

Backstage: How the Voices Were Created

1. Aim and Framework

The voices of **Narva** are not interviews but **fictional condensations of real conversations, attitudes, and tensions**. They were created on the basis of publicly available sources about the history, society, and present of Estonia – especially concerning the tensions between the Estonian- and Russian-speaking populations.

The goal is to make **empathy and polyphony** perceptible – without claiming documentary precision.

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2. Research and Source Material

A. Types of Sources

- News outlets (ERR News, Euractiv, NZZ, France24) → current political and social developments
- Academic publications (University of Tartu, OSCE, ResearchGate, FPRI) → analyses
 of language, identity, integration
- Eyewitness accounts & online forums → linguistic nuances and lived everyday realities
- **B. Time Frame** Material from **2022-2025**, focusing on:
 - The language reform in the Estonian education system
 - Labor migration of young adults
 - The relationship between Narva and Tallinn, and experiences of the border
 - Perceptions of the border with Russia

3. The Process of Condensation

- 1. **Extraction:** Relevant quotes, terms, and situations were taken from multiple sources.
- 2. **Combination:** Similar statements by different people or media were **merged into a fictional composite figure**,

representing typical attitudes rather than individuals.

- 3. **Linguistic Shaping:** Vocabulary and rhythm were adjusted to sound **authentic but not documentary**.
- 4. Context Check: Each scene was as far as possible reviewed in dialogue with factual information and voices from Narva/Estonia,

to achieve a balanced depiction.

4. The Backgrounds as a Second Layer

Beneath each dialogue lies an **optional layer: the background**. It links brief contextual notes (data, tendencies, terminology) with interpretive reflection and forms the transition between **research** and **artistic condensation**. This allows readers to trace **where the tone of a voice originates** without breaking the flow of reading. Each section also includes a list of publicly accessible **sources from the resonance field of the respective voice**.

5. Ethics and Responsibility

The dialogues respect the **dignity of real persons and communities**. They avoid labeling, irony, or accusations. The fiction serves **understanding**, **not judgment** – seeking **resonance between factual and felt truth**.

No sentence in the dialogues is a literal quote – but perhaps each one could have been **said like this**, in a certain situation.

6. Disclaimer

"These texts are artistic interpretations of real-world themes. They are based on publicly available research but do not constitute journalistic or scientific statements. Persons and situations are fictionalized - inspired by reality, yet not identical with it."

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kompendium:narva quellenmatrix 2025.csv

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