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**ROLE OF AN HONORARY CONSUL ON THE GLOBAL
DIPLOMACY SCALE IN THE EXAMPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF
ESTONIA**

Bachelor's thesis

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I declare I have written the bachelor's thesis independently.

All works and major viewpoints of the other authors, data from other sources of literature and elsewhere used for writing this paper have been referenced.

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ABSTRACT

This paper will concentrate on aspects of working as an honorary consul and define the basis of diplomatic relations with a focus on honorary consuls. In particular, it focuses on the benefits and strengths of such work, while the consular system is examined upon the case of Estonia. The paper will give an overview of the current system and analyze whether the ongoing globalized diplomatic context even needs the function of an honorary consul. This paper is going to bring out the values in promotion in spheres such as culture, commerce and business. The qualitative research method will be used in the questionnaire format in order to gain valuable data from the source, which in this case are actively working honorary consuls for the Republic of Estonia.

Keywords: diplomacy, honorary consul, Republic of Estonia

INTRODUCTION

The research will strive to answer questions concerning the work, role and importance of an honorary consul. The research questions of this paper are the following: How does the honorary consul system work in the case of Estonia and what are the direct or indirect values of the honorary consul platform? The paper will focus on the history, core and aspects of honorary consul work in general and furthermore will focus on the Estonian case and the diplomatic segmentation and facet of the diplomatic sphere regarding honorary consuls. The research consists of data received directly from honorary consuls working voluntarily for Estonia internationally. Moreover, the analysis will consist of information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, which directly addresses and conducts the work and duties of honorary consuls. The paper includes two questionnaires addressed to the network honorary consuls working for Estonia and secondly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The questionnaires will address the fundamental aspects of the work and delve into beneficial points concerning commerce, culture and branding for appointing and target state. The paper will point to the uniqueness of the platform of honorary consuls in the world of embassies and will prove the productiveness and value of it to smaller countries like Estonia.

The role of an honorary consul may differ depending on the circumstances of the state. There can be several tasks for an honorary consul, from giving notary and consular aid for the citizens of the sending country to pure marketing for the sending country. The position of the honorary consul is used in the case of smaller states as an alternatives to professional diplomats. Honorary consuls are recognized by the international law and are therefore can be granted the same privileges as career servants. In most cases, honorary consuls are used in the regions where the rates in passenger flow or trade partnerships with the sending country are not high. Worldwide there are estimated to be 20 000 working honorary consuls (Economist, 2013). Estonia has in a way been a pathfinder for smaller states for implementing the honorary consul system globally. Moreover, the system benefits the large employing states such as Canada or China, who gain new trade partners. It also provides them with the ability of expansion in several spheres.

One of the many reasons for the growing need of honorary consuls is the fact that the world is globalizing, meaning that travelling has become cheaper for regular citizens and that

people are more mobile. Problems concerning health or authorities may always occur, therefore the chance of career consuls being located far from the source of the problem is relatively high, especially in the case of a country like Estonia. Another reason why smaller states benefit from honorary consuls is a financial one - trade routes have changed quite massively over the decades. For example, even small African states are interested in conducting trade with the Asian hemisphere. A few decades ago, that would have been rather odd, but now the global trade network is heading towards new norms (Honorary consuls: A booming trend 2013).

The history of the institution of honorary consul is significant, as the position emerged and was molded into the form we nowadays know during the first part of the 20th century (being shaped by the World Wars, Russian Revolution etc.). According to Kevin D. Stringer, the first mentioned consular task of promotion of investments and trade was stated by US career ambassador Thomas R. Pickering. The emphasis on the strong bond between globalization and international trade started the mentality of the honorary consul (Stringer 2007). After World War II, immigration and emigration had again become a serious concern and giving aid to citizens had become the essential goal for consular services. Before the era of global wars, the objective had been clarification concerning international trade (Veski and Kerikmäe 2014). Provision to the World Wars, the maritime and commercial, as well as political and business spheres were appointed to the diplomats, which brought preciseness and competence to the circles. Taking care of civilians and their rights had become the main focus of work for the consuls (Veski and Kerikmäe 2014). The main change occurred with the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, which abled career consuls to prosper and develop the system even further. The honorary consul as a career was in jeopardy and the prominent assessment was that there is no place for honorary consuls in the diplomatic sphere. Nevertheless, in general there were two sides that states took: there were the ones who were convinced in the value of the role and others who thought that there was no room for the profession. The supporters of the role were primarily smaller states such as Switzerland, Finland and the Netherlands, who considered the institution to be immensely valuable for entities with limited domestic resources. One of the arguments for smaller states was that their large numbers of sailors may need the aid in every relevant port. At the same time, there were states, usually large both geographically and economically, who did not approve the development of the institution. Even today, China and the United States of America are two examples of countries that have not registered their own honorary consuls. Nonetheless, the US welcomes honorary

consuls to work on their soil (Veski and Kerikmäe 2014). Altogether, the perspective of states in introducing the institution of honorary consuls always differs, depending on economic, cultural and commercial conditions. Therefore the institution differs a lot from one state to another, with a particular contrast between smaller and larger states. In the case of my research, Estonia undoubtedly belongs to the group that values both its benefits and the institution itself. Estonia has a large quantity of citizens scattered across the globe due to the world wars, which made Estonians flee their homeland and start their lives in new locations. This granted a working system, where the community of Estonians is well informed and acknowledging the heritage of Estonian culture.

1. OVERVIEW OF DIPLOMACY

Starting with the definition of honorary consul, the main difference between the official ambassador and honorary consul is the fact that the ambassador is appointed to be the head of the representative state and to deal with the whole state without any indulgences, whereas the consul is representing only one city or region within a specific state (Diplomatic Consulting). “His job is to strengthen the ties, facilitate trade, investment and goodwill between the two nations” (Diplomatic Consulting). Therefore, the duties of the honorary consul are mainly focused on promoting trade and good relations between the two states. Briefly discussing the remuneration of an honorary consul, there is either no or a symbolic salary for the year. Work is built on good will and it is voluntary. According to Evriviades, “diplomacy is the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of foreign relations” (Evriviades 2005). Another key aspect is the competent know how and intelligence regarding the appointing state as well as the location of work (Evriviades 2005). Diplomacy by explanation is a skill, an art and also a practice. Diplomacy is the utilization of intelligence, while having extensive knowledge of both the country the diplomat is serving in, as well as the home country. The most important thing is to examine the surrounding actions concerning the rapidly changing world and adapting crucially to these changes. As world is changing, so is diplomacy (Evriviades 2005). The decrease of nation based diplomacy and the rapid increase of civil society are some of the current trends molding the diplomatic sphere. As stated by Evriviades, the Bosnian scholar and diplomat Drazen Pehar has interpreted diplomacy as “primarily words that prevent us from

reaching for our swords”, which nicely states the core idea of diplomacy and the essential need for diplomats. It is the action of communication which prevents the threat of physical clash (Evriviades 2005).

1.1 Globalization in diplomacy

The effect of worldwide integration on diplomacy and overall consular system is direct and is molding the sphere. To the question of whether globalization has changed the terms and conditions of modern diplomacy the answer is a resounding yes. To be precise, globalization has molded the procedures rather than the core nature, which is still to build, preserve and practice relations (Campbell 2015). When discussing the correlation between globalization and its aftermath to modern diplomacy, the changes are mainly related to communication and entities. Regulations and behavioral norms, which have been set throughout history, have stayed rigid and constant. First of all, the international diplomatic sphere is no longer conducted only by national foreign ministries, but rather one can see that universities, the media and NGOs have joined the arena of traditional diplomacy (Campbell 2015). The second matter which has adjusted the terms of globalization is the obscure line between domestic and foreign policies and actions. Every decision made either externally or domestically can have serious effects. Another struggle when it comes to diplomatic relations and problem-solving is the incapability of communicating with failed states and, in the current case, the icon of terrorism, which is the Islamic State. Diplomacy in this sense needs two entities who are able to think and act rationally. In the contemporary context, the function of diplomacy has molded due to the inability of several actors to do so. According to Campbell, an essential task for diplomats is to maintain accuracy and analyzed thinking, since the fast flow of information may not consist of legitimate information. Globalization may have brought with it new ways of doing diplomacy and provided a constant flow of information, but still it has not given way to valid content in its purest meaning. This evidently remarks the essential need for diplomats and consuls to calculate and act depending on the relevant context and meaning (Campbell 2015).

1.2 Safety and risks to embassies and consulates

First of all, in order to allow for a smooth expansion of the worldwide system of consulates, the current and constant threat of terrorism needs to be diminished. Physical places such as consular buildings are some of the main targets for acts of terror and mayhem. According to the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, the safety matter is and should be dealt by the host country. Nevertheless, there are large global forces such as the United States who believe and see that the security provided by the host countries does not qualify according to their own norms. Therefore the US has since the mid-1980's had a system in place called the Diplomatic Security Service, which is a so-called "stretch unit of the State Department". According to the UN Chronicle, the World Federation of Consuls promotes the enhancement of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations: "1. to prevent its disregard by states 2. improve the international legal framework for the protection of consular missions and consular officers against terrorist and other attacks 3. allow for equity and non-discrimination in the role of honorary consuls to enable them to serve the sending states to the best of their ability, with dignity and in safety" (United Nations, 2013). To explain it further, the World Federation of Consuls was established in Copenhagen in 1982 for the sake of gathering consular corpses for cooperation for advancing the effectiveness of the global consular system. The federation also dealt with structuring a well- formed system to promote the prestige of consuls worldwide. The federation was located in Belgium and named *Fédération Internationale des Corps et Associations Consulaires (FICAC)* (New security risks and challenges for Consuls 2013). The act of mutual respect and loyalty to the principles recognized in the Vienna Convention will allow for the growth of consular collaboration in each member country.

On the negative side, one thing that has mostly affected the larger states is the constant threat of physical assaults on the buildings of their embassies and consulates. United States has been the number one target for foreign radicals. There have been cases for other countries as well, for example during the Iran hostage crisis in 1979 or the Syrian Uprising, which mostly harmed the embassies of France, Turkey and Saudi-Arabia (Policy Mic 2012). Coming back to the USA, the second point is the question of whether the role of embassies has started to diminish. The role of embassies and ambassadors have been decreasing due to rapid globalization and simplified communication options, in addition to the increased quantities of summits and meetings and regular multilateral encounters with unions and organizations, such

as the UN (Policy Mic 2012). The third point which supports the removal of diplomatic institutions is the question of political immunity. One such recent case is that of Julian Assange, where the hacker was able to live in the politically immune embassy of Ecuador in London (Policy Mic 2012). Nevertheless, there are several cases where the political hideouts for civilians have made sense and are logical. The overall arrangement is nonetheless impeding the global political sphere, where relationships are extremely fragile on their own.

1.3 Minimizing the risks

What should be done for the sake of diplomatic security? First of all, the personnel has to be well prepared and ready for extreme scenarios in potential target locations. Secondly, in extreme cases where either the consulate or on a larger scale the embassy is located in a dangerous district, the amount of potential state members that are sent there should be minimized. Local personnel will not be a potential target for radicals, meaning that the local officers should be the primary promoters of commerce and peaceful relations, at least until the level of danger has cooled down. Nevertheless, in most cases the struggles between relations remain fragile for a long time and therefore this kind of solution does not work in severe cases of diplomacy. Another option for the consulates for the sake of balanced security is to maximize the amount of defense in the form of local troops of military and authorities. In cases of large global actors, the possibility of locating marines to the perimeter is also there, although this is still mostly used by the United States, being the global hegemon (PBS 2012).

In most cases, when speaking directly about the global honorary consulate system and its relationship with security, the risks of assaults and chaos are generally low. In the case of honorary consuls, the system is built on voluntary actions. Thus one can see that the relevance in political, commercial or cultural matters to the global sphere is relatively low. Another argument, which supports the well-being of honorary consulates and its individuals, is the fact that most of the sending states are relatively small and also have a smaller influence on other entities. The fact is that countries like Estonia or Iceland, who globally play a relatively non-significant role when it comes to politics or world affairs, are less likely to be attacked than places such as France or Belgium, who play a significant role in world affairs. Diplomatic targets in potential crisis locations such as Sanaa or Tripoli for big state forces can create an

unbalanced diplomatic situation, which can lead to other peaceful locations being dragged to combat as well. The fact is that today's diplomatic and consular world is facing threats. It is inevitable and the only solution is to cooperate with allies, as well as build and maintain strong defense structures.

1.4 The question of necessity of embassies and consulates in nowadays world

The contemporary system of having embassies in foreign countries goes back to Renaissance where Milan and Italy in general started to use representatives to send them to other European states. Overall, the rules of diplomacy were ensured with the 1815 Vienna Congress and since then that system has been in place. Now in the 21st century there are constant disputes about the necessity of embassies and representation in foreign countries. It is important to go through the positive and negative reasons for maintaining or losing the physical embassy system. According to Policy Mic, "having a resident embassy makes it easier to cultivate and maintain contacts, negotiate, lobby, gather information and handle a crisis in relations should one develop" (Policy Mic 2012). Having a person on the spot is far more compelling than having a person working long-distance. Discussing matters and solving issues in person is always more meaningful than having talks in the virtual world or by phone. The second reason for an embassy or consulate is to show others the superiority and prestige of the state. A third positive aspect is the physical side of having embassies and consulates for the aid on citizens who may struggle with legal or passport issues (Policy Mic 2012). Embassies play the crucial role of safe houses, which is a valid reason for maintaining the physical entities rather than having virtual bases.

2. HONORARY CONSUL

2.1 Honorary consul in the context of international law

In the case of honorary consuls and international law, it is largely divided into two segments - monism and dualism. According to monism, international and national laws can be combined into a single legal system, whereas dualism is seen as a system where international and national laws exist separately. International law administers laws between states and their affairs, while national law deals with the state and its citizens (EAFIT 2014). The Vienna Convention on Consular Affairs has divided consuls into two segments, those being professional career consuls and honorary consuls. The Vienna Convention on Consular Relations does not quite describe who is an honorary consul, instead it is built on the traditions of consuls (EAFIT 2014). The Convention recognizes that honorary consuls who have previously been appointed for duties, established an efficient mechanism in complementing international relations (New security risks and challenges for Consuls 2013) Next there is the question of how one becomes an honorary consul. First of all, one must own a respectable international political or business grid, which is helpful in work as an honorary consul. Another important matter is where the consul lives. For example, honorary consuls are not relevant for cities like Washington or Tokyo, where the market is already full of professional ambassadors and large diplomatic housing, but rather for large cities in large countries that are not the capitals (for example Boston or Shanghai) or capitals and large cities in smaller countries, such as Lisbon or Ljubljana. The representing countries tend to be extremely specific in selecting the consuls. Background and previous actions tend to matter a lot, as well as status and education (Diplomatic Consulting). The profession as mentioned before is built for states as Estonia who lack in foreign affairs funding and seek to hold a well- functioning system of consular bases.

2.2 Estonian honorary consul system

“Honorary consuls are highly regarded and respected members of a community, part of the elite diplomatic corps and as such come with privileges, protection and perks. They fly flags on their cars, never get parking tickets, pass through the fast lane at immigration, don’t pay real estate taxes and have their homes and offices off limits to law enforcement” (Diplomatic Consulting). There are an estimated 20 000 honorary consuls working worldwide. As mentioned before, the system is being used more by smaller states who need such extra functions to support their citizens. It is also estimated that there are approximately 180 honorary consuls working for Estonia in 84 different states. Estonia is one of the pioneers of having a working system of consuls (Triniti 2015). The Vienna Convention has stated that an honorary consul must first of all honor the sending state by protecting the citizens and its commercial interests. Secondly, an honorary consul must guide the visitors with the host country provisions and rules, including health, immigration and passport issues. The third obligation for an honorary consul is to be informed about the cultural, commercial and political situation of the host country and to inform the sending state with valuable data. The fourth point states that one must promote the alliance between the sending state and the host state by binding the two via successful trade agreements. This also promotes business, culture, commerce and science affairs in the host country (Triniti 2015). Another great example of a well-organized honorary consul system is Iceland, which has an estimated 250 consuls promoting the country globally. There are several similarities between the economic and commercial nuances of Iceland and Estonia. Both countries are built on niche products on the economics side, while having limited resources on their own.

Estonia has been able to adapt to the platform nicely. First of all, it is important to consider that the size of Estonia has set multiple obstacles on the country and therefore the possibility of playing a considerable role on the global level is relatively low. Estonia therefore has built up a system where the country is trying to expand its borders by having a strong net around the world for political, commercial and cultural means. In a way there are similarities with the honorary consul system and E-residency program, as both platforms benefit the state system. In E-residency, the state gets taxes and a new player to enrich the market further and possibly create jobs. From the entrepreneur’s perspective, they gain an affluent and favorable domestic environment to work in. In the honorary consul system, both also benefit from the

system, since the consul seeks the benefits of diplomatic bonuses and experience while the state has a trustworthy link in a specific city or region to back the civilians of the sending state.

The second reason why Estonia commits to the honorary consul system is due to rapid worldwide integration. Overall, travelling has developed immensely and thus the possibilities of visiting distant locations by the sending state civilians urges the state to build a support system which works all over the world. It is clear that the bureaucracy in third world states can be relatively impossible to work against, meaning that all aid from the sending state is fundamental.

A third reason is the growing globalization in international trade. Estonian businesses are progressively seeking to export their goods and services to foreign states and therefore having consuls for marketing the possibilities of trading with Estonia is extremely important. With the right connections and trustworthiness, trade possibilities are created by the work of an honorary consul.

A fourth point is the promotion of Estonian culture globally. In many cases around the world, the Estonians who fled the country during the war are promoting Estonian culture, doing so especially in larger states. Often times they are the ones to have become the honorary consuls. A few prominent examples are Canada, Sweden, Australia and New Zealand. Still, in the case of places like African states, there is an urgent need to promote Estonia, especially to help raise awareness of the possibilities for higher education there.

As one can see, the pros created by honorary consuls are relatively high and the system works well for a small state like Estonia. The benefits are not only political or immigration bound, but also commercial and cultural. Estonia in its geographic as well as budgetary size lacks a global dominance. Therefore building a system of voluntary honorary consuls is extremely helpful for the state.

2.3 Values gained by working as an honorary consul

The ability to travel the world without having the commitment of applying for visas is one of the bonuses of working as an honorary consul. Another big perk which comes with the diplomatic passport is the fact that queues are avoided and routes in the airport are different

from the regular passenger ones. Benefits of being an honorary consul also include the ability to do business internationally. A diplomatic passport likewise enable the consul to receive discounts from airlines and also to receive higher recognition (Diplomatic Consulting 2015). This explains the fact that most of the honorary consuls tend to have a background in business. The authorization helps the consuls benefit for the sake of international trade and build the country's network for cultural and business purposes. As quoted by Kishan Rana: "Hon Cons' are a remarkably effective, almost zero-cost option for representation in cities and regions where countries may not opt to establish fulltime consulates of their own." Many countries are nowadays undermining the values and benefits of honorary consuls. Nowadays as the foreign budgets for states are decreasing, the solution to smaller states should be the honorary consul platform (Diplo 2013). At the end of the day, the platform functions on freewill and competence of the consul and is beneficial for both the consul and state being represented.

2.4 Business and trade promotion

First of all, one of the core reasons for honorary consul recruitment is the fact that it is created in order to promote the sending state commerce, as well as create trustworthy and long-term ties between the companies of both states. Another key characteristic in becoming an honorary consul is to have a business background for successful expansion in commerce between states. For smaller states it is important to find alternative and cost-beneficial ways of creating new commercial paths with numerous regions. There are still weaknesses, which include reducing the quality of aid provided for the sending state businesses and companies. Nevertheless, in the case of Estonia, it tries to educate the honorary consuls by having several workshops and gatherings in Estonia from time to time, to expand the know-how of Estonia's latest breakthroughs and promising new entrepreneurs. These kinds of activities will both provide a great overview of the current situation and an understanding of which direction to move forward in. The best outcome businesswise for the honorary consul is to promote the unique sides of economies, which in the case of Estonia means a lot of niche products. In that case the significant aspects are best represented and probabilities of business are the highest.

When discussing trade and quantities of markets, the one who is constantly stepping on the toes of the global hegemon USA is China. There are several reasons why China has become

the fundamental trade partner in the world. Talking more specifically about Chinese and Estonian relations, the situation could be a lot better. Nevertheless, taking a pause and comparing the sizes of the economies between the small Estonia and gigantic China gives a clear overview of how difficult it is to create long-lasting ties between these two countries. Focusing on the China and Estonia relations and considering its relevance especially for the Estonian economy, the need for competent and trustworthy honorary consuls is crucial. The main key for success in China is understanding regional importance and how various areas act differently to diverse products and services, like how Shanghai differs from Beijing. Dividing the pros and cons of such relations with China from the Estonian perspective, starting with the positive side, the potential lies in the quantity of the population and the enormous size of the market. The large market on the other hand has led the situation to the point where most of the market has providers, meaning that the market is leaning towards a niche demand. Estonia's value lies especially in niche products and so far, the trends have shown that the globally unique and authentic products and services have been the most successful area. Another positive aspect concerning China is activity in Foreign Direct Investments, which comprises foreign activities and gives them valuable funding (Välisministeerium 2014). According to the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the key struggles concerning commercial ties with China are the far distance, unfamiliar business environment, struggles in finding and sustaining contacts in China, the size of Estonian companies, the discouragement of taking large scale risks and finally the large state level attendance in business affairs, which ultimately generates bureaucracy (Välisministeerium 2014). Trade wise, Estonia needs to focus on pure and environment-friendly products, starting from wood based products and finishing with the nutrition sector. The only possibility to succeed is to stand out with uncommon and new products and services. A crucial point in success is marketing and its efficient usage by developing clusters and platforms for a lot of businesses to use in entering foreign markets (Välisministeerium 2014).

Concerning trade, the Canadian ambassador for Estonia Gita Kalmet has had some valuable points to add to Estonia-Canada trade relations. One of the foremost reasons for the solid trade and overall business partnership between the two countries is the large communities of Estonian migrants living all across Canada. Gita Kalmet affirms, though, that there is room for improvements. "Canada is Estonia's 31st largest trading partner as its 23rd largest export market and 40th largest source of imports. Estonians trade more with neighbors and partners in

Europe and for Canada, our market may often seem too small” (Gita Kalmet 2014). Nevertheless, there are still multiple reasons for seeking trade with Estonia, when looking at it from the Canadian perspective. Estonia and the whole Baltic Sea region is a great “hub” station where to expand their export goods and resources. The Baltic Sea region consists of over 100 million potential buyers, which is internationally a respectable market to look at. Kalmet states that the region holds many attractive assets which make the market even more desirable. First and foremost, the economies in the international sense are relatively open. The Baltic Sea states are eager to trade domestically and also have an export orientation. This in a way is the first criteria for successful trading. Secondly the citizens are highly educated and have a great work ethic, which also makes the trading more fluent and pleasant. There are numerous other benefits from great infrastructure to vigorous business communities. Another unique part of the Baltic Sea region aspect trade wise is the strong connection (including border wise) to Russia (Gita Kalmet 2014). Focusing solely on Estonia, it holds one of the most desired transit corridors between Eastern Europe, the rest of Europe and North-America. Kalmet talks precisely about service export values which in most cases include exceptional startups and our professionalism in government based systems, starting with E-health and E-school platforms. In accordance to a report by the OECD and European Commission, Estonia ranks 1st in a list of 30 countries in appliance of e-health services. The protected systems assure complete coverage of patient health records to doctors, regardless of their location in Estonia (Gita Kalmet 2014). Having said that, Estonia has become a pioneer in numerous services dealing with E-solutions for more transparent and efficient methods of governing. Returning to the matter of honorary consuls for Estonia especially, consuls who are representing Estonia in their host countries have to get accustomed to trends and be able to market the values Estonia has to offer export wise. Research conducted for the thesis has also shown that there is large interest in e-solutions. The further results will come later on in the methodology section.

2.5 Cultural role of an honorary consul

As in the case of commerce and business, the performance of putting together events and hosting Estonian musicians to perform for the Estonian society is as important as is the economically beneficial part. Culture and commerce go hand in hand, as both bring value and opportunities to each other. Cultural promotion and branding is the cornerstone of maintaining

ethnic uniqueness. A great example for the rest to follow is the USA and Canada, where the Estonian communities continue valuing their traditions and keeping the culture very much alive. The honorary consuls from that region are mostly also exiled Estonians or their descendants, which gives value to the honorary consular system due to the ability of negotiating between the Canadians and Estonians living in the region. In addition, the ties also allow the consuls to bring together both sides of the story (being the North-American region and Estonia) for all sorts of purposes starting from trade and ending with concerts focused on Estonian heritage. Culture and its promotion also works the other way around, as in different cases the honorary consuls seek to cultivate the visitors from Estonia about the target region. Cultural appreciation is the key to having healthy relationship among the two sides. While the global balance of relations is going through turbulence, the important thing is to value the long term partnerships by accepting each other in every way. Promoting cultural events such as the celebration of the National Day of Independence will allow for Canadians to acknowledge respect for and together with Estonians.

Sources of channels for increasing acknowledgment and awareness of Estonia include broadcasts and articles written for local news. Whereas the honorary consul holds prestige and has respect amongst citizens, the spoken and written word gives the consul the ability to reach the people and transfer ideas and thoughts via media. Being able to express the values and news is extremely important, as the role of a consul is to be the messenger of word. The summary of legitimate data and respect among individuals gives honorary consuls the ability to transfer knowhow and ideas.

2.6 Tourism and promotion

When talking about the multiple duties an honorary consul needs to face, promoting of the region and attracting tourists holds a strong importance in the relations between the two states. Helping to build the tourism sector aids the local community in multiple ways such as local employment and better infrastructure. Tourism in many regions is the main source of income and from the state perspective also taxation fees from the civilians. Social benefits are another value brought together with tourism, which means that tourists are shown the cultural heritage and overall ways of life in the region, which in long term is the key to survival of

traditions. Honorary consuls can directly make a difference by branding and promoting regional values and benefits to the rest, with it eventually becoming tourism, whether it is motivated by commerce and business or leisure.

Another benefit that comes with tourism is the financial aid for the preservation of natural resources and overall ecosystems. The financial resources are targeted into conservation of nature, which ultimately result in pure and original environments for tourists and locals. All in all, promoting tourism will eventually lead to opportunities in developing the regions in all kinds of sectors and honorary consuls with the abilities and contacts are very much suitable for the duty.

2.7 The question of necessity on the global diplomatic arena

As researched and examined, the role of the honorary consular system in the case of Estonia works smoothly and therefore the question of necessity is relatively irrelevant. The main question is where the world is heading in the coming years and what the relations will look like in the future. The concept of honorary consul needs to advance along with the changes of global diplomacy. As discussed before, Estonia as a small country yet with relatively globalized citizens uses the platform and relies on the initiative of the consuls. With the compactness that Estonia has, communication works without any larger bureaucratic resistances, which gives both states the opportunity of cooperation. The honorary consul platform suits the case of Estonia, whereas human resource of Estonia is being spread around the globe, which compels in assistance of the state. Regarding the necessity, the answer is even more audacious. The world is heading towards a system where the amount of honorary consuls and voluntary forces are rising due to the scarce funding from the state level into foreign affairs.

According to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia, in 2017 Estonia is represented in 46 official consulates, which in global numbers is relatively small. As the alternative option in adapting honorary consul is wide based. As of 2017, Estonia has 200 honorary consuls in 86 different states working for the state to support Estonians and promote trade, investments and culture (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia 2017).

As necessity for help in foreign states is relatively high, the aid provided for citizens varies as well. For example, John Soosaar, an honorary consul working for Estonia in Nova Scotia, Canada, states that “my work involves answering requests for Estonian passports and

delivering them and ID cards when they arrive by Special Delivery. My main task is to make the government and the population informed about Estonia and what it has to offer in trade, tourism and its involvement in Europe” (John Soosaar 2017). The primal necessity of honorary consuls relies on the commitments of consular aid, which is followed by the work on transmitting information about trade and tourism.

Marcel van den Heuvel, an honorary consul in the Netherlands working to represent Estonia states the main tasks as first of all, issuing official and urgent documents to Estonian citizens following the overall support for those in need of help. Most often troubles occur in struggles with the authorities, also problems in airports and harbors. Van den Heuvel also states representing Estonia at visits and official meetings while communicating with whether politicians, business people or artists (Marcel van den Heuvel 2017).

Irene Panagopoulos, an honorary consul for Southern hemisphere of Greece is also a proud representative for Estonia. Irene believes that honorary consuls continually function as cultural contacts. Consuls organize events to raise awareness and build long-lasting relationship between the two states. What is also urgent to remember, honorary consuls act as a support system in case embassies needing assistance (Irene Panagopoulos 2017).

3. RESEARCH

Starting with the description of the sample consisting of honorary consuls working as voluntary representatives for Estonia, the list is wide and consists of individuals from similar, yet different careers. Sample consists of 7 honorary consuls worldwide. The choice was formed while keeping in mind geography. For example, receiving answers from North-American and European hemisphere. Europe and North- America have arguably the strongest ties in trade, investments and culture with Estonia and therefore the chosen honorary consuls should grant legitimate reflection of the current situation concerning their representative duties. As mentioned before in the honorary consul segment, most of the honorary consuls have an entrepreneurial background, yet there are of course exceptions. Furthermore I would like to give a short overview of the questioned honorary consuls.

First of all, honorary consul in Amsterdam, the Netherlands is Mr. Marcel Edwin van den Heuvel. Van den Heuvel for example works for international organizations as a conflict and crisis manager. He also has published several books. Furthermore, the honorary consul has taken part as a speaker at conferences directed on trade in Europe held in Amsterdam.

Second interviewee is Hans Graf, who is responsible for Stäfa region in Switzerland. Switzerland holds great value in developing commercial ties with Estonia and therefore there is a lot of potential work in creating and also bringing together counterparts. Graf is a owner and manager of a consulting firm which is focused in legal, public and political affairs. Graf has been the honorary consul for Estonia since 1998.

Third interviewee is Karin Ellis, responsible for city of Bergen, Norway. Ellis is an extremely accomplished IT engineer for the last 30 years, whereas she has worked for several global companies. In 2011, Ellis started her own company which focuses on the conduct and developing of intercultural trainings. The courses are purely practical, job related and are providing very specific information for the targeted environment. In 2014, Karin Ellis became the honorary consul in Bergen for Estonia.

Fourth honorary consul is Irene Panagopoulos, who is liable for Athens, Greece. Mrs. Panagopoulos is the managing director for Magna Marine, Inc., which is a Greek private

company with domestic subsidiaries. The firm provides deep sea freight transportation services. Panagopoulos has been the honorary consul for Athens since 2005.

Mr. Jaak Treiman is the current honorary consul in Los Angeles, USA and representing the Republic of Estonia. Treiman was born in Estonia, but escaped during the Second World War and ended up in Los Angeles in 1951. Treiman by profession is a lawyer, however currently he is working for a non-profit corporation committed to identifying and building on small but significant initiatives started by local innovators in fragile countries. Treiman was assigned as the honorary consul in Los Angeles in 1986, which clearly is a sign of competence.

Sixth interviewee is John Soosaar, the honorary representative in Nova Scotia, Canada. Throughout the years, Soosaar has been employed in media as whether producer or communication specialist. Currently Soosaar is working as a communication specialist in Soosaar Media Consultants. Mr. John Soosaar became the honorary consul in Nova Scotia province in 2010.

Finally, Palle Bo Staermose is the honorary consul in Odense, Denmark. Mr. Staermose is the CEO of Juliana Greenhouses. Staermose is also an active promoter of Danish business environment and throughout the years has presented his ideas at several conferences addressing Danish and Estonian commercial ties.

All of the 7 interviewees have different backgrounds of profession, which gives the research also a wider scope of opinions.

3.1 Methodology

For the research part I have used qualitative analysis, which in this case uses the written descriptions of participants, who are honorary consuls and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia. The main focus of the qualitative analysis is to gain valuable information and data from the immediate source, who in this case are the consuls and their duties and outcomes. The qualitative method is based primarily on questionnaires and an analysis of the gained data. Questionnaires were used due to the simplicity and relatively fast response from the consuls, and moreover because of the fact that the consuls are located all over the world, which makes live interviews nearly impossible. Questionnaires consist of questions that ask about the role of

honorary consuls, their duties, benefits etc. The main goal for the qualitative method is to gain as much different valuable information from different consuls all around the world working for The Republic of Estonia as possible. While the answers in most cases should consist of similar answers, nevertheless the aspect of internationality means that the answers may differ from region to region and their distances from the target state which in this case is Estonia. The qualitative method was realized in a questionnaire form consisting of five questions mainly targeting the job specifications and characteristics. The honorary consuls were contacted via mail and the addresses are from a database consisting of all active honorary consuls. As a remark, for the sake of gathering consular work with all of its duties (culture, trade and business) the consuls were mainly chosen because of the density of ties between two states. For example, smaller regions who do not hold any trading ties with Estonia whatsoever were not included. The questionnaires were assembled regarding the main fields, where the work is most crucial. The responses gained will answer the research questions concerning whether and how the honorary consul system works in the case of Estonia and also, at least according to the working consul, what the main benefits and values of the platform are. In the case of the second questionnaire, the main objective was to receive legitimate and more specific answers about the work of honorary consuls from the ministry. The ministry as the manager of the program should have valid data. Nevertheless when discussing the output from the state entity, there may be issues with sharing data about the honorary consuls, since state level norms insist privacy and limited reachability.

The questions were sent in the original language, which is Estonian, therefore the questions and answers will be transmitted to English via overview. The main focus with contact with the ministry is to gain valuable and legitimate data of the current situation of honorary consuls and diplomacy overall. The source is extremely trustworthy, and thus the information is extremely up to date and relevant.

The questions for the consular department of the ministry, which directly deals with the honorary consul network, consisted of 5 questions and focused mainly on the responsibilities that the consuls are urged to take part in. The questions touched matters such as passing out legal documents with rightful measures or how Estonia educates the consul at the annual meetings in Tallinn as well as how the knowhow refreshing looks like. The questionnaire also included a commercial and business side, where the focus was on the ability to bring two sides of the matter together and promote successful trade.

3.2 Analysis of the answers from honorary consuls

The first observation clarifies that most duties and obligations are analogous, whereas the honorary consular conventions are mostly held by states where civilian communities are wider and in need of persistent assistance. Most of the consuls claimed that the main role is to give assistance to the salaried and professional consuls stated by the home state. The main goal is to have an assisting function to compliment the work of professional and authorized consuls. What came out was that the main idea is to provide all sorts of aid to the civilians, who in this case are Estonians. The aid varies from having trouble with the authorities of the target state to helping connect Estonian exporters to target state importers or helping Estonian musicians find potential concerts.

Another key similarity which came out from the questionnaire was being a marketer/brander for the sending state. This includes hosting events, gatherings and celebrating Estonian anniversaries, which all raise consciousness among foreign civilians. It provides a global network of physical business cards in order to promote business, commerce and culture. Nevertheless these positive aspects are not the primary points, as the essential aim is to aid Estonian citizens who for some reason are in need of help. There can be multiple reasons for the need for help, starting with troubles with the authorities and ending with dangers caused by forces of nature. What also came out from the questionnaire was the point about giving out visas, passports and also in some cases Estonian ID-cards. With the expanded network of honorary consuls, the work is simplified and the local citizens of Estonians aided. Most of the consuls brought out this point and this is the fundamental point of work as an honorary consul.

The second matter addressed the time spent for the obligations of consul work on a weekly basis. The answers varied, but in most cases it was around 2 hours or more. Nevertheless, in some cases the spent time varied between 4 and 6 hours per week and in one case even 15 and more. The judicious evidence claims that the work hours may vary by location of the honorary consul. In the case of 15-20 hours per week spent on purely honorary consul duties, the volume of variety of obligations differs from a smaller region consul, where the quantity of civilians is also smaller. The position of the honorary consul for Estonia working in the United States and more precisely in California, which consists of a lot of tech based

gatherings and networking for both Estonians and locals, meant that the time spent on related duties may last longer.

Thirdly, the process of becoming an honorary consul is by all means done in the same pattern when taking into consideration the answers given by the consuls. The process of becoming one in most of the cases is long and develops over time, which means that most of the honorary consuls have achieved some sort of competence in the state affairs and have been able to build a solid ground of financial sovereignty and network. In most of the cases handled here, the consuls claimed to have been asked to perform the role of honorary consul. In addition, it was stated that the process of legally becoming a consul usually takes 1-2 years, depending on the complexity of the state legal matters and also on the relatively slow bureaucracy machine. What also makes a difference is the size of the market in which a certain consul works in. As an example, Jaak Treiman, who is the administrated honorary consul of California and its areas, is increasingly dealing with the Silicon Valley and Estonian startups interaction, which creates potential linkages between the two markets. Another thing to be mentioned is that the region has attracted more and more tourists and habitants from Estonia, offering great business and innovative climate and more.

The fourth question addressed the beneficial part of being an honorary consul. The majority of answers were attached with the idea of meeting interesting people and building an even stronger network and secondly being able to take part in engaging events, which provide valuable knowhow and at the same time give the possibility of meeting new contacts. To analyze the first aspect, most of the meetings as told by the consuls are at consular corps and also by meeting high officials of Estonia visiting the region. In many cases the delegations consist of officials and business orientated people seeking for new trading partners and trade destinations. Consular corps meetings are held regularly and provide efficient cooperation for better results. Corps meeting are also enriched with speakers and visitors from all kinds of cultural, entrepreneurial and political backgrounds about the current situation in Estonian affairs as well as the target location latest developments.

Another point brought out was the briefing of the locals in consular areas around the world. Consuls write and perform speeches, publish articles and texts about Estonian welfare and opportunities in all kinds of spheres. Educating the citizens and urging them to

acknowledge the possibilities and values Estonia as a state has to offer is a major component of this.

Lastly comes the interaction with other accompanied consuls and its values. As told by the surveyed consuls, the feeling of togetherness and cooperation is relatively high. First of all, most of the state independence days are celebrated with each other and the overall communication is dense. As mentioned before, California and more precisely Los Angeles has the third largest consular corps in the world and the region hosts meetings and plenums monthly. This provides the members with an opportunity to interact and exchange ideas on various matters concerning the work of an honorary consul.

3.3 Analysis of the answers from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Another questionnaire was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, regarding questions on consular, statistical and commercial topics. The first question addressed the statistics of the actual number of working honorary consul working for Estonia. On 12.04.2017, the confirmed number is 200 honorary consuls in 86 different states. The numbers show that nearly every state has a least two honorary consuls working in different regions, with the numbers being based on criteria such as the size of state, opportunities in commerce and business etc.

The second question focused on whether Estonia needs the program and what the benefits of the honorary consul arrangement are. According to the Ministry, Estonia holds 48 official consular representative points, which on the international scale is extremely low. In accordance to the constitutional law of Estonia, the state needs to protect its citizens internally and externally. Due to the rapid growth of travelling and the need for consular cover, the necessity for a global presence is essential. Estonia as a small state has found a cost-beneficial and effective way of being represented across the world, without having the need of owning a large number of official embassies. According to the Ministry, besides the consular role, honorary consuls play key roles in basic representation of the state, promotion of commercial and cultural ties and overall exchange of contacts.

The third question addressed the issuance of documents and how it is concerned with consuls. The Police and Board office sends the civilian passport or ID-card to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Depending on whether the region has an embassy or just the honorary consul,

the package is sent via diplomatic mail to the target location. The documents are then issued by the consuls regarding identification laws.

The last question addressed the matter of educating the honorary consuls and by which means the consuls are cultivated by Estonia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia informs the consuls about innovations concerning the state, along with the constant correspondence between embassies and honorary consul and, as said before, between the ministry and the consuls. There are regular meetings including a state (for example Finland) or larger regions such as Oceania and Asia. Estonia also hosts a largescale conference for consuls every 3-4 years to expand their knowhow and contacts. The next conference is set to take place in the summer of 2018.

3.4 The outcome of the questions and answers

All in all, the amount of information given by the consuls was enough to build a conscious impression of the essence of work and tasks for the officers. The answers provided enough data to perform a brief analysis and therefore to provide genuine material of actual working samples, who in this research are consuls. The answers provided did have similar patters to them and in most cases, besides the hourly effort put into work, the job descriptions do not vary. The main reason for that is the fact that the work and tasks are regulated with the Vienna Convention. Altogether, the answers given allowed to expand the research and give it a realistic scope and perspective.

Continuing the analysis, the answers given by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Estonia were extremely data-orientated, which gave the research an insight into quantities of different aspects concerning honorary consuls. The answers showed how exactly the issuing of documents looks step-by-step and by which means the honorary consul system is working for Estonia, as well as what the main benefits and outcomes are. The feedback brought straight-forward answers, which was expected beforehand. The answers were also similar between the ministry and the questioned consuls, which again shows how the system is directly in a symbiosis and regulated with strict norms and quotas. Without a doubt, the public sector needs to function strictly by norms and follow the constitutional laws, in order to maintain transparency and balance.

For the final examination of the research questions, multiple spoken facts prove that the module of using voluntary consuls for better cooperation between Estonia and foreign states is working and is rapidly enlarging too. The diplomatic world and multilateral relations are molding and the world has to adapt to the changes. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and consuls themselves are extremely proud of the system and strive to expand effectiveness and cooperation in business, commerce and culture. Secondly, as researched and furthermore discussed with consuls via questions, the main direct and indirect benefits include the ongoing branding and aiding citizens. From one part, the individual ties help connect businesses in Estonia and in the destination and also help the local citizens be more aware of Estonia, while also providing consular support and aid to Estonians if needed. The international net of Estonian communities obligate Estonia to provide backing and the honorary consul plan makes it possible.

CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, the world is globalizing and thus the diplomatic relationships are molding as well. In a globalized world, travelling has become a norm, which means human resources are also constantly on the move. Presence is vital in order to preserve the wellbeing of citizens by providing aid of any kind. The system used by smaller states, which is the honorary consul program, has brought value and presence internationally for decades. Also, as mentioned before, the cost-beneficial module of worldwide voluntary support works great. For a small state, such as Estonia, the structural fuse between official embassies and honorary consul works in the case of small international forces. Estonia has the tools to expand globally via commercial, cultural and political breakthroughs and honorary consuls play an urgent part of broadening Estonian values. The blend of providing consular assistance in the target location, while having a strong branch of the nation's promoters, eventually brings ties in commerce and foreign investments. The interviews provided the research with legitimate information about the benefits. The research questions of how does the platform of honorary consuls work in the case of Estonia and what are the exact values brought by the program were examined and reflect the urgency of the platform. The program is working exceptionally well for the Estonian foreign affairs model and is rapidly expanding as Estonians are as well expanding to new grounds. The beneficiaries brought by the profession were confirmed by the questionnaires as the honorary consuls claimed to have the most of the workload in consular operations as well as building commercial and business affairs while also focusing on the culture and heritage vitality. From the surprising part of analysis of answers, the motivation is extremely high nevertheless the fact that no salaries are included. Strive of creating value for Estonia in turn grants new contacts and fascinating events. The honorary consuls surveyed during the research provided the reflection of the actual everyday duties, so the research is legitimate and real. The study showed exactly how crucial is the program as the support system for global locations. For the future, the model proved by the case of Estonia, states with similar size and capabilities should adapt to the model and invest in the training of honorary consuls and witness in time how much positivity in many aspects it will bring. All in all, answering the research title claim of the role of an honorary consul on the global diplomacy scale in the example of Republic of Estonia, the answer is that the system of honorary consuls is working in the example of Estonia and enables the state to provide assistance in commercial, consular and cultural means. 200 honorary

consuls worldwide bringing value and binding relations and due to the rapidly globalizing world, the demand for honorary consul backup will grow even more in the coming years. The predictions for the future when it comes to diplomacy, moreover consular affairs, the globalization is inevitable thus national foreign ministries need to adapt to the pattern and seek for alternatives such as honorary consul program.

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APPENDICES

First for the questionnaire I put together these questions the honorary consuls to answer

1. Please describe the main tasks of an honorary consul?
2. How much time you have to devote to it weekly?
3. Please describe the process of becoming an honorary consul and what are the criteria for candidacy?
4. Which are the main benefits for you of being nominated as an honorary consul?
5. Please describe the cooperation you have with other diplomats and the country you are representing?

Also I will attach the answers in their pure form without any changes

Marcel van den Heuvel (The Netherlands)

1. Issuing official and emergency documents to Estonian citizens.
 2. Acting up on Estonian citizens whom need support. Like being a victim of crime, getting into trouble with the police or the Dutch authorities. Problems in the harbor or at the airport.
 3. Representing Estonia at events, visits and meeting that take place in my city/region. This can be a visit of the Estonian Navy, ministers, politicians, business people or artists.
 4. Regular meetings with the embassy and Estonian diplomats.
 5. Representing Estonia at official events, exhibition fairs.
 6. Promote Estonian business and culture
 7. Maintain a network if Estonians in my city/region and create a network to support Estonian visitors/officials.
2. How much time you have to devote to it weekly?

Approximately 2-4 hours per week.

3. Please describe the process of becoming an honorary consul and what are the criteria for candidacy?

I was asked. Probably because I am an investor in Estonia. The process then took almost two years.

4. Which are the main benefits for you of being nominated as an honorary consul?

None

5. Please describe the cooperation you have with other diplomats and the country you are representing?

See under answer #1

Hans Graf (Switzerland)

1. The tasks are fixed in the Vienna Convention from 24.4.1963 and in the Handbook from the MFA of Estonia

2. In normal times about 6 hours, in connections with events, visits, conferences or travels it can be much more

3. About the criteria you has to ask your MFA

4. It is an interesting task

5. Very various. It depend a lot on personal initiative.

Karin Ellis (Norway)

1. Please describe the main tasks of an honorary consul?

Main tasks are to hand out passports and ID cards and to issue Certificate of Returns for those without or lost passports.

2. How much time you have to devote to it weekly?

Approx. 1 hour.

3. Please describe the process of becoming an honorary consul and what are the criteria for candidacy?

Others can answer this better than I can. I was asked to be an honorary consul because of my interest in intercultural trainings/other cultures and the company I have founded (www.ellisculture.com).

I went for a 3 hour interview in Tallinn. My candidacy had to be approved by the Estonian and Norwegian Foreign Ministries and this process took 12 months.

4. Which are the main benefits for you of being nominated as an honorary consul?

I get to meet Estonians in Norway. As a member of CCB (Corps Consular Bergen) in Bergen I also get invited to business events.

5. Please describe the cooperation you have with other diplomats and the country you are representing?

I meet regularly with the other honorary consuls in Bergen (CCB) and sometimes consuls in other places in Norway (CCN).

Irene Panagopoulos (Greece)

My name is Irene Panagopoulos. I'm an Honorary Consul in Greece for the area of South Greece with consul office in the city of Patras. I have been a consul since 2004 and that makes me the longest honorary Consul of Greece. I was nominated by the Greek Ministry of the Exterior Consulate Office and had to pass an arduous examination and interviewing procedure both in Athens and in Estonia. I was one of the very few first female consuls.

I believe Estonia did not have embassy in Greece then. In the first years of our mission as consuls we were much more involved into day to day operation because of absence of official embassy. We did most of the paperwork, legal work, etc. We were only two consuls to cover the country in addition to the new Estonian Republic Consulate of three members. We were chosen as persons who can be trusted. We had an adequate financial status and no conflicts of interest.

We were asked to help build connections for a renewed nation member in Europe, the Republic of Estonia, sometimes covering the expenses ourselves. Not many persons knew anything about Estonia.

Greece, a country with strong tourism traditions, in the first years, didn't have any tourism relations with Estonia. The few first Estonians who passed through Greece in the nineties, that we know of, were mostly Estonian citizen truck drivers who transferred cargo within European countries and drove to Greece to pass by ferry from port of Patras Greece to Italy, to the ports of Ancona or Brindisi. Some issues had occurred concerning them, with thefts on their property, stowaway refugees found in their trucks or missing/stolen documents.

As Consuls we continually act as cultural liaisons. We organize events to create awareness and help to build friendship bonds between the two nations. We support the embassy whenever our assistance is needed. We are never paid. On the contrary often times, if we are in a position to afford it, we will undertake events or help support financially fully or in part, other initiatives as necessary. In Greece we still have a financial crisis and the country and the citizens are impoverished.

Between Greece and Estonia we have in common the love of the sea and the music. Many Greeks and Estonians work on ships and many more have main source of living from the sea. We both have islands and hence ferries for transportation. The main business of my family until 2007 was the ferry business. This is how I was connected to the Estonian people, through my family's business in the Baltic Sea and the red Superfast ships. Our ships over there were bought by the Tallink company and now they sail under their new colors. I am continuing to be Honorary Consul and proud at that. I visit Estonia every two years. I don't speak the language.

Today tourism from Estonia and to Estonia is well established. We even know of Estonians who live in Greece and vice versa, have businesses together and there are several mixed

marriages between Greek and Estonian persons. I am not as busy as a Consul anymore since nowadays the Embassy is doing everything. The traffic between our countries has grown tremendously. We are many more consuls in Greece now too. Some of the bigger Greek islands now have consuls. We meet annually or if asked by the Embassy and we discuss about cultural issues and political issues that concern the two nations. We love Estonia and we remain truly committed.

Jaak Treiman (United States of America, California)

1. I am attaching a calendar I maintain that shows my activities for last year. In addition, I respond to telephone calls, text messages, emails and various other forms of communication. Generally these are questions concerning Estonia, documents required to go to Estonia, visa questions (although I am not authorized to issue visas), or requests for information about Estonia. Also not appearing on the calendar is one of the more useless activities honorary consuls are engaged in, namely, making personal delivery of passports - something that the United States does by mail.
2. Time spent varies from week to week. If you count travel time to various events and meetings I would estimate about 15 - 20 hours per seven day week, remembering a number of functions take place in the evening.
3. I was appointed in 1986 and the process is now very different. I'm attaching the draft of an excerpt I am preparing for a book that may or may not come out around Christmas of this year. That tells you what my process was like. I suggest you contact the foreign ministry for the current procedures.
4. Meeting interesting people and attending some interesting events. Financially it is a net loss.
5. Honorary Estonian consuls in North America maintain informal contact with each other. As far as contact with consuls from other countries, Los Angeles has the third largest consular corps in the world and we have monthly luncheons. In addition, the EU consuls hold monthly meetings. We also see each other at the various events the consular corps is invited to.

John Soosaar (Canada)

1. I can only speak for my own work after six years as Honorary Consul in Nova Scotia, a province roughly the size of Estonia with a population of 940,000. My work involves answering requests for Estonian passports and delivering them and ID cards when they arrive by Special Delivery. My main task is to make the government and the population informed about Estonia and what it has to offer in trade, tourism and its involvement in Europe. People are also interested in such things as e-government, e-residency etc. I also make people aware of Estonia's history and current events in articles I write for newspapers and magazines. I meet monthly with about 30 other Honorary Consuls here in Halifax to discuss matters involving government, trade and Consular issues. Occasionally I am called upon to assist Estonians who may have need of Consular assistance. I also keep our Ambassador in Ottawa informed on matter which may impact Estonia. I also speak at various forums about defence matters involving Estonia and the Baltic Countries. I am currently working with a local businessman who is an e-resident and wants to travel to Estonia this year to investigate business connections.

2. I try to spend at least two hours a week focused on consular matters. However that varies and there are weeks when I may spend more time, if I'm writing a speech or dealing with inquiries.

3. In my case I was approached after retiring from a career in journalism. I have been told that I was selected mainly because my parents were Estonian, I have always campaigned for Estonian independence, speak the language and have many contacts in government and business. During my time as a television producer and assignment editor that news about the Baltic countries was included in newscasts, particularly in the late 1980s and in 1991. I have written a book about my initial visit to Estonia in 1991 as a translator for Canada's Minister of International Trade Michael Wilson, which I have distributed to some Estonian diplomats and friends.

4. I think the main benefit is that I can help the homeland of my parents in any way I can. Since independence I have been involved in shipping vans to Estonia to assist businesses which needed them, have put together a trade mission in the mid 1990s, written about Estonia, brought the daughter of a friend here to study English and live with my family. But I think the main

benefit has been to make Canadians aware of the country and what it has to offer. I think that during my time as Honorary Consul many more Atlantic Canadians are aware of Estonia through articles and recently broadcasts with which I have been involved.

5. I have found that all the other Honorary Consuls with whom I interact have a very positive image of Estonia and the Baltic Countries and are proud to invite me and my wife to various events where I can represent Estonia. Nova Scotia's Lieutenant-Government invites us to various events at Government House. As Honorary Consul I have also established a close working relationship with Ambassador Gita Kalmet and with her help in 2015 we were able to honor a former Canadian Attorney-General with a high Estonian government award for his family's help when 40 Estonian refugees arrived in Nova Scotia in 1949. I have also been to Ottawa several times to meet with Estonian diplomats as they were sworn in by Canada's Governor General. The Consuls for Poland and Latvia are invited to the celebration of Estonian Independence day in my home every year and I attend theirs.

Bo Staermose (Denmark)

1) The main task is to represent Estonia in the dedicated area and inform the embassy of relevant matters. We deliver a number of passports to local Estonians throughout the year, and at the same time we help Estonian companies to find partners in Denmark.

2) 1-2 hours per week.

3) I think it is more relevant to have an answer from the Estonian Foreign Ministry. However, I was contacted by the Estonian Ambassador who paid me a visit, and thereafter I was informed that the Consulate was vacant and the Ambassador would be happy if I would apply for the position.

4) It's difficult to talk about "main benefits" but I consider it an honor to represent Estonia in Denmark, and at the same time I think it is interesting to have close relations to another country.

5) I have been active in the Danish business community for quite some time and have also been a board member of the Danish Export Council, which is a part of the Danish Foreign Ministry. I have therefore had a number of contacts with other diplomats already before I was appointed honorary consul.

The answers from The Ministry of Foreign Affairs

1. 2017. aasta seisuga Eesti heaks töötavate aukonsulite arv?

Eestil on 12.04.2017 seisuga 200 aukonsulit 86 riigis.

2. Miks kasutab Eesti aukonsulite programmi ning mis on selle eelised?

Eestil on vaid 46 välisesindust, aga põhiseadusest tulenev kohustus oma riigi kodanikke ka välisriigis kaitsta. Inimesed reisivad üha rohkem, nõudlus konsulaarkaitse järele on pidevalt suurenenud. Aukonsulid on soodne viis väikeriigil olla esindatud. Konsulaarvaldkonna kõrval on oluline riigi üldine esindamine, majandus- ja kultuurisuhete arendamine ning kõikvõimalike kontaktide vahendamine.

3. Kuidas näeb välja välisriikides toimuv passide väljastus aukonsulite poolt?

Politsei ja Piirivalveametist saadetakse Eesti kodaniku passid ja ID-kaardid välisministeeriumisse ning olenevalt sellest, kas riigis on olemas Eesti saatkond või mitte, liiguvad passid diplomaatilise postiga kas otse aukonsuliteni või saatkonna vahendusel aukonsuliteni. Aukonsulid väljastavad Eesti kodaniku passi või ID-kaardi isikut tõendavate dokumentide seadust järgides.

4. Kuidas näeb välja aukonsulite harimine Eestiga seonduvate uuenduste näol?

Uuendustest teavitame aukonsuleid e-maili teel, pidevalt toimub infovahetus välisministeeriumi ja aukonsulite ning saatkondade ja aukonsulite vahel. Regulaarselt korraldatakse ühe riigi (nt Soome) või regiooni (nt Ladina-Ameerika, Aasia ja Austraalia/Okeaania) aukonsulite kohtumisi. Iga 3-4 aasta tagant toimub Eestis kõiki aukonsuleid koondav konverents (järgmine on planeeritud 2018. a suveks