European Union and organizes students exchange in the framework of the programme ERASMUS.

Traditionally Narva College organizes a Students' Scientific Conference every spring term. The conference on multicultural education takes place every third year.

In 2010 "Innovative Methods in Multicultural Education" was a joint Multicultural Education and English Language Teaching (ELT) conference.

Conference topics:

- Multicultural Education and Support of Cultural Identity;
  - Foreign Language Teaching and Learning;
  - Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL);
  - Teacher Training for Multilingual and Multicultural School
- Representatives of 15 countries participated in the conference.

Multicultural environment of College staff supports as well tolerance and diversity among young people, there are different practical ways of doing that both using formal and informal ways like due to official event during Study visit partners could join also formal during the day and informal event in the evening taking place in Narva Castle.

There is every day naturally integrated actions taking place in the College, which lead to healthy situation towards anti-discrimination policy and anti-racist education.

The representative of students shared that he does not feel discrimination in the college despite the fact that his first language is Estonian. He also noted a challenge of passing the test of Estonian language for Russian students. The other challenge is the elderly teachers' staff and also the frequent visits of language inspection which creates lots of stress for the teaching staff of the College.



## **Narva Vanalinna State School**

**Presentation by Renata Moistus, Hobby teacher**

### **About the school**

State Vanalinna School was based on previous school nr.2 with Russian language of study. From August 2000, the school became a part of state project “Language immersion”, and new period began for the school that today exists. Today this school is one of the best examples of formal educational institution in the city (there are 10 schools in the city and only one is Estonian school). Moreover, as there is the problem to practice Estonian language for Russian-speaking children, youth, State Vanalinna School is the best practice on every day bases.

Both Russian and Estonian teachers work here. Working language is Estonian but there is the place for Russian speech as well). This system is adopted in such countries like Finland, Canada and well used now in Estonia. From 2010, State Vanalinna School got the status of gymnasium. There are ca 391 pupils and 39 teachers.

The program supports cultural identity of all existing nationalities, and at the same time develop Estonian culture, promote anti-discrimination in all kinds of form.

### **Language immersion programme**

Language immersion is a form of studies that is being implemented as a national program in Estonia for better acquisition of Estonian as the second language. Today almost half of non-Estonian schools apply language immersion methods.

Immersion programs were first introduced in 1965 in Montreal, Canada. The objective was to provide English-speaking students living in the predominantly francophone province of Quebec with the opportunity of learning French, the only official language of Quebec.

### **What is language immersion?**

In a language immersion program at least 50% of subjects are studied in the target language (in this case Estonian). The methodology permits children to gain proficiency in the Estonian language while also developing their mother tongue.



In the case of total early immersion, learning begins in kindergarten or the first grade, and all subjects are studied in Estonian. The teaching of Russian as mother tongue begins in the second half of grade two. From grade four, the proportion of subjects taught in Russian increases. In grade five, the proportion of subjects taught in Estonian falls to 50%. In grade 6, in addition to the study of a third language such as English, half of the subjects are in Russian, half in Estonian.

In the case of late immersion, grade six is the preparatory year where the volume of Estonian language classes and subjects taught in Estonian increase. In grades seven and eight, the proportion of classes taught in Estonian increases to 76% of the curriculum. The remaining 24% includes Russian as a mother tongue and a third language such as English.

The late immersion program will be launched in September 2003. This system was tested and recognised in Canada and Finland and now is widely applied in Estonia. Currently there are 17 kindergartens, 16 schools of early and 20 schools of later language integration (earlier starting with the first year, later starting with the senior grades).

Total early immersion classes have been offered in Kohtla-Järve, Maardu, Narva, Tallinn and Valga.

The programme supports the cultural identity of Estonia minorities and protection and development of Estonian identity and culture, mutual understanding and cooperation of nationalities living in Estonia and Estonia efforts to integrate in the European Union.

One of the tasks of the program is protection of the mother tongue of pupils, its development and support. The aim of the program is to create environment suitable for integration into Estonian society. The learning process includes also interests groups, excursions, study visits, hiking. A significant support is ensured by the library providing lots of literature in Estonian.

During the meeting with the pupils of the School, they shared that due to different games and activities involving pupils the process of speaking Estonian is easier. Nonetheless, after the school pupils spend their time mostly with Russian friends. They in no way feel that they loose their Russian identity.

On the question about discrimination of Russians in Estonia, the pupils responded that this is mostly a political game and mass media war, which is not connected to reality. There are also not well-educated young people, who do not want to think and lack emotional intelligence; they create stereotypes and discrimination.



## Narva Youth Centre

### **Presentation by Jevgeni Semchishin, Infospecialist**

Municipal organization founded in February 1998 with the aim to develop and coordinate youth work in the city. Target groups are youth, youth organizations and youth workers. There are youth work service, youth info centre, youth initiative service (volunteering movement), Nordic Council Infopunkt, training service, café-club Exit (open youth work).

### **Youth work service**

Includes preparation and implementation various programmes on youth work, researches of problems of young people

### **Youth info centre**

The Centre provides counselling and information for young people.

### **Youth initiative service**

Gives opportunity for youth organizations to use premises for their work, provides assistance in implementation of projects, carries out different activities for youth, develops youth parliament and volunteering movement.

### **Training service**

Organizes short and long-term courses for youth workers and youth leaders on various actual themes including: combating intolerance and discrimination, promotion of human rights, etc.

### **Café-club Exit**

It is open youth space where everyone could come and spend time, organize something interesting or take part in it.

The Centre is carrying out intercultural activities but of course it should be more.



## NGO VitaTeam

### **Presentation by Ilona Ignatuhhina, head of the organization**

Vitateam NGO mission is to support and develop human resource, where youth is one of the main target groups. Vitateam NGO provides free non-formal education services within the framework of lifelong learning for people of Ida-Viru County, Estonia.

The most important task is to make a young person as well as grown-up people trust and believe in his/her own capabilities. We work in the field of non-formal education. Most part of the work is connected with youth work, and is taking place in Narva, Narva-Joesuu, Sillamae, Olgino village, Johvi city, Kohtla-Jarve and Kivioli.

The institutions NGO works with are schools, hobby schools; youth open centres, youth organisations and municipalities, labour market as well.

The organisation is situated in Narva, an industrial town by its history, trying to assimilate modern development. The Ida-Viru county, a disadvantaged area from economic, social and cultural points of view is, socially speaking, the region with the lowest level of income and the poorest standard of living compared to other regions in Estonia. Culturally it is related to the Russian language, which is mostly spoken in Ida-Viru County as Narva is situated on the border to Russia in the North-East of the country. In Narva, most of the industrial infrastructures have closed. In comparison to the rest of the country, the region has an important rate of unemployment and Narva's economic situation has declined.

In this context, participants in our educational activities have few social competencies, are at risk of social exclusion, and as the result face passive participation in social and professional life.

VitaTeam provides an example on the local level organisation with international team which gives the challenge from different perspectives. VitaTeam is represented by different ages from 18 till 33 which is the good example for youth to see and try in practice being active and at the same time having experience of diversity among young people. The main target group are young people, their parents and grown-ups, who work with youth in different educational institutions. VitaTeam initiates educational projects, activities for all groups. One of the methods, which became pilot project, is Language Café (see description below).

### **The project “Open your Eyes”**

VitaTeam supports human resource and then comes up usually some issue, and as an example of topic Racism and Xenophobia can be introduced one of the project named “Open your Eyes” taking place in 2010 under the program European Volunteer Service supported by SA Arhimedes Estonian National Agency for the EU Youth in Action Programme. The covered themes were art and culture, anti-discrimination. The project involved two countries: Estonia and Russian Federation.

The project's activities included volunteer's trainings; acquaintance with activists from non-formal youth community "Xenophobic.NET" and examples of their activity; Film Festival "OPEN YOUR EYES" partner meetings; Photo Action "OPEN YOUR EYES" partner meetings, preparation of promo-materials, preparation of web-site design, assistance in organization of Film Festival and Photo Action (March, 2010) in St. Petersburg, assistance in organization of Film Festival/Photo Action "OPEN YOUR EYES" in Narva and Sillamae, participation in EVS info-day in Narva, organized by VITATEAM, evaluation session after Film Festival in St.Petersburg, possible assistance in actions of "Xenophobic.Net" in St.Petersburg.

The main applied methods of this EVS project were learning by doing and using the internal motivation of the person to take part in the activity, to create something new in cooperation with others.



**Language Cafe – method or project idea or what we do...**

**Presentation by Fernando Nieto, volunteer**

**Problem we wish to address:**

Narva is a linguistically and culturally isolated city in North-Eastern Estonia, afflicted by high unemployment rates and scarce social mobility. There are not many opportunities for locals to acquire new skills and competencies. Moreover, being a practically monolingual environment, it does not offer opportunities to practice languages other than Russian. The demand for multi-cultural and multi-lingual activities is not being adequately met: indeed, one recurrent complaint by the local people is precisely the almost total lack of occasions for practicing foreign languages and even Estonian, the state language. The idea of the Language Cafe stems exactly from this situation and wants to meet people's need and will to improve their language skills, through non-formal education methods.

**The Narva Language Cafe – the concept:**

All over Europe, more and more Language Cafes are being set up. This experience, that started from a simple intuition of few proactive language-lovers, has now become an all-Europe phenomenon thanks to the Subject Centre for Languages, Linguistics and Area Studies of the University of Southampton (UK), which, with the support of the European Union Socrates-

Lingua programme, has collected all the existing experiences and has formulated a method that can be taken up (and improved) by whoever wants to start a new Language Cafe.

All the details can be found on the website [www.languagecafe.eu](http://www.languagecafe.eu)

The idea behind the Language Cafe is that formal (school- or course-based) education can be supplemented by non-formal education, which provides out-of-the-classroom occasions to improve one's skills, learn and socialise in a way that is completely new and free-of-constraints. The Language Cafe is a perfect example of non-formal education, in that it provides the participants with the opportunity to practice a foreign language through games and discussions, in a relaxed and playful atmosphere.

Another important concept behind the Language Café is lifelong learning: no matter one's age, anybody can take part in it and get a chance of learning, exchanging, improving oneself. The Language Cafe does not impose any restriction based on age or on language level: if a person speaks a bit of one of the languages offered by the Language Café and wants to practice and possibly improve it, he/she is welcome!

In Narva, we have already had a zero-budget experience with English Language Cafe during the summer and it was a success: people responded enthusiastically and expressed the wish that it become a permanent once-a-week gathering. This is why we intend to renew and expand the Narva Language Cafe, offering other languages – most important of all, Estonian – and crystallizing it into a durable structure that can signify a real change in the participants' everyday lives.

Although we plan to start with the English Language Cafe and the Estonian Language Cafe, the Language Cafe is a flexible format that can potentially spread to cover a multiplicity of languages and activities. Indeed, we will also provide practical and organizational support to anyone who wants to start Language Cafe -groups based on other languages.

### **Narva Language Cafe – Plan:**

The Language Cafe is a format, which gives the participants the opportunity to practice a foreign language in an informal atmosphere. It does not need a special location: the venue will be a local Cafe (hereinafter, Host Cafe) and the event will be open both to those who came expressly to take part in it and to the Host Cafe's customers.

To begin with, the Narva Language Cafe will set up two weekly meetings in the Host Cafe: the English Language Cafe and the Estonian Language Cafe. Each meeting will last two hours and will be organised and led by a facilitator.

The facilitators (fluent in the relevant language) will organize the meetings in such a way that all the participants will talk, actively contribute to the Cafe and have fun. Every week a new topic will be chosen: all the games, activities, discussions for that week's meetings will be linked to the given topic. Examples of activities can be found on the official Language Cafe website (<http://www.languagecafe.eu/downloads/en/helpsheet2.pdf>), but many more activities and games will be proposed by the facilitators.

The Narva Language Cafe will be inserted in the directory of the Language Cafe official website, where all the Language Cafes in Europe are listed. Furthermore, a Narva Language Cafe blog will be created:

- It will serve as a virtual meeting place where the participants, writing in the relevant language, can carry on the conversations started during the Language Cafe meetings, chat, share... In this way they won't restrict their contacts (and their practice of the language) to the two hours per week of the Language Cafe meetings;

- Through the blog, the participants can keep in contact with the Language Cafe-team and propose new topics, games, methods; they can also propose themselves as “facilitator” of the next meeting, in which case they will receive full support and assistance by the Language Cafe-team in the organization of all the activities;
- Thanks to the blog, the participants will also be able to organize extra-Language Cafe activities related to language learning, for instance film screenings in the relevant language. In this case, they will be supported by the Language Cafe-team in the organization of these activities.

In case a new language is proposed, the interested person or group will receive the full and active support of the Language Cafe-team (logistical assistance, know-how, methods, material) to set up a new language-specific Language Cafe.

General Narva Language Cafe gatherings will be organised on regular basis, where all the participants to all the Language Cafe-language groups will be invited to participate. In these occasions, special games and activities – related to language learning and multiculturalism – will be proposed.

### **Continuity**

Once the Narva Language Cafe is set up, it will serve as the centre of all the various language-specific Language Cafes. All the material and methods used during the Language Cafe meetings will be collected and put at the disposal of whoever wants to start a new Language Cafe (in the form of hand-outs, file disks and ready-to-use sets for specific games/activities).

The Narva Language Cafe will draw its strength from the enthusiasm and dedication of the participants. This will start a virtuous cycle where the active involvement of the participants will allow the Narva Language Cafe to expand its reach and to give the participants ever more chances of meeting, practicing languages, organising language-related events, and – in general – being actively involved in their city’s social and cultural life.

Thus, what we hope to give to the participants through the Narva Language Cafe-project is not only a chance to practice a foreign language, but also the opportunity of developing new social and organisational skills and of increasing their self-confidence in social situations. Foreign languages, experience in organising events and self-confidence will all be precious assets for the participants’ career and every-day life.



## **The Legal Information Centre for Human Rights**

The Legal Information Centre for Human Rights (LICHR) was established in 1994 with the support of three Danish non-governmental organizations within the Democratisation programme of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Denmark (DANIDA) and with the assistance of the Presidential Round Table on National Minorities, the Representative Assembly of Non-Citizens of Estonia and Tallinn City Chancellery.

The core areas of activity:

- provision of access to justice and protection of human rights;

- legal aid;
- analysis of the human rights and national minorities' rights situation, monitoring of Estonian legislation;
- contribution to the integration process and inter-ethnic dialogue in society;
- legal training in the sphere of human rights.

In 2009 – 2010, the Legal Information Centre is implementing a project that aims to improve the knowledge of kinder-garden and secondary school teachers about their rights and raise awareness of the parents about the added value the Boards of trustees can bring, particularly in highlighting to the public the problems of Russian-speaking schools. Politicians and authorities are invited to discuss the issues of concern, explain what is currently going on and how to overcome difficulties that arise concerning the transition to the upper-secondary school in Estonian language of instruction. As part of the project, a survey is being carried out, along with meetings and international conferences. The project is yet not finalised, however the interim evaluation of it is rather positive.



### **Web portal [www.teretere.eu](http://www.teretere.eu)**

In 2010 the Integration and Migration Foundation Meie Inimesed has launched a web portal [www.teretere.eu](http://www.teretere.eu) (translated as Hello Hello). The portal is aimed at schoolteachers, education workers and parents of the children who study together with immigrant kids. The educational materials, legal acts that might be applicable, place for the experience exchange is being provided as well as other useful information for those who wish to engage in educating and integrating young new-immigrants.



### **Intellectual Club**

The youth association Generation, in cooperation with Youth Union Siin, launched an Intellectual Club, which is meant for younger people; however, participation of interested persons is strongly encouraged. The aim of the Club is to involve younger people in discussions concerning active citizenship and help them develop their own opinion about democracy and processes taking place in the Estonian Society. For the meetings politicians representing various political views, including high rank politicians such as MEPs, Local Government members, experts and opinion leaders are invited. One of the issues of concern at these meetings has always been integration, racism and unequal treatment. The meetings take place on a monthly basis. This is a voluntary initiative that is currently not receiving any funding.



## Conclusions

Estonia is multicultural state where approximately 1/3 of the population is non-Estonians. The issues of non-citizens, different interpretation of history, mutual stereotypes and discontent between majority and minority remain among actual questions.

The Integration Programme 2008-2013 was adopted in 2008. A great of attention in the Programme is paid to the Estonian language training. For instance, Estonia implements the Language Immersion Program, which is a national program for better acquisition of Estonian as the second language.

However, a little or no attention is paid to other aspects of integration: anti-discrimination education, promotion of tolerance and diversity, breaking stereotypes, etc.

Specificity of Narva and region.

Narva and Ida-Viru County culturally related to the Russian language, which is mostly spoken as Narva is situated on the border to Russia in the North-East of the country. Estonians are minority here. The region is a disadvantaged area from economic, social and cultural points of view is, socially speaking, the region with the lowest level of income and the poorest standard of living compared to other regions in Estonia.

During the study visit, we have seen positive examples of intercultural learning and co-operation in State Vanalinna School and Narva College.

However, in ordinary schools there is lack of intercultural activities.

There are non-governmental organizations engaged in anti-discrimination work. However, the number of those organizations is small.