

Education in the Shadows: the Case of Estonia

Laura Kirss

Research across various educational and social contexts has shown that private tutoring (PT)¹ has become a wide-spread phenomenon across the world. Besides countries in East Asia, where the phenomenon was historically rooted and is still omnipresent, PT became associated with educational systems in countries of different size, quality of educational systems, level of economic development, political institutions, or geographical locations. Its presence, importance and scope became so prevalent that in some coun-

tries (e.g. Turkey, South Korea) spending on private tutoring became almost comparable to spending on the formal public education system. Research has indicated that PT is also widely spread in Central and Eastern European countries (Silova et al., 2006). For instance, approximately 62% of the pupils sampled in the Lithuanian PT study (Budiene and Zabulionis, 2006) reported having received some type of supplementary private tutoring during the last grade of secondary school.

1 - Private tutoring is fee-based instruction in academic school subjects that is complementary to instruction mainstream schools provide free of charge.

Main Conclusions:

- Similar to many other countries, private tutoring is a well-known phenomenon in Estonian education.
- Private tutoring occurs most often in difficult subjects like Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry.
- Private tutoring is needed because not all pupils are able to keep up with the rhythm of work at schools.
- Tests and examinations have also created a demand for additional help and assistance.
- Structures of remedial teaching at schools do not always fulfil their functions. Hence, private tutors are needed for providing extra help.
- Gaps in teacher education also seem to have given rise to private tutoring.
- The lack of functioning communication channels between schools and homes have contributed to using outside helpers.
- Parental expectations regarding schools reflect a clientelistic view that knowledge can be bought.
- Private tutoring compensates for irresponsibility on the side of the pupils.
- The need for private tutoring can be reduced by using current resources more effectively.



Laura Kirss

Laura is Education Policy Analyst at Praxis and is also heading the Education Policy Program. Her main research interests include educational inequality, access to education and evaluation of policy. She has an MA degree in Public Administration and Social Policy from the University of Tartu, Estonia. Prior to joining Praxis in 2007, she worked at the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

PT is a known phenomenon in Estonia.

There has been no systemic research on the scope and characteristics of PT in Estonia. Using the number of secondary school graduates taking the national examinations and the number of graduates participating in fee-based PT courses (e.g. those provided at some universities or training centres), it is estimated that at least one-fifth of the secondary school pupils have had an experience with PT in the subject of Mathematics. Praxis participated in the international comparative research project “Private Tutoring Phenomenon: Developing Policy Options” by the Network of Education Policy Centers (NEPC).² The aim of the project was twofold as it aimed to explore the educational stakeholders’ perspective on the PT phenomenon in each participating country and, in a partnership with participants, develop tailored educational policy options to address the phenomenon.

In order to fulfil the aims, qualitative methodology was applied. This approach was chosen because it allowed a deeper understanding of stakeholders’ conceptualizations and the orientation towards co-creation in finding appropriate policy options. The participants were educational stakeholders from governmental, political, professional, and academic spheres as well parents and teachers. Inclusion of individuals and organizations from such varied contexts was envisaged with the aim of gathering a wide range of perspectives and explanations in order to reach a holistic overview of the PT phenomenon in Estonia. In total, 16 semi-structured interviews and one focus group were conducted.

The data from the interviews with stakeholders confirm that PT is an existing phenomenon in the Estonian education system. However, due to its somewhat hidden nature, it is difficult to grasp its scope. Depending on their contact or experience with PT, stakeholder views on the scope tend to vary. The following excerpts from the interviews illustrate these views:

- ☛ *It [PT] is very extensive. I would say that around 30-40% of pupils have used PT in one of the subjects at some point or use it constantly. (Education official)*
- ☛ *Around two-thirds of pupils have used PT at some point or at some period. (Educational NGO representative)*

- ☛ *When I think back to my basic school, at least half of pupils had used PT. (Educational NGO representative)*
- ☛ *Based on the number of parents who have found me [for PT purposes], despite the fact that I do not advertise at all, I think PT is very widely spread. (PT provider)*
- ☛ *It is spread more than it is known to be and it could have spread more than we wish it to be. (Educational NGO representative)*

With regards to the dominant education level, the stakeholder views reveal that PT is occurring both at basic school and secondary school levels. It needs to be emphasized that stakeholders’ perspectives on the dominant educational level seem to be dependent on their personal experience with PT. For instance, PT providers, offering preparatory courses for examinations, hold the impression that PT is mostly prevalent at secondary education level while school teachers, being more in contact with basic school pupils, suggest that PT is mostly common at that education stage. Stakeholder views reveal that at lower education levels the main users of PT are parents who turn to PT providers with the aim of receiving additional educational assistance for their children. However, sometimes pupils themselves seek help of PT providers. At secondary level, pupils seem to be the main users. The range of PT providers varies rather extensively from active and retired teachers to university students.

There seems to be quite a consensus among the stakeholders on the organization and purpose of PT in Estonia. PT lessons with a teacher are used for dealing with pupils’ individual learning needs, which mostly relate to remedial teaching but could also include pupils preparing for subject competitions or pupils wanting to improve their grades. Preparatory courses are mostly used for examination and test preparation where individual needs are not particularly addressed. In those courses, emphasis is primarily on explaining different exercises and assignments required at the examinations but also practicing (previous) examinations.

2 - The NEPC project “Private Tutoring Phenomenon: Developing Policy Options” included six countries: Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, Georgia, and Mongolia. The project was conducted under the leadership of Dr Boris Jokić.

The Roots of PT – a Mosaic of Factors

As in other countries, the factors giving rise to PT in Estonian education are manifold. The analyses of educational stakeholders' perspectives demonstrated that there is not one single cause of PT in Estonia. Quite the contrary, PT has emerged as the result of the interaction of many different factors prevalent in Estonian education. The following will summarize these main factors emerging from the data analyses. Due to its nature, this analysis cannot ascertain the relative importance or weight of these factors in contributing to the rise of PT in Estonia. It can only be concluded that the interplay of these factors has been conducive to the emergence of PT in this country.

Difficult subjects

Mathematics, Physics and Chemistry, which are most often related to PT in Estonia, are subjects that require systematic learning. It seems that these subjects are constructed in a manner that once you have a problem with a part of the curricula or topic this deficit follows you in the later educational stages, unless it is addressed at the moment when the problem emerged. The lack of spiral curricula in these subjects further contributes to PT as in later stages of education revision of specific, difficult curricular topics is not generally emphasized.

- ☛ *Mathematics is a subject that you cannot learn [by heart] the way you can learn Biology or Geography. Mathematics is, in a way, a system. It begins with certain rules and principles at primary school which are built upon at later stages, going deeper into the subject [at every stage]. These principles and rules form a network or system and if there is a blank in the system, consistency has been lost. And these blanks lead to other blanks later. Consequently, if the pillars of knowledge are missing, there is nothing to build upon later. (Education official)*
- ☛ *A pupil can handle other subjects, parents at home can help or he/she can read a textbook and understand something but Mathematics is a basic subject. If there are gaps in knowledge, you need to seek help – otherwise you cannot finish grade 9 (basic school). (Teacher)*

The stakeholders also pointed out that the situation with difficult subjects is further exacerbated by textbooks and learning materials. Textbooks are not compiled in a manner that would facilitate pupil learning and seeking help. Also, there is no single good online source that could be helpful in case pupils have any difficulties.

The nature and curricular content of these difficult subjects underline the importance of laying more emphasis on repetition and reiteration of basic principles and rules, stressing more the spiral nature of the curriculum. Furthermore, the textbooks need to be reviewed from the aspect of their helpfulness for pupils. This also highlights the importance of addressing more promptly the needs of pupils who have encountered difficulties with these particular subjects.

Structure and rhythm of work at school

Learning and teaching at mainstream schools is often structured in such a way that learning problems occur easily. Often, especially in Mathematics and other complex subjects, the curricula is overloaded with a large number of topics to be covered in a very limited time frame. When a pupil misses a topic or has problems understanding it at the learning pace set by the teacher, a gap in knowledge comes about easily. The stakeholders argued:

- ☛ *The curriculum to be acquired in Mathematics is too extensive for a 6th grade pupil. Learning is like “riding” through the topics. The rhythm of work in the class is high. (Teacher, PT provider)*
- ☛ *Topics are missed, or there is no time for some topics, or topics are covered too quickly. Topics are covered only once but pupils need more revision and knowledge integration. (PT Provider)*
- ☛ *The subject [Mathematics] is taught several times a week and if somebody is ill, a gap in knowledge occurs very easily. (Education official)*

The discussions with stakeholders suggest that the pupils, as well as the teachers, are under a great pressure to cover the whole curriculum. It seems that the curriculum emphasizes more the quantity rather than the quality of the learning. The fact that Mathematics is usually taught in large classes further exacerbates the problem, as

PT goes hand in hand with difficult subjects like Mathematics and other exact sciences.

PT is needed because rhythm of work at school extends pupils' capabilities.

teachers do not have time to pay attention to the needs of individual pupils. Hence, it would be crucial to revise the curricular content of these difficult subjects to allow more time for learning and teaching as well as to consider how teaching could be altered to allow for more individual attention for pupils.

Assessment

The developments in assessment have had a visible role in inducing PT. On the one hand, external assessment in the form of national examinations has created a market for specific preparatory courses at different education institutions in Estonia. National examinations, as high-stakes examinations determining the educational fate of pupils, have created a demand for supplementary education services. As interviewees pointed out:

- ☛ *When an examination is this one thing that determines the fate or educational career of a young person, then it is only natural that these young people want to pass these examinations as well as possible. (Educational NGO representative)*
- ☛ *The fear of failing in education is big. (Educational NGO representative)*

As a result, these preparatory PT courses are an additional way of securing one's future success:

- ☛ *The evaluation by your own teacher and quality of your own school is one thing... but to be sure to get enough points [at the examination], it is necessary to get an independent expert evaluation. Also, the fact that different teachers have pupils solve different kinds of assignments provides additional training. (Educational NGO representative)*
- ☛ *At secondary level, it is necessary to take additional classes to alleviate the fear of what is coming [at exams]. It is like this: are you able to finish secondary school and do you get a good enough preparation to be competitive at university entrance examinations? (Educational NGO representative)*

Now that the national examination in Mathematics has become compulsory, it is expected to increase the demand for PT as weaker pupils, who previously did not choose to take this exam, also need to improve their knowledge to pass the examination.

On the other hand, assessment and grading at school contribute to PT as the need for private help seems to intensify near the times of grading. The teachers pointed out that as the grading period comes closer, parents and pupils start requesting more help from them. Pupils need the assistance of PT providers to prepare for tests and pass grading:

- ☛ *There are mainly 2 cases – [pupils come to seek the help of a PT teacher] before the evaluation (tasemetöö) in grade 6 or the final examination in grade 9.*

These tendencies highlight the unmet need for preparing for assessments – there do not seem to be enough opportunities at school for providing assistance for pupils who have not been able to fulfil curricular requirements. In addition, in view of the national examinations, it seems pupils have started to have doubts about the quality of education provided at their school, so they seek ways of validating their knowledge with 'independent' providers.

Inadequate support for pupils falling behind

The opportunities for general education schools to provide remedial teaching for pupils are rather limited today. Even though schools are expected to provide consultation lessons for catching-up purposes, these might not always be used for that. Interviews and discussions highlighted that there is a great variance across schools and even individual teachers. Some interviewees suggested that consultation hours tend to be used primarily for retaking test or passing assessments.

- ☛ *Usually, consultation classes are meant for retaking tests. I have only seen a couple of pupils there who came to consult the teacher. (Educational NGO representative)*
- ☛ *In fact, there is no place to seek help from. In some schools, consultations are required to function as remedial classes; in some they are only meant for retaking tests. And there is no real system [for providing help for pupils falling behind]. (Teacher, PT provider)*
- ☛ *It [consultation] probably varies from school to school... The question is, are these consultation classes held at all and are they primarily used for retaking tests? And then, it is your own problem*

Tests and examinations make pupils seek additional help.

how you manage to learn this piece of curricula. And then you have to go to a private tutor to learn this piece. (Education official)

At the same time, teachers also pointed out that pupils themselves are not eager to take advantage of these opportunities – consultations are not viewed as a place where help could be received. This could be the result of the fact that consultations function as places where tests are retaken and pupils have stopped viewing consultations as an opportunity to receive assistance. But it could also be that pupils are not well-informed about the possibilities open through consultations, consultation classes take place at inconvenient times for pupils, or consultations are negatively perceived among pupils (pupils who need help are viewed as stupid). As interviewees pointed out:

- ☛ *Consultation hours ... generally, these are hours, when a teachers sits quietly in a class correcting tests and there are no pupils. (Teacher, PT provider)*
- ☛ *It [going to a consultation class at school] was somehow embarrassing or a shame... how can I go to a consultation class – I am not stupid! Only stupid pupils go there. (Education official)*

Therefore, seeking private help outside school does not ‘harm’ one’s image and is more comfortable psychologically. Also, at times it seems to be more convenient.

In any case, it appears that there is room for improvement in providing school-based help for pupils needing additional assistance in learning. Simultaneously, the image of consultation classes needs to be changed, so that pupils view them as a place for getting help and an opportunity to improve their knowledge.

Professional development of teachers

One of the factors inducing private tutoring relates to the professional development of teachers. Even though conflicts between teachers and pupils generally tend to arise due to miscommunication from both sides, the fact that conflicts were mentioned as one of the driving forces of PT, does indicate shortcomings in the professional development of teachers. In general, teachers seem to be content specialists rather than educationalists. Interviewees pointed out:

- ☛ *Some teachers have come straight out of university and they teach the subject in a very complicated way. They do not grasp the fact that some pupils might be somewhat less bright and they might not understand anything. He or she expects the pupils to be at his/her level of knowledge. (PT provider)*
- ☛ *I had pupils from one school... the teacher was explaining things in front of the class, there was a big noise in the class and you could not hear anything. (PT provider)*
- ☛ *The parent thinks that when a teacher cannot handle the class and teaching at school, he/she cannot be trusted. (Teacher, PT provider)*
- ☛ *And I know all the teachers, how they teach. ... There are teachers whose pupils come [to PT] more often. And one pupil said: “Why can’t our teacher teach like this? Our teacher just says something in a very quiet voice in front of the class, hardly breathing; you cannot understand anything she says. Why can’t she talk like this [PT teacher]?” And I must say, not all people are fit for a teaching profession. (Teacher, PT provider)*

The expectations for a PT teacher highlight the shortcomings of teaching at regular schools:

- ☛ *Very often, my primary role is to be a psychologist, confidant and a supporter and only after that a provider of specific knowledge. (PT provider).*

Thus, it seems that the competence of teachers tends to lie mainly in their field and they are less well prepared in dealing with the pupil/class. This also suggests that their preparation has placed less emphasis on psychological, didactic and methodical knowledge (once again, mainly in the domains of Mathematics and Science). On the other hand, it has to be kept in mind that in Estonia Mathematics and Science are the very subjects where the supply of qualified teachers is often the lowest. Therefore, the problem of teacher preparation is even more exacerbated by the limited supply of these teachers. Or, as a stakeholder pointed out:

- ☛ *The reasons are often objective – there are no teachers available and if there are, they are not competent. (Educational NGO representative)*

Structures for remedial teaching at schools are inefficient.

Subject teachers are mostly content specialists rather than educationalists.

There is often no functioning communication channel between various parties of education.

Parents view schools as places where their children are filled with knowledge.

Furthermore, several interviewees suggested that conflicts between teachers and pupils lead to a situation where help is sought from an outside private helper. For instance:

- *There are cases where, in general, a teacher gets well along with the class, but he/she might have conflicts with individual pupils. Relationship problems could be one of the reasons [behind PT]. (Education official)*
- *In my network of friends, it is really so that when you have problematic relations with your teacher and you cannot attend his/her classes, then you need a private tutor. The problem is more about relations than a teacher or subject material. (Educational NGO representative)*

This underlines the importance of teacher training and even more so, the need to raise the social position of Mathematics and Science teachers to increase the general supply of competent educationalists.

Lack of models of cooperation in education

Many interviews underlined the issue of lack of cooperation between different parties in education. Namely, they pointed to the low quality of the communication between teachers, pupils and parents leading to the hiring of the PT tutor. In particular, in the case of more well-off parents, it is more convenient to turn to a private tutor than to deal with learning problems together with a child and his/her teacher(s). Even though sometimes, especially at the secondary level of education, parents could be unknowledgeable about certain Science or Mathematics topics and are unable to help their children, it seems that turning to private help is more related to convenience and lack of communications channels between home and school. As one of the interviewees suggested, it is often a matter of prevailing attitudes:

- *It is a characteristic of our education culture... I am not only blaming the school... there are of course unused opportunities for attracting parents to school but in whose interest is it – the school's or home's – that a child would learn something at school?*

In case of many education problems, it is thought that the school is to be blamed for everything. In fact, it is almost like in medicine – 90% of problems are defined by ways of life and 10% by cure. It is similar in education – the role of home in contributing, encouraging, evaluating, being interested, listening is much more important than a small or a big class. If there is something wrong in education, it is often related to homes. ... And we will not get very far when we only blame schools and teachers. (Parliamentary representative)

The stakeholders mentioned that in Estonia, the role of the class teachers includes taking care of the pupils in his/her class and managing communication with parents. Even so, there are limits to what a single teacher can do.

The “communication distance” between home and school is often the source of misunderstandings and problems, part of which are pupils’ learning difficulties that then need to be addressed outside schools. Consequently, more emphasis needs to be put on finding ways of bringing these different parties together which then would potentially relieve the need for PT as well.

Parental expectations

As the interviewees hinted above, education is, these days, often seen as a product provided at schools and something that can be bought. Often, it is coupled with a view that parents have no responsibility in education. These thoughts from stakeholders illustrate this view:

- *... We are too convinced that it is the role of school to educate and raise our children... there is this capitalist way of thinking that we throw our children into it [school], and it is the role of school to arrange this [education and up-bringing]. (Parliamentary representative)*
- *At some point, it is easier to buy a teacher and get the problem off your back. (Educational NGO representative)*
- *The commodification of education has taken place...parents assume that school is a place where children are filled with knowledge. (Educational NGO representative)*

The previous argumentation on “thin” communication between different parties in education is closely related to the clientelistic approach adopted by parents. Thus, finding ways of bringing schools and parents closer to each other would also most likely facilitate an increased feeling of community among these parties.

In contrast, several interviewees highlighted the concern of parents about the education of their children and about the future success of their (educational) career. In this case, PT is an additional way of securing future success:

- ☛ *One general factor [behind PT] – interest of parents. When somebody’s daughter or son is not doing very well or they have no interest ... but parents have an interest in supporting their child in finishing basic school or getting to the next level. (Educational NGO representative)*
- ☛ *... parents have been very worried, they wanted to secure the career of their children. (Parliamentary representative)*

Learning problems of pupils

Last but not least, an important factor leading to the use and provision of PT is irresponsibility on the side of the pupils. It is impossible to achieve good results without any commitment by them. These opinions illustrate this idea:

- ☛ *Most [clients] are pupils who do not learn Mathematics regularly. Mathematics requires regular learning. They are just lazy and hope to pass. (PT provider)*
- ☛ *Sometimes it was not about a teacher... pupils did not have a habit of learning and they blamed a teacher. In reality, these pupils did not study themselves. And if they took a private teacher, the results did not change. (Educational NGO representative)*

Unless pupils themselves are willing and motivated to contribute to their own learning results, other measures facilitating learning cannot have any effect.

What Policies Could Reduce the Need for PT?

Previous research on PT outlines four main policy responses to private tutoring that have typically been taken (Silova et al., 2006):

- ☛ There are governments who have decided to **ignore the phenomenon**, either because of low administrative capacity or perceived lack of necessity to do so. For instance, Canada and United Kingdom have left PT for the market to regulate.
- ☛ Another form of response has been **recognition and regulation**. This could take the form of minimum requirements for PT facilities or more extensive regulation of the content and form of provision.
- ☛ Some countries have chosen to **actively encourage** PT. This approach is based on the idea of needs-based instruction and contribution to the development of human capital. Encouragement could be at the policy level but also through other measures, e.g. information dissemination, training for tutors or tax incentives.
- ☛ There are also countries that have decided to **prohibit** PT. The basis for this strict approach is the idea that PT fosters social inequalities in society.

Silova et al. have also pointed out, based on a survey in nine former socialist countries, that these countries have long ignored the PT phenomenon. Even though the phenomenon has been known at the societal level, it has not received any attention by policy makers, i.e. it is not mentioned in government documents. The stakeholder responses provided in the current study and the lack of current legal regulation³ surrounding PT also suggest that PT is an issue left to the market to regulate.

The overview of factors contributing to PT underlines the complexity surrounding the phenomenon. As PT does not exist independently of the general education system, it is in a way a reflection of the problems and deficiencies

Pupils are responsible for their learning results.

There are 4 groups of responses to PT.

³ - In Estonia, the only legal requirement regulating the provision of PT at the moment is the education license that private providers of education and training are required to obtain from the Ministry of Education and Research (Private Schools Act).

of the system itself. Hence, it is apparent that unless the structural problems of the education system are dealt with, it is complicated to tackle the problems of PT as well. Several reasons behind PT discussed here relate to ‘big’ educational issues such as the structure of the curricula or teacher education programs, which cannot be addressed here. Even so, taking into account the potential negative consequences of PT – stakeholders pointed to issues like discouraging learning and participation at school, social inequality, costs for parents, the grey economy – it is still important to find ways for its reduction. And even though PT will always remain a choice for parents and pupils who are interested in more individualized teaching, it is feasible to ask whether there are other ways of addressing the needs PT is currently relieving.

Stemming from the previous discussions, the following will only discuss policy options feasible in the current general education system, leaving aside policy options requiring structural changes in the system.

Using current resources more effectively

The discussions with educational stakeholders and the previous analysis have suggested that there is potential to use currently available resources more effectively. These could include the following:

- C **Revision and reorganization of the current supplementary or consultation lessons.** This would include the re-conceptualization of the status and the form of supplementary classes; introducing a formal obligation to hold additional lessons in case of a negative grade; individualization of the programs of the supplementary classes for each pupil.
- C **Reserving more time for class teachers** for dealing with pupils with learning issues and arranging help.
- C **Introducing learning in groups in ‘difficult’ subjects.** Taking into account the difficult nature of the specific subjects (Mathematics, Physics, etc.) and the high intensity of teaching within them, pupils could be divided into smaller learning groups (e.g. in language classes) that would guarantee more individual attention to pupils.

- C **Organization of peer support/learning.** Providing that there are some formal valuation and recognition mechanisms in place (e.g. volunteer passport), more successful pupils could be recruited for helping pupils with problems. These forms of learning should be publicly encouraged at school as well. Peer learning and support would also function through team-based school assignments.
- C **(Re-)engagement of retired or unemployed teachers** and their linking to particular schools. Taking into account that many retired, as well some unemployed, teachers are currently working unofficially as PT providers, they could be publicly hired as tutors at specific schools. Linking them to specific schools would provide a constant communication line with the teachers at school and therefore render tutoring more effective. In this case, schools would serve as a liaison and “guarantee” of quality of teachers. If the school does not have funds to compensate the tutors, they could be subsidized by parents.
- C **Engagement of students from teacher colleges** and faculties who could work as instructors/assistant teachers in schools. Future teachers serve as a very good potential for addressing the need for additional help for weak pupils. These student teachers would engage in this activity as part of their pre-service development, they would be aligned with specific schools/teachers. To guarantee their commitment, it would be important to that they are reimbursed for their activity either through ECTS points or via state subsidies.
- C **Engagement of volunteers** (e.g. stay-home parents, alumni). Again, providing that there is some public recognition of the activity (e.g. counts as work experience or could be added to the volunteer passport), volunteers could be recruited as tutors at schools.
- C **Providing help online** through making learning materials and aids available to pupils but also making contacts with potential helpers (e.g. online study sessions with peers).

It is important to look for simple answers.

These options highlight the necessity to devote additional resources to addressing the needs of pupils. Some of these options require the investment of additional financial resources (e.g. teaching in smaller groups, making teachers more available to pupils, hiring retired teachers) but it is not so in all cases. More importantly, they require the time of headmasters and other school leaders to take the time to analyze the situation and find the most suitable solution for their school. In addition, it requires investment in time for communication and building partnerships in the education community. There are of course some possible threats that might hamper the realization of these options. In addition to lack of financial resources, various parties might not be motivated to contribute to the change; it is always hard to interrupt the current mode of working. This might be the case for teachers as well as pupils or parents. There might also be problems with available infrastructure (suitable rooms) or other practical arrangements. It is also known from other countries' experience that publicly available (free) PT provision might sometimes be deemed to be of low quality; therefore more well-off parents might still opt for paid private teachers.

Regulating the provision of PT

Considering the hidden nature of the PT 'market', there is an option of formalizing this educational activity. In Estonia, the private provision of education is required to be registered in hobby schools and licensed in private schools. However, it is known that a lot of PT takes place informally, in the homes of pupils or parents, and not all PT organizations have the required license. This policy option would therefore include improvement of the legal framework with the purpose of regulating PT more specifically. It would require some form of accreditation of the education programs as well as quality control of the staff. The regulation would also need to address the general education teachers with a special emphasis on their engagement in the working bodies of the external assessment procedures. It is well known that improving regulation does not necessarily bring along a change in situation unless there are also some enforcement or monitoring mechanisms in place. Therefore, it is also necessary to invest into the oversight structure. Even so, there is still a threat that provision of PT

would not be legalized by the providers as there are no negative incentives related to providing it in a current (illegal) form. It is also possible that legalization would not take place because there is no motivation from the side of the providers – teachers providing PT besides their regular job do not bother to go through the certification process, especially when their provision is of irregular nature. Legalization would also possibly reduce the number of clients as official provision of service would be considerably more costly.

In addition to regulation, the establishment of formal PT centres could be established. This way, the quality of teaching would be guaranteed. This requires either investment from the state or at least that access should be assured for underprivileged pupils through a state subsidy or a voucher system. However, it could also be that a service provided free of charge is viewed to be of lower quality compared to that supplied under a fee.

Another option includes the introduction of the PT phenomenon into the legal documents regulating the general education system. An important part of it would be the development of a visible and highly recognized code of ethics for teachers. The code would also need to address the aspects related to immoral teaching, explicitly stating a formal ban for the provision of PT lessons by school teachers to their own pupils. Unless there is public scrutiny on the implementation of the code, its role in contributing to change would still be limited. It should also be taken into account that there are no sanctions related to not following the code. Therefore, the impact of the code still heavily depends on the participants' willingness to adhere to it.

Monitoring and researching PT

Another way of addressing PT is focusing more attention on increasing its transparency. This could begin with some form of official monitoring of the phenomenon that would establish the scope and characteristics of it at some point in time (e.g. biannual review). The monitoring would also need to draw attention to the causes and effects of the phenomenon to provide useful information for policy makers and education administrators. Monitoring would also require some investment of resources and commitment to move along with the results.

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