



population  
and housing  
census

## NEWS RELEASE

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### PHC 2011: 157 native languages spoken in Estonia

**Statistics Estonia reports that, according to the preliminary results of the Population and Housing Census, 157 native languages are spoken in Estonia. 68.5% of the population speak Estonian as the native language, with one tenth of the population able to speak an Estonian dialect.**

According to the preliminary results of the Population and Housing Census (PHC 2011), 157 native languages are spoken in Estonia. The previous census of 2000 indicated that 109 languages were spoken as native tongue.

Estonian is the most common native language (886,859 speakers – 68.5%), followed by Russian (383,062 – 29.6%) and Ukrainian (8,012 – 0.6%). There are a total of 25 languages with over hundred speakers in Estonia.

Sign language could also be reported in the census and 147 people stated Estonian sign language as their native language.

For the first time, the latest census enabled respondents to report their knowledge of Estonian dialects. 131,243 people, i.e., 10.1% of Estonian permanent residents, were able to speak a dialect.

The most common dialects include Võru (87,048 speakers, incl. 12,549 speakers of Setu subdialect), Saarte (24,520, incl. 1,320 speakers of Kihnu subdialect), and Mulgi (9,698).

**Detailed information on native languages and dialects is published in the [statistics database](#). A map of Estonian dialects can be found at <http://eki.ee/murded>.**

The 11th [population census](#) in Estonia was conducted from 31 December 2011 until 31 March 2012. Previous censuses were carried out in 1881, 1897, 1922, 1934, 1941, 1959, 1970, 1979, 1989 and 2000. The next population census will be conducted in Estonia in 2020/2021.

For further information:

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