

Languages and language varieties in Estonia

The paper focuses on the languages and language varieties spoken in Estonia. It shares information about the census data regarding the number and mother tongue users of Estonians, Russians and other national minorities in the country. The study describes the regional varieties of Estonian, the only official language of the country and it also highlights the status of speakers of other languages. Besides foreign language teaching, mother tongue education is a crucial element of the Estonian language strategy. The study details the role of foreign languages in education and reports on a research which started in 2021 and investigates the Estonian language identity with the help of an online questionnaire. In the questionnaire, a separate open question focuses on the attitudes towards the Estonian language. The preliminary results of the questionnaire are expected in autumn 2021.

Keywords: language varieties, national minorities, regional varieties, language strategy in Estonia.

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