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RUSSIAN-SPEAKERS IN FINLAND

THE AMBIGUITIES OF A GROWING MINORITY

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ABSTRACT – *Russian-speakers in Finland are the country's largest (and growing) immigrant group. Despite their ethnic diversity and their willingness to integrate in Finnish society, they are often framed in Finnish discourse as "representatives" of Russia with dual loyalties. They are also being simultaneously developed, by different political agents, as both a Finnish and a Russian cultural minority. The article examines the tensions between these different framings, describes the educational and cultural provisions for Russian-speakers in Finland, and gives an overview of various institutions that they themselves have created. Issues of language rights and cultural maintenance receive particular attention.*

KEY WORDS – *Russian-speakers in Finland, minority language rights, integration policy, dual loyalty, Russian-language media, language and culture maintenance*

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INTRODUCTION

Our aim in this article is to unpack some of the current political ambiguities surrounding "Russian-speakers" as the largest, and growing, immigrant group in Finland. Although Finland was part of the Russian Empire for over a hundred years prior to gaining independence in 1917, the current presence of Russian-speakers in the country has been mostly the consequence of 20th- and 21st-century immigration flows. While there was a significant wave of immigration from Russia after the October revolution, the vast majority of the current population of Russian-speakers in Finland are more recent immigrants who have been arriving since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991, and especially since 2000. Although the number of Russian-speakers currently living in Finland is by no means huge (certainly below 2% of the total population), it is growing steadily, and demographic projections indicate that Russian-speakers are likely eventually to catch up with Finland's long-established Swedish-speaking population (currently just over 5%) (Söderling, 2016, p. 14). Such prognosis assumes, however, that processes of linguistic and cultural assimilation would not have a massive impact on the self-identifications of Russian-speakers over the longer period.

Finland's Russian-speakers are, in fact, a group that is far from straightforward to categorize. They include people who have moved to Finland not only from Russia, but also from Estonia, Belarus, Ukraine, and other countries of the former Soviet Union. A significant proportion are Ingrian remigrants—those who were in the Soviet Union categorized as Finnish by ethnicity, being descendants of 17th-century Finnish immigrants, yet who were in the

20th century being brought up largely as speakers of Russian. Despite this diversity of ethnic origin, country of birth, and cultural self-identification, Russian-speakers are commonly treated in Finland as a single group and are often out of convenience labelled simply "Russians". What this article will seek to demonstrate is how the political field surrounding Russian-speakers in Finland today is traversed by several very different framings of this group—framings that co-exist and are effectively "layered", yet entail quite distinct political projects, which intersect and interact with one another, and are frequently in tension.

Russian-speakers in Finland are framed, firstly, as an immigrant group, alongside other sizeable immigrant groups. Secondly, Russian-speakers in Finland are commonly (and simplistically) perceived as representatives of Russia—a powerful, and at times threatening, neighbouring country, with which the Finns have had to contend for centuries as imperial subjects, trading partners or enemies at war. Thirdly, Russian-speakers in Finland are rapidly establishing themselves as a significant linguistic and cultural minority, Finland's largest after the Swedish-speaking population. In this last case, "language" emerges as the principal cultural marker (limited and insufficient as it might be when it is brought to serve as an index of this purported minority group's "culture" and "identity" taken as a whole).

The conceptualization of Russian-speakers in Finland gets even more complex, however, when these different framings get juxtaposed and begin to interfere with one another. For example, the "minority" rights of Russian-speakers in Finland might be honoured as part of the policy of liberal multiculturalism that Finnish authorities would be applying in equal measure to any of its larger immigrant groups; or these rights might be cultivated as part of a much narrower tit-for-tat agreement between Finland and Russia that construes Russian-speakers in Finland as analogues of the historic ethnic Finns based in Russia. Furthermore, as we shall see, Russian-speakers in Finland are being developed simultaneously, albeit by different political agents and with differing levels of success, *both* as a *Finnish* cultural minority (a minority whose activities and cultural life are first and foremost practised as contributions to Finnish society) *and* as a *Russian* cultural minority (essentially a "diasporic" group whose maintenance of cultural identity is expected to be dependent on the maintenance of strong connections and identifications with the "motherland", posited as the origin, source and safe-

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guard of this identity). As we shall argue, the political ambiguity of "Russian-speakers" in Finland is to be found in the "interstices" (and this also means in the interactions and contradictions) *between* all of the above different framings of Russian-speakers in Finland.

In the first section of the article we will provide a historical overview of Russian presence in Finland and sketch out the prevalent Finnish attitudes towards this group, not least as a reflection of their attitudes towards Russia itself. This section emphasizes the first two of the above framings (Russian-speakers as an immigrant group and as de facto "representatives" of Russia). The second section then looks at the important role that "language" plays in framing Russian-speakers in Finland as a minority, especially in campaigns that seek to turn them into a group whose rights will eventually exceed those of "mere" immigrants. This second section also provides an account of Finland's current educational provisions for Russian-speakers as a linguistically circumscribed minority.

The third section of the article focuses on other ways in which the Finnish government provides for Russian-speakers as a cultural minority. By looking at the work and the mission of Finland's key state-funded institutions dedicated to supporting the cultural needs of Russian-speakers, including parts of the state media, this section presents both the successes and some of the major challenges of the Finnish integrationist approach vis-à-vis Russian-speakers, i.e. its project of supporting Russian-speakers' cultural activity primarily as a form of involvement in and contribution to Finnish society. The final section then examines some of the key institutions created by the Russian-speakers in Finland themselves, focusing on the umbrella associations claiming to represent the group at the national level, rather than on the many diverse local organizations. In this section, we identify the existence of a tension between projects of self-organization that are driven by the aim to embed Russian-speakers as a distinctive group within Finnish society and those that emphasize connectedness to the "motherland", and tend therefore to be actively supported by the diaspora-focused soft-power initiatives of the Russian state.

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1. RUSSIAN-SPEAKERS AS IMMIGRANTS FROM RUSSIA: HISTORICAL OVERVIEW AND CURRENT SITUATION

Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire in 1809, but there was no large-scale migration to Finland from Russia during the 19th century. In 1900, the number of Russians in Finland was in the region of 6,000, amounting to no more than 0.2% of the total population of 2.7 million. However, Russians made up almost 40% of the merchants in Helsinki (Kuhlberg, 2002). The city of Vyborg/Viipuri in the South-East of Finland (now part of Russia) flourished as a trading post, with its four languages of equal standing: Finnish, Swedish, German, and Russian (Tandefeldt, 2002). In the newly independent Finland of the 1920s, Russians who fled there during the revolution and civil war played an important role during the first decades of independence in the development of culture, trade, science, and construction (Baschmakoff & Leinonen, 2001, pp. 62–63, 69; Protassova, 2004; Shenshin, 2008; Pikkarainen & Protassova, 2015). Biographies of many notable "Finland-Russians" from this and other periods can now be found on the website of the Russian service of the Finnish Broadcasting Company (Russkaâ Finlândiâ, 2017). Numbers dwindled from the 1930s onwards, however, and remained low until the break-up of the Soviet Union, after which they started rising again, steadily and consistently.

Today, according to data from Statistics Finland, more than 1.3% of the c. 5.5 million inhabitants of Finland identify themselves as native speakers of Russian (Tilastokeskus, 2016). This makes them the largest group of foreign language speakers in Finland. Swedish, which is spoken as a native language by 5.3% of the population, counts as a national language alongside Finnish. Since the population register does not allow one to officially register as bilingual, the real number of native or near-native Russian-speakers is likely to be higher than the official figure. At the end of 2014, there were 14,300 families in Finland where both parents (or the sole parent) were speakers of Russian. In a further 12,600 families one of the two parents was a native speaker of Russian; in two thirds of these (8,400 families) the father was Finnish and the mother Russian (Tilastokeskus, 2015).

Those Russian-speakers who arrived in Finland in the aftermath of the October Revolution, or earlier, are conventionally referred to as "Old Russians". Their present-day descendants generally register Finnish or

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Table 1. Numbers of Russian-speakers in Finland

1880	1900	1910	1922	1940	1960	1987	1990	1992	2001	2008	2015
4,200	6,000	7,400	35,000	7,210	2,750	2,581	3,884	9,335	31,090	45,000	72,436

Source: Statistics Finland.

Swedish as their mother tongue, but among the older generation many are fluent Russian-speakers who maintain a distinctive cultural identity, one that often includes allegiance to the Orthodox Church. The Finnish Orthodox Church, which has the status of a national church on a par with the much larger Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland, belongs to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople and is mainly Finnish-speaking, although some services are conducted in Church Slavonic. Some of the "Old Russians" had preferred, however, to remain within the Russian Orthodox Church and the Moscow Patriarchate and they founded, in the 1920s, separate parishes in Vyborg and Helsinki. The influx of Russian immigrants in more recent decades has led to some expansion of the activities of the Russian Orthodox Church in Finland.

The vast majority of Finland's Russian-speakers have arrived in the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Among these, a special category are the Ingrian Finnish remigrants. Ingrian Finns are descendants of Lutheran Finnish immigrants who were introduced into Ingria, now part of the St Petersburg region, in the 17th century, when this territory belonged to the Swedish Empire. Ingrian Finns formed a large portion of the Finnish minority in the Soviet Union and they continue to do so today in the Russian Federation. Some Ingrians still live in the St Petersburg region, but many had been displaced across other parts of the Soviet Union, often through forced deportations, especially around the Second World War.

The process of the remigration of Ingrians to Finland began in 1990, following a personal intervention by President Mauno Koivisto. However, many of the Finns who were originally enthusiastic about the "return" of Ingrian Finns became disillusioned as they discovered that the majority of those arriving in Finland were, in fact, Russian-speakers, who seemed culturally more Russian (or perhaps "Soviet") than Finnish (Salonsaari, 2012, p.

58; Kyntäjä & Kulu, 1998; Koivukangas, 2003). The Russian-speaking Ingrian Finns themselves display a spectrum of attitudes: many feel at home in Finland, but some agree that they are probably more Russian than Finnish, or that they are "Finns with a Russian soul" or "Russians with a Finnish soul" (Protassova, 2004, pp. 259–268, 273–276, 285–286). Circumstances contributing to their self-identification as "Finns" would include the fact that most of them nowadays speak very good Finnish, that they have Finnish citizenship, work with Finns in Finnish-speaking environments, own property, have married a Finn, have Finnish family names, and are parents to native-born Finns.

Other Russian-speaking immigrants arriving in Finland since the 1990s and forming, in fact, the majority of those self-identifying as "Russian" in the country today, vary in terms of their status, as well as their motivation for migrating to Finland. One important segment of recent Russian-speaking immigrants consists of the wives and husbands (predominantly the former) of Finnish citizens, i.e. those who immigrated specifically as spouses. Their children, even if they speak Russian to varying degrees, are normally registered as Finnish-speakers (or in some cases Swedish-speakers). A growing category of immigrating Russian-speakers comprises people who come to Finland for reasons of study or employment. Finding work in Finland is not easy for Russian-speakers, though. There is, in fact, strong evidence of discrimination on grounds of (perceived) ethnicity in the Finnish labour market. A report published by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (Larja *et al.*, 2012) includes the findings of a field experiment on recruitment discrimination, which showed that job seekers with Russian-sounding names had to send in twice as many applications as those with Finnish-sounding names before obtaining an interview (the applications were from fictitious job seekers with matching qualifications and work experience). A related, but slightly different category of immigrants are Russian business people who set up firms in Finland and bring their families over with them. Many Russians also buy property in Eastern Finland, thereby acquiring the right to stay in a Schengen country for up to 180 days a year without immigrating as such. They usually continue to work in Russia, but spend their leisure time in Finland.

In surveys conducted between 1993 and 2007, Finns consistently placed Russians and Somalis at the bottom of the immigrant "hierarchy", taking a

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more favourable view of the other ethnic groups they were asked to assess, namely the Estonians, the Chinese, and the Poles (Jaakkola, 2009). The way Finns view Russia itself undeniably plays a part in this seemingly poor estimation of the Russian immigrant. A hostile or suspicious attitude towards Russia and the Russians has a long history in Finland (Vihavainen, 2013). Some Finns today fear that the growth of the Russian-speaking population in Finland may potentially increase Russian influence which they would find unwelcome. According to opinion surveys, while most Finns would prefer to be on good terms with their much larger neighbour, the prevalent view is that Finland must follow closely developments across the border and always be on its guard (Seppänen, 2010, 2014). For example, the annual question-and-answer marathons held by Russian president Vladimir Putin are transmitted in real time, with translation into Finnish.

Finnish attitudes towards Russia and the Russians are not, however, uniformly negative or suspicious. There is, in fact, considerable interest in "Russia" among educated Finns, as witnessed by the large number and relative popularity of books for the general reader on Russian history and culture, economics and politics, and even on "Russianness" itself (Mustajoki, 2012; Huttunen & Klapuri, 2012; Ekonen & Turoma, 2015; Pesonen, 2010; Sutela, 2012; Seppänen, 2010, 2014; Vihavainen, 2006; Parikka, 2007). The most common positive construal of Russian-speakers living in Finland is somewhat functionalist, though: they are usually defended as potentially useful "intermediaries" between Russia and Finland at the level of economic, political and cultural contact (Krutova, 2011, p. 11; Viimaranta *et al.*, 2017, pp. 620, 631). Finns also seem to have no difficulty in extending their unequivocal support to sportspeople of Russian descent who represent Finland in international competitions.

Russian is available quite widely as a foreign language within Finland's public education system (more widely than in other European states which had not been part of the Communist bloc). However, this does not mean that Russian is a popular choice, and its take-up rate among the Finnish population remains lower than one might expect given Finland's proximity to and levels of interaction with Russia. In 2015, approximately 3% of the pupils at Finnish comprehensive schools (ages 7 to 15) were learning Russian as one of their foreign languages (Kettunen, 2017). The motivation for learning Russian is somewhat stronger in Eastern Finland, where there are ini-

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tiatives to boost tourist infrastructure targeting Russian visitors and where there is also a larger percentage of resident Russian-speakers (Hattunen & Oikarinen, 2013).

There is some anecdotal evidence, though, that speaking Russian may on occasion prove to be a stigmatizing factor in Finland, not just for native-speaking immigrants (Lähteenmäki & Vanhala-Aniszewski, 2012), but also for Finnish learners. Marja Jegorenkov, an experienced teacher of Russian and vice-principal of a Helsinki school specializing in languages, remarked in a public speech on 31 May 2014 that learning Russian had always been considered a political action in Finland. According to Jegorenkov (private communication, December 2014), an assumption is frequently made that interest in the Russian language implies sympathy towards the political regime across the border, with speakers and learners of Russian in Finland often facing questions about their political and ideological allegiances. For most Finns, the relationship with Russia is a tug-of-war between emotional and rational responses. In general, such tensions are not rare in relations between neighbouring nations (Mustajoki & Protassova, 2015).

The prevailing image of Russia and the Russians in the Finnish general public's perception is created most influentially by the Finnish mass media. Here Russia is often portrayed as unpredictable and even frightening, although at the same time intriguing and attractive (Lounasmeri, 2011). However, given the recent rise in tensions between Russia and the West, the Russian Federation is today increasingly presented in the Finnish media as a potential threat, something supported by official political analysis, such as that expressed in reports prepared by the Finnish Institute of International Affairs (Martikainen *et al.*, 2016). This is also reflected in recent political debates about dual citizenship, with a number of Finnish politicians expressing the view that holders of a second passport should be ineligible for certain kinds of public office (Dvojnoe graždanstvo, 2016). Those who support such restrictions are usually careful to make no explicit reference to Russia in this connection, but it is reasonably clear that the whole issue would not arise were it not for the increasing number of Finnish/Russian dual citizens.

The dominant attitude among Finns towards Russia's current political leadership and its supporters is certainly one of suspicion. For example, when it was announced that Russia was to be the main guest at the Helsinki

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Book Fair in the autumn of 2015, some prominent voices, such as the internationally renowned Finnish writer Sofi Oksanen, immediately expressed concern that the event would become a forum for unwanted political propaganda from Moscow. In reality, aside from the official delegations, Finnish publishers were able to invite whichever Russian writer they wanted, and many of the big names in contemporary Russian literature (some, in fact, critical of the regime) were present, making the event into a great success (Huttunen, 2015).

This suspicious attitude has had some impact on how Russian-speakers in Finland are today viewed by the Finnish-speaking majority, with questions often being raised about the positive or negative roles that they might potentially play in Russo-Finnish relations. This is not entirely without justification since those supporting Russia's operations in the international arena do indeed see the Russian-speaking population in Finland as a target for propaganda and are becoming increasingly active on Finnish Russian-language internet forums (e.g. russian.fi), seeking to influence their users' political attitudes.

2. RUSSIAN-SPEAKERS AS A "MINORITY": LANGUAGE STATUS AND EDUCATIONAL PROVISION

However, both the prolonged history of the Russian presence in Finland and the recent rapid increase in the size of the Russian-speaking immigrant population has prompted this group to start perceiving itself, and be understood by others (within Finland and outside it), as one of Finland's key "cultural minorities". "Language" is used as a seemingly straightforward and uncontroversial, transparent and convenient distinguisher of the group, which is why its dominant circumscription as a "minority" tends to be as "Russian-speakers". At present, however, although Russian-speakers do indeed form Finland's largest immigrant group, the Russian language does not, in fact, have the status of a recognized minority language. This situation is, however, likely to come under review in the near future. A 2012 report prepared by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Nils Muižnieks, contains the recommendation that "further consideration should be given to the status of the Russian language and the promotion of Russian-language education and media in Finland" (Muižnieks, 2012, p. 2); and this specifically in light of the fact that "Russian-speakers [have] not been

officially recognized as a minority in Finland" (Muižnieks, 2012, p. 13), the implication being that they possibly ought to be. Under the provisions of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages, to which Finland is a signatory, the status of a minority language should be granted to a language that is "traditionally used within the territory of the State", while the "languages of migrants" are not entitled to official recognition (European Charter, 1992, pp. 2–3). The crux of the matter is the interpretation of the word "traditionally", concerning which the Charter gives no guidelines.

Moreover, although the size of a minority is not accepted as a formal criterion as such, the number of Russian-speakers in Finland is already significant and likely to keep growing. According to a demographic prognosis made by the former director of the Finnish Institute of Migration, Ismo Söderling, the number of Russian-speakers in Finland may rise to as high as 200,000 or even 250,000, thus conceivably reaching 5% of the projected total population (Söderling, 2016, p. 14). Russian-speakers would thereby rival Swedish-speakers as the largest linguistic minority in Finland. Given that Swedish has the status of a co-national language alongside Finnish (and is certain to retain it), it would become increasingly difficult to justify a situation in which Russian has no formal recognition.

Eilina Gusatinsky, former editor of Finland's Russian-language monthly *Spektr*, has already suggested in an interview for the national daily *Helsingin Sanomat* that "Finland-Russians" ought to become a linguistic minority similar to the "Finland-Swedes", forming thereby an integral part of Finnish society (Mansikka, 2016). This would almost inevitably entail official minority language status for Russian. It is also clear, however, that this would face strong opposition from some representatives of the Finnish-speaking majority, who are repeatedly questioning the linguistic rights of Russian-speaking immigrants in Finland (Lähteenmäki & Pöyhönen, 2014; Saukkonen, 2013a, b).

Crucial to the place of Russian as a marker of "minority" rather than "immigrant" status is the level of educational provision that Finland offers specifically to *heritage* Russian-speakers. What this provision and its uptake reveal, however, is considerable ambiguity in who constitutes "Russian-speakers" as a target population here, who supports this population and how, and what its status as a group might ultimately be in Finnish society. Indeed,

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provisions for the children of Finland's Russian-speakers includes a number of different models and suppliers, while political and economic support for it varies depending on the locality and the model.

For children of Russian-speakers who receive their education in mainstream Finnish- or Swedish-speaking schools, larger municipalities offer optional supplementary instruction in Russian as a heritage language. These lessons are additional to the standard curriculum and optional for the learner, but instruction is free. In practice, though, groups attending these heritage language classes are often very heterogeneous: they may include both recent immigrants whose dominant language is Russian and children born in Finland of only one Russian parent and whose dominant language is, in fact, Finnish. The lessons are also open to children from Finnish-speaking families who have learned Russian through long-term residence in a Russian-speaking environment.

The teaching of Russian as a heritage language is organized in accordance with national guidelines that apply equally to all languages other than those mandated in the Finnish school system as *äidinkieli* or "the mother tongue"—namely, Finnish, Swedish, Sami, Romani, and Finnish sign language. According to data from 2015, a total of 52 heritage languages were available in at least one municipality. Russian occupies a special position among these, given the sheer number of pupils studying it: in autumn 2015, a total of 5,051 pupils throughout the country had registered for heritage language classes in Russian, compared to 2,414 for Somali, 1,574 for Arabic, 1,386 for Estonian, and figures below 1,000 for the remaining languages (Opetushallitus, 2015).

Textbooks for Russian language and literature used in these classes are usually published in Russia, as none have been produced in Finland for this purpose. The practice of using imported textbooks is common in other languages as well (Badawieh *et al.*, 2007). In the case of Russian, this can become politically sensitive, as the textbooks contain expressions like "our country" or "our native land" when referring to Russia, and often include textual material and images explicitly aimed at fostering Russian patriotism. However, there have so far been no public controversies concerning the suitability of imported Russian textbooks for use in Finnish schools. This is probably due to the high degree of confidence in the teachers, who are expected to filter

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out elements that do not fit the Finnish educational context.

In contrast to many other heritage languages, Russian is not affected by the problem of the number of pupils falling short of the required minimum, or of there not being enough teachers to teach the subject (the latter are locally-based native speakers who have had relevant professional training, usually both in Russia and in Finland). However, municipalities are not legally obliged to offer this form of instruction. They receive a generous state subsidy for this provision (covering up to 86% of the total cost), but they still need to make an additional financial investment of their own. In 2015, the municipality of Kotka (with a population of approximately 52,000) decided to discontinue all heritage language lessons, despite appeals from the local Russian-speaking community (Liukkonen, 2015; Regnum, 2015). The municipality's decision had indeed mainly affected Russian-speakers, who happen to be especially numerous in Kotka, forming 4.3% of the local population in 2014, the second highest proportion nationwide and the highest among urban centres (Lehtonen, 2016, p. 26, based on data from Statistics Finland). Other towns with a similar or larger population continue to offer heritage language teaching, not least in Russian, but there is no national policy to prevent further cutbacks in provision at the discretion of local authorities.

Aside from this supplementary heritage language provision in regular schools, Finland has several special schools providing bilingual education in Finnish and Russian. The Finnish–Russian School in Helsinki (www.svk.edu.hel.fi) has the longest history: its predecessor, the private Russian-speaking Tabunov School, was founded in 1864 by a local Russian merchant. Since 1977, this school has been a state-funded institution comprising a pre-school day-care centre, a primary school, and a secondary school division. Currently, there are separate classes for Finnish-speakers, Russian-speakers, and children assessed as functionally bilingual. Most subjects are taught bilingually. The Finnish-speaking pupils in this school study Russian as their first foreign language. Children from Russian-speaking families have lessons in Russian as a mother tongue and Finnish as a second language; balanced bilinguals may follow the native speaker curriculum in both languages.

Bilingual Finnish–Russian education has also been available since 1992 at the municipal Myllypuro School in Eastern Helsinki (www.mylpa.edu.hel.

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fi), which has special classes for children who demonstrate an adequate command of both languages during an admissions test. The municipal Puolala School in Turku (https://blog.edu.turku.fi/puolala) also has Finnish–Russian classes. Finally, there is the Finnish–Russian School Network of Eastern Finland (www.itasuomenkoulu.fi), which was founded in 1997 by a consortium consisting of the municipalities of Joensuu, Lappeenranta, and Imatra. It provides bilingual education for children in these three towns, all of which have a comparatively high proportion of Russian-speakers among their permanent residents. However, approximately three quarters of the pupils attending the schools in this network come from monolingual Finnish homes and start Russian from scratch in their first year. The school is organized mostly in the form of bilingual classrooms, and occasionally as separate classes in each of the languages, taught by native speakers. The Lappeenranta division of the network has been under threat of closure in recent years as the municipal authorities have started to question the economic viability of such schools, given that they are far more expensive to run than regular schools (Mehtonen, 2016). At the same time, local politicians in Joensuu and Imatra have indicated that they are strongly committed to providing Finnish–Russian bilingual education regardless of the extra costs that this involves (Kivimäki, 2016; Schönberg, 2016).

Some media attention has recently been generated by the fact that the Finnish–Russian schools in both Helsinki and Eastern Finland have received material support for the teaching of Russian from the *Russkij Mir* (Russian World) Foundation—Russia's soft power initiative set up following a presidential decree issued by Vladimir Putin in 2007. The school principals have, however, adamantly dismissed suggestions that their cooperation with this foundation has any political or ideological implications (Honkamaa, 2016; Huuhko, 2016).

A further educational option for Russian-speakers in Finland is the Russian Embassy School in Helsinki (www.schoolhels.fi). It primarily caters for the children of Russian diplomats and other officials, but on payment of a moderate fee the school is open to anyone wishing to give their children a wholly Russian education in Finland. The school follows the Russian national curriculum, and all the teachers have had their training in Russia (or the former Soviet Union). The school offers intensified instruction in English, but Finnish lessons are not available (making this an unlikely choice for Russian

families who wish to settle permanently in Finland).

The Embassy School also offers a programme of external studies for those who wish to supplement their children's regular education within the Finnish school system. At the beginning of the 2016–17 academic year, according to data published on this school's website, there were 70 day pupils, while a further 87 had signed up for weekly afternoon lessons, and 81 for external studies that include examinations. This level of interest is far from insignificant given the amount of commitment required from both the children and their parents.

To enrol one's child for supplementary classes at the Embassy School does not necessarily say anything specific about the parents' political allegiances or national loyalties. Despite Finland's success in the PISA tests, Russian-speaking parents are often critical of what they see as an overly relaxed academic atmosphere in Finnish schools. In many cases, sending the child to the Embassy School for extra lessons is motivated by a desire to give him or her a taste of more "rigorous" education (of the kind that the parents themselves would have undergone in their youth and with which they identify more readily). At the same time, parents will certainly be aware that their children's educational experience at the Embassy School will include a significant inculcation of Russian patriotism, which might be a motivating factor for some. It seems to be welcomed especially by the most recent migrants from Russia, who also seem to be supportive of the Russian Federation's recently voiced idea to establish an international network of Russian schools abroad (Koncepciâ, 2015).

Less formal instruction targeting Russian-speakers is also widely available through privately or cooperatively-run nurseries and kindergartens, clubs and centres, which have been forming across Finland on the initiative of Russian-speakers since at least the late 1980s. Such organizations may offer formal language lessons to supplement or replace school instruction, but their emphasis is usually on other activities, such as drama, music, sports, and the arts, all of which would be conducted in Russian. Camps are also organized during the summer and winter vacations. Several thousand children attend such activities, and the number of options available is increasing all the time (see: www.perhekeskusmaria.com; www.logrus.fi; www.pelikan.fi; www.pikku/narod.ru; www.inkerikeskus.fi; www.sadko.fi; www.raduga.

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fi; http://vk.com/klubokhelsinki; www.antikafe.fi; www.superkids.fi; happyland.fi).

Some of the community initiatives organized by Russian-speakers have made an effort to open up their activities to Finnish children as well. A key example of an organization of this sort would be Musikantit/Muzykanty (musikantit.fi), a non-profit children's cultural centre in Helsinki, which offers lessons in music, dance, the visual arts, and language. Set up by Russian-speakers and offering an extensive programme of activities in Russian, it also has several Finnish-speakers among its staff and caters in equal measure for interested Finnish-speaking children, staging events that involve everyone, including monolingual Finns, into what is constructed as essentially a bilingual community.

3. THE POLITICS OF INTEGRATION: OFFICIAL CULTURAL PROVISIONS FOR RUSSIAN-SPEAKERS

Aside from educational provisions of the sort described above, Finnish authorities are paying close attention to the wider cultural needs of Russian-speakers as part of a general policy of integration and multiculturalism. For a proper understanding of the Finnish approach to the integration of immigrants, it is worth noting that while the loanword *integraatio* can be found in Finnish texts, the preferred term is, in fact, *kotouttaminen*—a recent coinage which in its literal sense conveys the meaning of "enabling someone to feel at home". This involves, by definition, not only one's successful adaptation to new surroundings, but also the preservation of one's original cultural identity (or those elements of it that are important to the individual concerned).

In the early 2010s, the Ministry of Education and Culture has commissioned research on Russian-speakers as users and producers of cultural services (Lammi & Protassova, 2012; Pikkarainen, 2015). Its findings and recommendations have been discussed in open seminars, where participants have included representatives of Russian-speaking cultural institutions, private individuals, and Finnish stakeholders. As part of the so-called Government Integration Programme (2012–15), the Ministry is funding a number of projects aimed at supporting the Russian-speaking community, with the aim of encouraging forms of active citizenship within Finnish society.

The sense of responsibility that the Finnish government has towards supporting Russian-speakers living in Finland is noteworthy: formal initiatives of this sort have been originating predominantly from the Finnish authorities, rather than the Russian-speaking community itself. To a degree, this stems from the more general Finnish (and EU) policy of multiculturalism, with Russian-speakers receiving particular attention as Finland's largest immigrant group. However, this is also part of a long-standing arrangement between Finland and Russia to provide support for their respective ethnic groups on each other's territories. Article 4 of a 1992 agreement between Russia and Finland (Soglašenie, 1992) stipulates that both countries' authorities should help support Finno-Ugric peoples based in Russia to maintain contact with Finland, and those of Russian origin in Finland to preserve their linguistic and cultural heritage. The predicament of Finno-Ugric peoples in Russia is, indeed, of some concern to the Finnish government, which recognizes that helping these groups maintain and revitalize their languages and cultures could potentially become difficult if the Russian authorities had any reason to claim that Finland was failing to keep its side of the bargain in relation to the Russian-speaking community in Finland.

However, Finnish support for the Finno-Ugric peoples in Russia is carried out not through government programmes, but mostly through the activities of NGOs, such as the Finnish Cultural Foundation or the Finland–Russia Society (www.venajaseura.com). The latter is mostly run by Finnish-speakers, but a number of resident Russian-speaking members are involved in running its local branches and participate actively in various events such as community singing, documentary film shows, and rock concerts. According to information published on this society's website (available in Finnish and Russian), there are plans to target Finland's Russian-speaking population more widely in a forthcoming recruitment drive. The Society issues the journal *Venäjän aika* (*Time of Russia*) and carries out non-governmental projects with Russian partners, especially those aimed at supporting the Finno-Ugric minority in Russia.

Yet what the Finnish authorities are keen to ensure is that Finland's Russian-speakers develop their language and culture not simply as a self-sustaining group, but as contributors first and foremost to Finnish society. The Finnish government has, as a consequence, invested in a number of organizations, the explicit purpose of which is to foster the integration of Russian-

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speakers in the social life of Finland. Particularly prominent among these is the Cultura Foundation (www.culturas.fi), which was established in 2013 as successor to what used to be the Institute for Russia and Eastern Europe. This Foundation's aim is to foster the language and culture of the Russian-speaking population in Finland, but also to spread knowledge about Russia among the Finns and to support interactions between the two groups around art, music and literature. Cultura has supported, for example, initiatives like the Anticafe, an informal meeting place in Vantaa, in Greater Helsinki, which targets Russian-speakers of all ages as well as Finns interested in Russian culture. The Foundation also encourages academic research relevant to its aims: in 2016, for instance, it organized an international conference on the Russian-speaking communities of Europe[1].

Finland's Ministry of Education and Culture also finances a Russian-language library[2] located in Espoo. This is, in reality, the Russian section of an all-purpose public library, situated within easy access from the centre of Helsinki. The holdings of the library comprise more than 15,000 books in Russian, which are available free of charge as inter-library loans throughout Finland. At the interface of cultural and educational services, the public libraries of the Helsinki region have also devised a series of reading diplomas for Russian-speaking schoolchildren, modelled on similar reading diplomas in Finnish and Swedish, which are widely used in Finnish schools. There are also several Finland-based Russian literary societies, supported by grants from the Ministry of Education and Culture, as well as numerous cultural foundations, which publish literary texts by local Russian-speaking authors, both on paper and online.

The Finnish government also welcomes related cultural provisions coming from the Russian state, as part of the latter's cultural diplomacy mission. Russia's main institution performing this function in Finland is the Russian Centre for Science and Culture in Helsinki (http://fin.rs.gov.ru/), which is funded through Rossotrudničestvo (the Federal Agency for the Commonwealth of Independent States, Compatriots Living Abroad and International Humanitarian Cooperation). The Helsinki Centre was estab-

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1. http://culturas.fi/en/conference2016 (last accessed 23 January 2017).

2. www.helmet.fi/ru-RU/Bibliotechnye_uslugi/Russkoiazychnaia_biblioteka (Last accessed 23 January 2017).

lished in 1977 for the purpose of promoting the Russian language, Soviet culture, and scientific cooperation between Finland and the USSR. The Centre organizes Russian language courses, cultural events with visiting performers from Russia, and conferences (often related to bilingual education) with speakers from Russia, Finland, and elsewhere. While this Centre is part of Russia's state-controlled soft power structures and entirely dependent on guidelines set down in Moscow, its activities in Finland have to date been uncontroversial. However, as part of a recent reorganization of its website, "support for compatriots" has become more visible as one of the Centre's declared aims.

Finally, media provision is, as one might expect, critical to Finland's project of integrating its growing Russian-speaking population into Finnish society. Finland's national broadcaster Yle (http://yle.fi/uutiset/osasto/novosti) has been producing radio news bulletins in Russian since 1990. Initially intended for listeners in the then Soviet Union, Yle's Russian service soon began to regard the growing population of Finnish-based Russian-speakers as its main target audience (Yle, 2015). In 2013, Yle made further investment by launching a TV news service in Russian (*Novosti Yle*). This takes the form of daily five-minute bulletins, which are broadcast at a relatively inconvenient time of 4.50 p.m., but can also be viewed via the internet. Yle's Russian service also operates a website on which it publishes approximately ten news items each day, focusing strongly on events in Finland. While targeting speakers of Russian, this service represents the Finnish point of view on current affairs, which may at times be in conflict with the Russian perspective.

Novosti Yle is widely regarded as a reliable and authoritative news source. However, its position as "the official voice of Finland" leads many local Russian-speakers to view it with scepticism (Davydova-Minguet, 2016, p. 75; Sotkasiira, 2016, p. 37). Many Russian-speakers criticize the service for its apparent superficiality, as well as its heavy reliance on news items translated from Finnish. Indeed, the amount of original journalistic content has been diminishing over time due to funding cuts. One of Yle's journalists, Levan Tvaltvadze, estimates that the current ratio of translated to original content is 80:20, while he would regard 50:50 as optimal (Davydova-Minguet, 2016, pp. 73–74). Some Russian viewers go as far as to criticize Yle's news presenters for their apparently inauthentic accents (Sotkasiira, 2016, p. 37), even though the latter are all native Russian-speakers who probably appear

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strange only due to a different style of presentation to what is typical of newsreaders in Russia (Davydova-Minguet, 2016, p. 74). Complaints about the Yle newsreaders' language may have a political undercurrent, but they may also simply reflect a conservative attitude to the increasing diversification of the contemporary Russian language—a phenomenon that certainly affects linguistic usage in Russia itself, but is likely to be even more noticeable in the diaspora, where one may legitimately ask whether a local variety of the language ("Helsinki Russian" as distinct from, say, "Moscow Russian") is gradually emerging (Mustajoki, 2013).

As part of a survey carried out in December 2014, Russian-speakers were asked (without explicit reference to the conflict in Ukraine, but at a time when the issue was becoming highly prominent) whether they regarded the Finnish or the Russian media as more trustworthy. A preference for Finnish media was expressed by 40% of the respondents, while 13% stated that they had more faith in the Russian media. However, 47% indicated no preference one way or the other. This figure may conceal a variety of attitudes, since the survey did not distinguish between "trust both equally", "trust neither", and "don't know". Either way, these results indicate that Finland's Russian-speakers are quite distinct from the overall Finnish population, whose confidence in the Finnish media is remarkably high: according to a 2015 survey, as many as 92% of Finns considered the national broadcasting company Yle a reliable source of information, while equivalent figures for other established Finnish news outlets were in the region of 80-90% (Keränen, 2015).

A report by researchers at the University of Eastern Finland (Davydova-Minguet *et al.,* 2016) suggests that Finland's Russian-speakers use both Finnish and Russian media and, for the most part, do not have complete confidence in either. A qualitative study based on 25 in-depth interviews, (Sotkasiira 2016, pp. 38-44) identified four types of media users among Russian-speakers in Finland: (1) those who were entirely dependent on the Russian media as they could not follow media in other languages; (2) those who could follow other news sources, but whose views were largely influenced by the Russian media; (3) those who had a cosmopolitan or transnational media orientation and actively compared information provided by Russian, Finnish, and other (e.g. English language) media, tending to be sceptical about the objectivity of any single source of information; and finally, (4) those who were aware of the differences between Russian

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and Western viewpoints, but were not particularly concerned with current affairs and preferred to remain uninvolved. The researchers also observed that several of the Russian-speaking interviewees found the topic politically sensitive and seemed suspicious of the research and its agenda (Sotkasiira, 2016, p. 33). Among the researchers' main conclusions was that any direct, let alone aggressive, attempts to counter media propaganda coming from Russian news sources would be counterproductive, as the target audience would be likely to dismiss this as part of an information war. Instead, the best way of generating credibility, this research argued, was to present different points of view and to allow room for discussion (Davydova-Minguet *et al.*, 2016, p. 94).

4. BETWEEN "MINORITY RIGHTS" AND "COMPATRIOTISM": FINLAND'S ASSOCIATIONS OF RUSSIAN-SPEAKERS

At present, the longest-standing and most prominent institutions of Finland's Russian-speaking community take the approach of fostering this community's integration into the life of Finnish society, while avoiding getting embroiled in potentially sensitive foreign affairs matters. The monthly newspaper *Spektr* (www.spektr.net) is the best-known Russian-language periodical in Finland. The paper version is available free of charge at numerous distribution points around the country. The former editor-in-chief, Eilina Gusatinsky (replaced in 2017 by her brother Vladimir Gusatinsky), is one of the most prominent representatives of the Russian-speaking population and frequently gives interviews to Finnish-language media (Pietiläinen, 2016, p. 146). The paper has a strongly pro-integrationist editorial policy, combining unequivocal loyalty to Finland with relentless criticism of ethnic discrimination and prejudice as experienced by Russian-speakers. *Spektr* is widely respected within the Russian-speaking community, but despite its apparent successes, its future prospects are in doubt. As a monthly publication, whose website essentially consists of electronic versions of the physical newspaper, it does not function as a news source as such. The publishers feel, however, that transforming *Spektr* into an internet publication would not solve its current financial difficulties; they believe, moreover, that the existence of a paper version is vital from a symbolic point of view, making the Russian-speaking minority visible within Finnish public spaces (Davydova-Minguet, 2016, pp. 69–70).

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A not dissimilar agenda of encouraging integration while combating discrimination is pursued by the most prominent umbrella organization of Finland's Russian-speakers—FARO (Finlândskaâ Associaciâ Russkoâzyčnyh Obŝestv; Finland's Association of Russian-speaking Organizations; www.faro.fi). Founded in 2000, FARO is recognized by the Finnish state as the main representative of the country's Russian-speaking population. However, its visibility in the Finnish-language media has been limited (Pietiläinen, 2016, pp. 144, 151). On its website, FARO lists several Finnish ministries as its partners. The list also includes several other public organizations with an important role in Finnish society, including the Child Protection Agency. This is significant because there have been several prominent "child disputes" between Finland and Russia in recent years, with media reports in Russia claiming that social services in Finland discriminate against Russian families in their decisions about taking children into care. FARO's close cooperation with Finland's Child Protection Agency is a clear signal that the association has confidence in the Finnish authorities; this position is also reflected in an interview given to *Yle Novosti* by Natalia Nerman, chairwoman of FARO's board (Russkoâzyčnye èksperty, 2016). The FARO list of partners includes only one organization paying allegiance to the Russian state, the aforementioned Russian Centre for Science and Culture, which is a natural partner in view of this Centre's extensive programme of cultural activities in Russian. Indeed, even while pursuing its fundamentally integrationist agenda, FARO still attaches considerable importance to the preservation of a Russian (or Russophone) cultural identity among the people it represents.

A rival association to FARO is OSORS (Obŝefinlândskij Soûz Organizacij Rossijskih Sootečestvenikov; National Union of Organizations of Russian Compatriots in Finland; www.osors.fi); the word *sovet*, "council", appears in place of *soiuz*, "union", in some sources, including (as of February 2018) the organization's Facebook page (www.facebook.com/fsors). OSORS was founded in 2007 and was known until 2013 as the Coordinating Council of Russian Compatriots in Finland (Koordinacionnyj Sovet Rossijskih Sootečestvennikov). As signalled by the word "compatriots", OSORS maintains close links with Russian state structures and is a member organization of the Global Coordinating Council of Russian Compatriots (Vsemirnyj Koordinacionnyj Sovet Rossijskih Sootečestvennikov). In its early years, it functioned as a non-registered association, but has since completed the registration process with the Finnish authorities. According to its statutes

(Položenie, 2013), the association functions within the framework of Finnish legislation, while taking into account Russian legislation concerning compatriots abroad; in the event of conflicting judicial norms, Finnish legislation takes priority. The OSORS Facebook feed often relays material reflecting the official views of the Russian Federation, particularly on compatriot issues. However, Finnish sources are not ignored: for example, in connection with the Finnish–Russian child disputes, OSORS provided a link (without commentary) to the *Yle Novosti* report, which reflects the Finnish position on the issue.

In November 2014, the bilingual Russian–Finnish journalist Polina Kopylova criticized OSORS for organizing a conference ostensibly devoted to Russian culture in Finland, but containing strong elements of politically-framed Russian patriotism that took some participants by surprise (Kopylova, 2014). OSORS has also been involved, in conjunction with the Russian Embassy, in organizing patriotic events such as Victory Day commemorations. Members of RUFI (www.rufi.fi), a newly established member organization of OSORS, were particularly active in organizing, for the first time, an Immortal Regiment (*Bessmertnyj polk*) procession on 9 May 2017 in the centre of Helsinki. This aroused some controversy both among Finland's Russian-speakers and in the wider community (Shirokova, 2017). On the whole, however, those Russian-speaking activists in Finland whose principal loyalty is towards the Russian rather than the Finnish state tend to maintain a low profile, especially in Finnish-speaking contexts. Those in Finland who express openly pro-Putin opinions are more likely to be Finns, such as Dr Johan Bäckman, who frequently takes part in political talk shows on Russian television.

Both OSORS and FARO are assemblages of member organizations (mostly cultural and welfare associations, but also some business enterprises set up by Russian-speakers). Neither of the two umbrella associations has an individual membership scheme, and only a small proportion of Russian-speakers take an active interest in their activities. As of February 2018, according to information found on their respective websites, FARO has 42 member organizations, while OSORS has 38. Joining one association or the other may involve a political choice, but it may equally well depend on more mundane social networking. A few organizations belong to both FARO and OSORS. The issue of dual membership had evidently caused

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some friction in the past, though, as on 31 October 2016 FARO published on its website a declaration stating that, contrary to misinformation being disseminated elsewhere, its rules did not preclude its member organizations from simultaneously belonging to other associations.

One must also note that there are community organizations of Russian-speakers in Finland that feel entirely comfortable to straddle the two political positions represented by FARO and OSORS, without, it would seem, showing any concern about the tensions that seem to exist between them. The key example here is Mosaiikki ry, a registered association of Russian-speakers based in Jyväskylä (Central Finland), which maintains a bilingual website (mosaiikki.info) and publishes the bilingual magazine *Mozaika/Mosaiikki* (available online and on paper). The stated aim of this association is to facilitate the integration and adaptation of Russian-speakers to life in Finland. However, funding for this project comes from both Finnish and Russian sources, which include the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, the Russian Embassy, and the Russkii Mir Foundation. The content of the Mosaiikki website is similarly diverse: it includes information from official Finnish sources on the practicalities of life in Finland, as well as information from official Russian sources on kinds of support that is available to compatriots abroad. The magazine's original journalistic content frequently reflects the "compatriot" point of view: for example, issue 5-6/2016 contains an extensive interview with the director of the Moscow House of Compatriots (Moskovskij Dom sootečestvennika). One might see the Mosaiikki project as simply a pluralistic information channel, but concerns have been voiced that their approach might strengthen the Russian-speaking community's allegiance to "mother-Russia", even while actively supporting its firm embedding into Finnish society (Davydova-Minguet, 2016, p. 72).

Finland also has several national-level organizations targeting Russian-speakers that are not in an obvious way positioning themselves within the above political field. This includes, for example, the Russian Cultural Democratic Union (Russkij Kul'turno-Demokratičeskij Soûz, RKDS; www.russkijdom.fi; Susi, 2005). RKDS used, in fact, to be highly political during the Soviet period, but today its members seem content with its role as a largely apolitical cultural organization. RKDS was founded in 1945 by Russian-speakers from émigré backgrounds who were favourable to cooperation with the Soviet Union; many of the leading figures were members

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of the Finnish Communist Party. Today Russians from earlier émigré waves still figure prominently in this organization, but they have also actively welcomed more recent immigrants and seek to bring together Russian-speakers from different backgrounds. RKDS is a member organization of FARO, but it also assembles seven member organizations of its own, mostly in the field of culture. The Sadko club, one of Helsinki's major providers of children's cultural activities in Russian, operates under the aegis of RKDS.

Another organization worth mentioning is Russkoâzyčnye Finlândii (Russian-speakers of Finland; www.svkeskus.fi). This is a new association, founded in 2015, and is so far active mostly in the Helsinki region and in Tampere. Unlike FARO and OSORS, this association is for individual members, who would also belong to a local branch of the association. This organization's stated aims are similar to those of FARO: the focus is on the integration of Russian-speakers into Finnish society, while no mention is made of links to Russia. However, the association so far gives the impression of being less directly concerned with minority rights advocacy, focusing more on the practicalities of Russian-speakers' life in Finland (e.g. by providing Russian translations of official documents and offering a variety of educational activities). The association cooperates and shares its website with the Union of Russian-speaking Entrepreneurs of Finland (Soûz russkoâzyčnyh predprinimatelej Finlândii). The emergence of this new association may indeed reflect a feeling among some Russian-speakers that the FARO/OSORS rivalry excessively politicizes the associational life of this linguistic minority in a country that provides, all in all, a reasonably comfortable daily environment for most immigrants (Kempi, 2015).

5. CONCLUSIONS

Russian is now the third most commonly spoken native language in Finland, and the number of Russian-speakers is expected to keep growing. The country's geographical location as Russia's neighbour and the resultant historical, economic and cultural ties have meant that the Russian-speaking population occupies an exceptional and complex position in Finland, for which it would be difficult to find parallels in other countries (e.g. Bronnikova, 2014; Byford, 2014; Isurin & Riehl, 2017). The question of Russian-speakers is becoming more and more prominent in Finnish debates about immigration, state language policies, and the cultural rights of minorities. The status

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of Russian-speakers in Finland is set to change, even if the question of official minority language status for Russian is at present unresolved, and is likely to be controversial in view of the attitudes towards Russia and Russian-speakers among a substantial part of the Finnish-speaking majority.

Russian-speakers are, however, already highly visible in the wider Finnish community, and sociological studies underline their willingness to integrate and become part of Finnish society (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2007, p. 56). In fact, most tend to see this as their "duty", in which they seem to be more similar to Estonian-speakers than Somali-speakers, for instance (Varjonen *et al.*, 2017, p. 54). Finnish authorities take an active interest in facilitating the process of integration: they study the needs of Russian-speakers and try to provide suitable support for their activities, promoting all manner of cultural entrepreneurship, encouraging the participation of Russian-speaking small businesses in the social sphere, and developing this population's consciousness about their positive role in Finnish civil society. Russian is, moreover, widely available within the Finnish public education system as a heritage language, while integration is encouraged through courses in the Finnish language and various professional development schemes. Although Russian-speakers still face varying degrees of mistrust, discrimination and at times even hostility, a vast majority of them (83% according to one survey) say that they are satisfied with their quality of life in Finland (Castaneda *et al.*, 2012, p. 213; Varjonen *et al.*, 2017, p. 46–47).

Various shades of political opinion are inevitably present among Finland's Russian-speaking population as a whole. Attitudes are also likely to vary depending on the time and circumstances of immigration. Nevertheless, the average Russian-speaker living in Finland cannot avoid a certain sense of divided loyalties in times of tension between Finland and Russia, even when the latter is of a relatively minor kind that plays itself out primarily through the media. In this context, however, a sceptical or even critical attitude towards mainstream Finnish media reporting is quite common among the Russian-speaking population, and there is a widespread tendency to look towards Russia for alternative viewpoints (Sotkasiira, 2016). This, in turn, can lead to a further stiffening of attitudes among the Finns, leading to a potential rise in tensions.

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At present, though, the political field surrounding Russian-speakers in Finland can be said to be "balanced" in most respects. The activities of the Russian-speaking community are for the most part in line (or at the very least not in conflict) with the Finnish authorities' integrationist agenda. Russian-speakers certainly enjoy linguistic and cultural rights as individuals. Given their large numbers as well as historic legacies, they often receive a relatively better level of support (e.g. in the educational context) than some of the less prominent immigrant groups. This also implies a greater recognition of their political significance, especially in the local context, in areas where their numbers are greater. At the same time, Russian-speakers as a group are still not in a strong enough position to claim the cultural rights of a "traditional minority" (such as the Sami or Tatar, for example). However, the current "balance" is likely to become disturbed in the future. This will depend on longer-term demographic shifts, on the evolution of Finnish debates around immigration, on the political relationship between Finland (or the EU more generally) and Russia, and last but not least, on specific forms of social self-organization and political mobilization within the Russian-speaking population that are likely to be generated in response to these wider developments, whatever their course.

To attempt to forecast such a course would probably be unwise, although, as things stand at the moment, it does not appear to be in anyone's interest for the aforementioned "balance" to be disturbed (even if, or precisely because this "balance" is the result of a series of political tensions that we highlighted above—tensions that are most likely to continue to exist). What our article has tried to show, however, is that whatever turn the politics around Russian-speakers in Finland takes, it will be played out within a political field formed as a constellation of several very different framings of "Russian-speakers", juxtaposed with one another.

The complexity of the Russian presence in Finland makes it impossible to treat Russian-speakers as a uniform group with established attitudes and views. Future research should focus more on the integration paths and processes defining the second and the so-called 1.5 generation. In our view, linguistic fluency (in Finnish and Russian) and cultural competence are crucial factors in determining the role that this group will play in a diverse society. The efforts of the Finnish state are consciously taking this into account. The issues of legitimacy involved in dual citizenship and a special personal rela-

tionship with Russia also resonate in recent debates where the concept of a new fifth column has come to the fore; indeed, the same questions were raised in Finland before and during the Second World War. In all, our discussion goes beyond the specific concerns of one non-ethnic, quasi-linguistic minority group, whose (trans)formation we have followed for 28 years. It is also about the self-definitions and self-reflections of various layers of Finnish society itself, in the context of a constant dialogue between the majority and various minorities.

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