Final Report, Tartu Folk High School
Effective Start for L2 Learners Project (2024-1-FI01-KA210-ADU-000248679)

The aim of the project Effective Start for L2 Learners Project (2024-1-FI01-KA210-ADU-000248679) is to promote the integration of recently arrived adult immigrants by developing a training model that supports the target group's integration. The approach combines individual tutoring with effective language and ICT training and career guidance, with particular attention paid to study motivation.

The pilot course implemented in Estonia included a B1-level Estonian vocabulary and conversation course, a module for developing IT skills, including awareness of digital security, and group career counselling. The aim was to provide adult immigrants living in Estonia with support and skills that would help them find suitable employment or continue their studies in Estonia.

The target group of the project was recently arrived adult immigrants who had at least A2-level proficiency in Estonian and were motivated to participate in the course regularly.
The pilot course (language course + digital skills development) was delivered as classroom-based learning from 9 April 2025 to 18 June 2025. Classes were held twice a week, on Monday and Wednesday mornings from 9:00 to 10:40. The language course comprised 36 hours, digital skills development 10 hours, and group counselling 2 hours.

Before launching the pilot course, the Estonian partner had the opportunity to learn from the Finnish partners how recently arrived adult immigrants are counselled individually in finding employment and study opportunities. We greatly value this learning opportunity because, although recently arrived immigrants in Estonia receive support and counselling within the adaptation programme, learners are not counselled as part of their language studies. We wanted to learn from the project partners' experience of conducting this kind of reflective counselling conversation. We had the opportunity to understand learners' individual challenges (limited language proficiency, lack of knowledge about study opportunities, misconceptions, low self-confidence, etc.) and how they can be supported in moving forward. The observation also provided an understanding of what a counsellor needs to know and be able to do. The Opintopolku website is a very useful tool for finding a suitable study opportunity together with a learner; Estonia does not yet have an equivalent service.
We shared the experience gained through the observation with Estonian language teachers at a seminar for teachers of Estonian as a second language held in August 13 2026. Several teachers participating in the seminar had experienced learners turning to their language teacher with various questions concerning their lives, as during a long language course the teacher often becomes a trusted person whom learners feel comfortable approaching.

The pilot course was advertised on the Tartu Folk High School website https://rahvaylikool.ee/eesti-keele-ope-tartu-rahvaulikoolis/ , in various social media groups, and through cooperation partners. The promotional flyer is attached to the report.

Registration for the course took place online. Applicants completed a questionnaire in which we asked them to assess their language proficiency, write a short motivation statement or explanation of why they wished to participate in the course, and indicate whether they wanted counselling related to employment and studies. Twenty learners completed the questionnaire. Most of those who registered were employed. The main reason for wishing to participate was to improve speaking skills. There were also jobseekers and learners on work placements who wanted to develop the digital skills needed at work. Some also expressed a wish to participate in cultural events in Estonian, for example going to the theatre. Nine learners were interested in counselling. Most learners were of Ukrainian origin, although some participants came from other countries as well.

An introductory interview was conducted with everyone who registered, one purpose of which was to determine whether studying at B1 level would be manageable for the learner. Seventeen learners were selected for the course; one did not attend. Sixteen learners participated in the course.

Reasons why learners wanted to participate in the course:

I would like to register for the course because I really want to find a new job. To do that, I need to pass the B1 exam. I am currently learning Estonian, but I understand that I need more practice.	Ma soovin registreeruda kursusele, sest ma tõesti tahan leida uut tööd. Selleks ma pean sooritama B1 eksami. Nüüd ma õpin eesti keelt, aga saan aru, et vajan rohkem harjutamist.
	I have a not very homogeneous level of Estonian. Id like to level it and use it more. Ideally, Id like to study in university in Estonian language. I don;t have too much oportunity to use Estonian language at work, but if I could study it, it could improve my social life too.
I often have difficulties at work because my Estonian is not good enough. I also really want to pass the B1-level exam in order to obtain Estonian citizenship.	Tööl tekib sageli raskusi eesti keele ebapiisava oskuse tõttu. Samuti tahan ma väga sooritada B1 taseme eksami, et saada Eesti kodakondsus.
I would like to acquire the Estonian communication skills that I currently lack in order to find a job.	Soovin omandada eestikeelset suhtlemisoskust, millest ma puudust tunnen, et tööd saada.
I really want to communicate, but I lack the confidence.	tahan väga suhelda aga julgusest jääb puudu
I am a music teacher by profession, but I am not currently working. I would like to work as a teacher. I have lived in Estonia for two years. I need to know Estonian at C1 level. And of course, I would like to speak Estonian fluently.	Ma olen ametilt muusikaõpetaja, aga praegu ma ei tööta. Ma tahaks töötada õpetajana. Ma olen elanud Eestis 2 aastat. Mul on vaja teada eesti keelt tase C1. Ja muidugi ma tahaks vabalt eesti keelt rääkida.
To improve my language level.	Повысить уровень языка.
I would like to participate in this course because I have little speaking practice, and I would like to try different ways of learning.	Ma soovin sellel kursusel osaleda, sest mul on vähe praktika rääkida, ja ma tahan proovida erinevaid variante õppe.
To find a job. I am currently at home. I have been learning Estonian for two years and I want to find a good job. I currently live in Otepää. Everyone here speaks Estonian!	Et leida tööd. Nüüd olen kodus, kaks aastat õppinud eesti keelt, tahan leida head tööd. Praegu ma elan Otepääl. Siin kõik räägivad Eesti keelt!
I am currently working. I have been learning Estonian for three years. I want to speak better, so I think I should practise more Estonian on a course.	Praegu ma töötan. Olen õppinud eesti keelt 3 aastat. Ma tahan paremini rääkida, siis ma mõtlen, et peaksin rohkem eesti keelt tegema kursusel.

I have been learning Estonian for two years. I would like to participate in this course in order to improve my command of the language. I am learning Estonian to find a better job. I need to learn Estonian well.	Ma olen õppinud eesti keelt kaks aastat. Soovin osaleda sellel kursusel, et keelt paremini omandada. Õpin eesti keelt selleks, et leida parem töö. Mul on vaja eesti keel selgeks õppida.
I have lived with my family in Tartu for three years. I am a teacher and an occupational therapist. I am married and have six children. I have attended various Estonian language courses. I have studied and practised there, but I find it difficult to speak Estonian in everyday life. I am not working at the moment, and at home we speak Spanish. I would like to learn Estonian through practice so that I can use it every day and at work.	elan perega Tartus kolm aastat. Olen õpetaja ja tegevusterapeut. Olen abielus ja mul on kuus last. Olen käinud erinevatel eesti keele kursustel. Olen seal õppinud ja praktiseerinud, aga mul on raske igapäevaselt eesti keelt rääkida. Nüüd ma ei tööta ja kodus räägime hispaania keelt. Tahaksin õppida eesti keelt praktikast, et saaksin seda kasutada iga päev ja tööl.
I often have problems at work because my Estonian is not good enough.	Mul tekib tööl sageli probleeme eesti keele ebapiisava oskuse tõttu
I started learning Estonian as soon as I came to Estonia, in April 2022. I completed A1 and A2 courses. I also studied independently with the help of keeleklikk.ee. However, my spoken Estonian is still not good enough. I would like to be able to speak Estonian at least about simple topics.	Hakkasin eesti keelt õppima kohe, kui Eestisse tulin - aprillis 2022. Lõpetasin A1- ja A2-kursused. Õppisin iseseisvalt keeleklikk.ee abiga. Siiski ei ole mul piisav kõnekeele tase. Sooviksin rääkida eesti keelt vähemalt lihtsamatel teemadel.
I am currently working and have been learning Estonian for about two years. I would like to continue learning Estonian because I live in Estonia and need to know the language. Secondly, I find it very interesting. I also have a dream: I want to read Oskar Luts ("Kevade", "Suvi").	Praegu ma töötan, ma õpin eesti keelt umbes kaks aastat, ma soovin õppima edasi Eesti keel, sest ma elan Eestis, aga vaja osata keel, teiseks see on väga huvitab. Veel mul on unistus, ma tahan lugeda Oskar Lutsu („Kevade“, „Suvi“.
1. I had a work placement, but it has now ended. 2. I studied Estonian for a total of 20 months on A1, A2 and B1 courses. Between courses, I studied independently at home using apps and books. 3. I would like to develop my conversational skills on the course because at the moment I lack the speaking skills I need to find a job. I am trying to find more computer-based work because I am looking after two children, and therefore I also very much need digital skills in Estonian.	1 Olin tööpraktikal, aga praegu tööpraktika sai läbi. 2 Kursustel A1, A2, B1 õppisin kokku eesti keelt 20 kuud. Kursuste vaheaegadel õppisin kodus ise äppide ja raamatute järgi. 3 Soovin arendada kursustel vestlusoskust sest praegu mul on puudu rääkimisoskust, et tööd saada. Ma üritan rohkem arvutiga tööd saada, kuna tegelen kahe lapsega, ja seetõttu eesti keelse digioskused mul samuti on väga vaja.
1. I am not currently working. 2. I have been learning Estonian for two years. 3. I would like to speak Estonian better.	1. Ma praegu ei tööta. 2. Ma olen õppinud Eesti keelt 2 aastat. 3. Ma tahaks eesti keeles paremini rääkida.

The language course used the B1-level Estonian learning material 'Hetki igapäevaelust' ('Moments from Everyday Life'), developed during an earlier cooperation project „Paths to the Nordic Society“, funded by Nordplus https://panso.eu/courses/courses-estonia/ . The learning material aimed to introduce recently arrived immigrants to Nordic society and customs. Owing to its practical focus, the material was very well suited to the course and received positive feedback from learners. Topics

included work and family life, equal rights for men and women, maternity and paternity leave, free leisure activities such as libraries and language cafés, healthy lifestyles, life at a country home, pets, outdoor activities, and more. The course was entitled Eesti keele B1-taseme sõnavara ja vestluskursus 'B1-level Vocabulary and Conversation Course', and its main focus was indeed speaking. Learners also practised task types used in national language proficiency tests and used many interactive activities and online applications (e.g. Wordwall). As one aim of the course was to help learners continue their studies or find suitable employment, the Estonian education system and working life were also discussed.

A learner who successfully completes the course:

- speaks about familiar topics such as work, home, family and acquaintances
- describes their educational background and work
- describes their hobbies and leisure activities

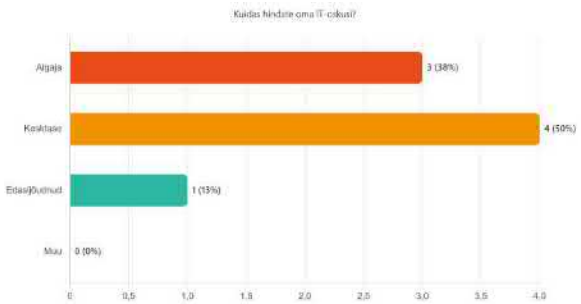
Learner participation in the language course was very good: of the 16 learners who started the course, 14 completed it successfully.





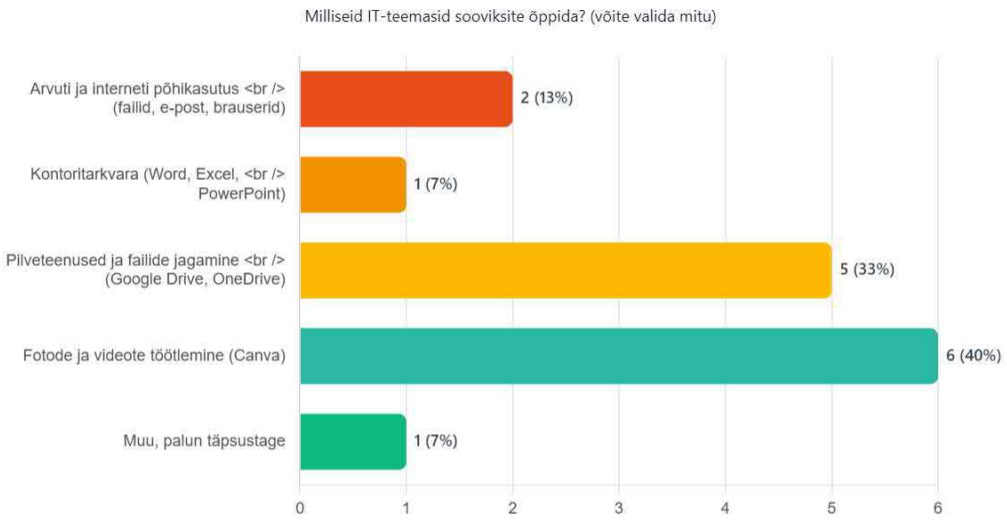
After the language course ended, the digital skills module began. Before the digital skills module, we asked learners how they assessed their digitaal skills and what their needs were. We also asked which devices they use in everyday life and which topics interested them most.

For example, the following questions were asked: 1. How would you rate your IT skills?



English translation of the chart:
How would you rate your IT skills?
Beginner — 3 (38%)
Intermediate — 4 (50%)
Advanced — 1 (13%)
Other — 0 (0%)

4. Which IT topics would you like to learn about? You may select more than one.



English translation of the chart:
Which IT topics would you like to learn about? (You may select more than one.)
Computer and internet basics (files, email, browser) — 2 (13%)
Office software (Word, Excel, PowerPoint) — 1 (7%)
Cloud services and file sharing (Google Drive, OneDrive) — 5 (33%)
Photo and video editing (Canva) — 6 (40%)
Other, please specify — 1 (7%)

5. Would you like to add anything else? Write what interests you most.

1) Estonia's most important websites for practical everyday use.
2) The most useful websites for everyday life in Estonia.
3) Creating a website.
4) I would like to learn how to create a website.
5) I would like to continue learning.
6) No.
7) Bank, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, Estonian Health Insurance Fund, CV and sending letters.
8) Are the classes entirely in Estonian? This will be difficult because there are many new technical terms.

The digital skills development module was delivered face-to-face in the classroom. To our surprise, interest in the digital skills module was lower than in the language course. In total, 7 of the 14 learners participated. We assume that the lower level of interest resulted from learners feeling more confident about their digital skills. This is also reflected in the preceding survey, in which most respondents assessed their skills as intermediate.



The participants were very satisfied with the digital skills development component and would have liked the course to be longer.

A learner who completes the course:

* understands what a web browser is and can use Google Search safely;
* can create a Google account and use Gmail and Google Drive for simple tasks;
* can create a simple visual in Canva and save and share it;
* knows what artificial intelligence is and can ask ChatGPT simple questions.

Group counselling

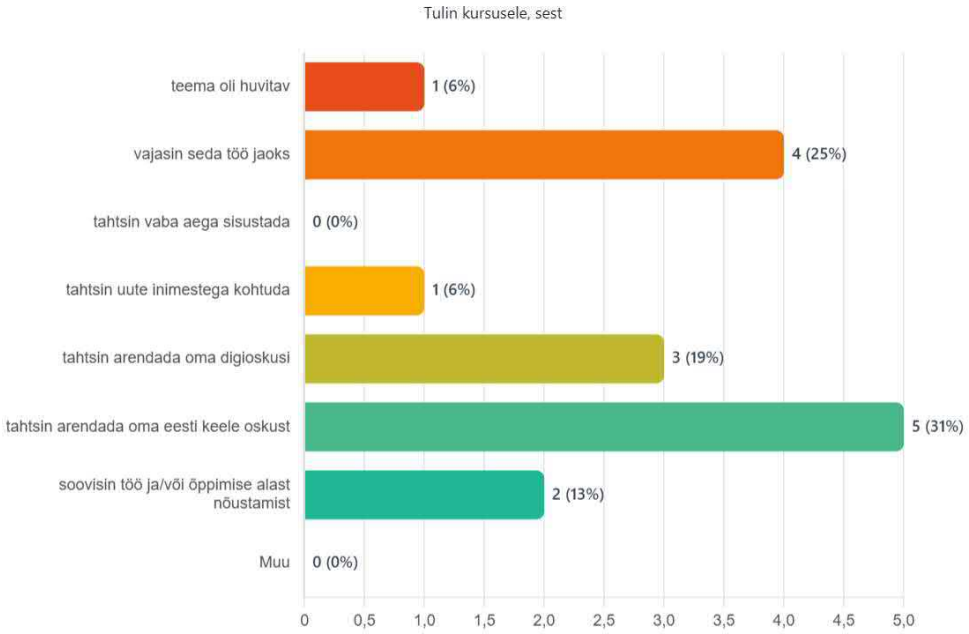
At the final meeting, a group counselling session was conducted by a specialist who works with refugees on a daily basis at a support organisation. The aim of the counselling was to improve employment opportunities and job retention for women with a migrant background who had been outside the labour market or were disadvantaged in the labour market. The session introduced participants to how to prepare a CV and apply for jobs.

Learner feedback

After the language and digital skills development course ended, participants were sent a feedback survey via the Connect online environment. Some of the responses are presented below.

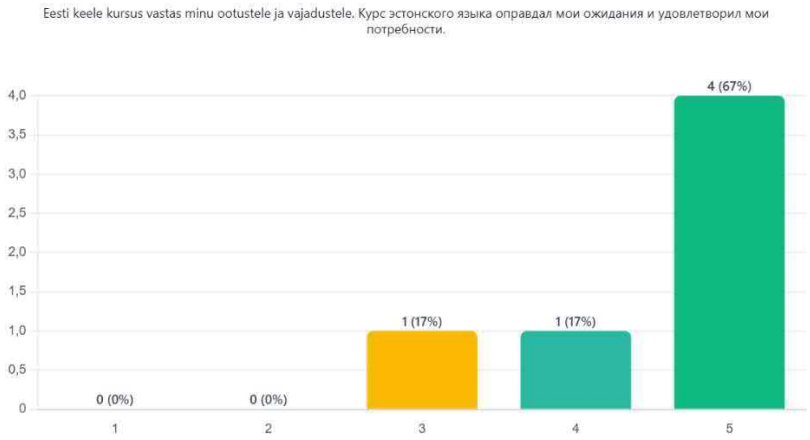
We asked why learners had joined the course, where they had received information about it, whether the course met their needs, whether the teaching methods and materials were suitable, and what could have been done differently.

Why did the learner join the course? (* The reasons had already emerged partly from the application questionnaire.)



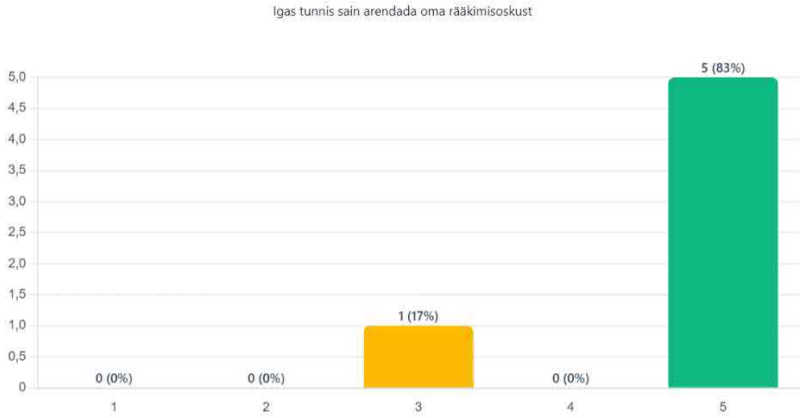
English translation of the chart:
I joined the course because:
The topic was interesting — 1 (6%)
I needed it for work — 4 (25%)
I wanted to fill my free time — 0 (0%)
I wanted to meet new people — 1 (6%)
I wanted to develop my digital skills — 3 (19%)
I wanted to develop my Estonian language skills — 5 (31%)
I wanted counselling on work and/or studies — 2 (13%)
Other — 0 (0%)

Did the Estonian language course meet your needs?



English translation of the chart:
The Estonian language course met my expectations and needs. All participants were able to develop and improve their language skills.
Rating 1 — 0 (0%); Rating 2 — 0 (0%); Rating 3 — 1 (17%); Rating 4 — 1 (17%); Rating 5 — 4 (67%).

In every lesson I was able to develop my speaking skills.



English translation of the chart:
In every lesson I was able to develop my speaking skills.
Rating 1 — 0 (0%); Rating 2 — 0 (0%); Rating 3 — 1 (17%); Rating 4 — 0 (0%); Rating 5 — 5 (83%).

Which topics were the most useful for you in the digital skills development module?

1) Canva

2) The ID card is important.

3) Photo and video editing. But this cannot be taught in one lesson.

4) Learning Canva skills.

5) All the topics were useful to me.

6) Using email, digital signing, PDF, Smart-ID and GPT.

SUMMARY

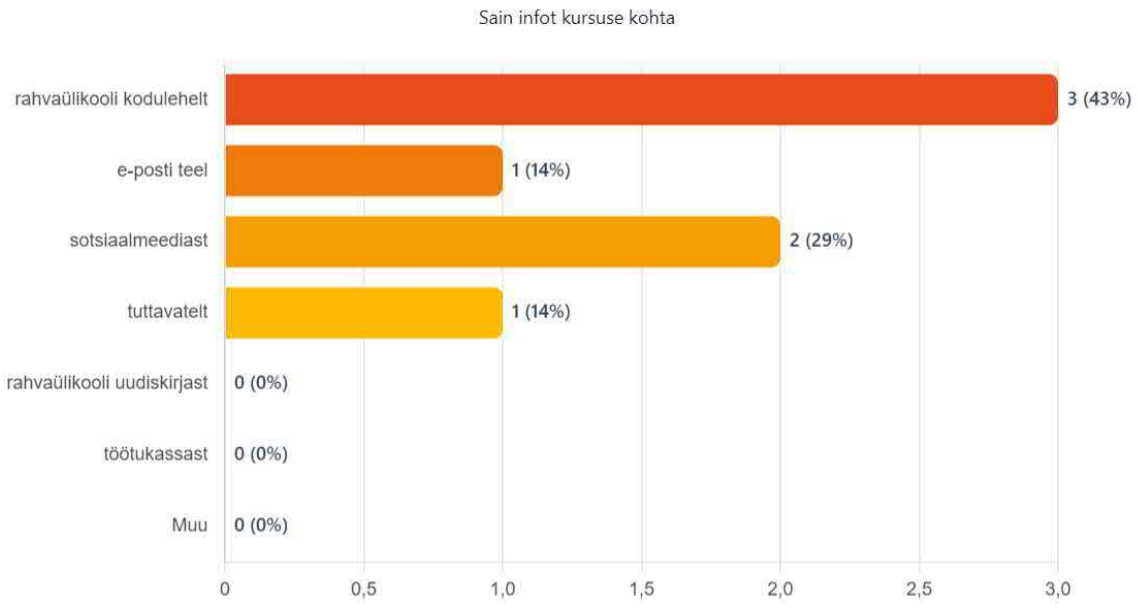
Almost all learners also pointed out that the course was very useful, but could have been longer.

As organisers, we felt that the course format—combining language learning with a specific focus, an IT skills module tailored to learners' needs and abilities, and individual or group counselling—is learner-centred and supports and sustains learning motivation. The fact that almost half of the learners who completed the questionnaire requested counselling is telling in itself. Counselling is offered by various organisations, but evidently the existing provision is not sufficient. The main reason for joining the course was strong interest in a conversation-focused language course, which learners would also have liked to continue for longer. The need to improve language proficiency is also clearly evident from the questionnaire responses. There is room for improvement in explaining the need for the digital skills module more clearly to learners. Estonia is a digital society where most services and official transactions are digital; perhaps learners did not yet fully appreciate this or overestimated their own skills. Learners' levels of digital competence also varied, and not all activities were interesting to everyone. Better differentiation would help in this respect.

Finally, we would note that, for some learners, individual counselling may provide the specific impetus needed to continue their studies and find employment (based on the experience of the Finnish partners), thereby making a real difference in the learner's life and prompting them to take action in the desired direction.

Dissemination of results and project information

In the feedback questionnaire, we asked where learners had received information about the project. Most had received information from the school's website and social media.



English translation of the chart:
I received information about the course from:
Tartu Folk High School website — 3 (43%)
Email — 1 (14%)
Social media — 2 (29%)
An acquaintance — 1 (14%)
Tartu Folk High School mailing list — 0 (0%)
Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund — 0 (0%)
Other — 0 (0%)

We promoted the project through the website and social media and also distributed the project flyer directly to cooperation partners.

We shared the project results at Tartu Folk High School team meetings, at the Tartu Folk High School webinar for language teachers on 15 August 2025, and at a cooperation seminar held in Tartu on Friday, 3 October 2025, from 15:00 to 18:00.

We also shared the results with all international Erasmus+ mobility participants who visited Tartu Folk High School and with cooperation partners at various meetings.

Terje Kruusimaa 17.08.2026

Language Programme Manager

Tartu Folk High School

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