



Elections in Information Society: *online*-campaigns 2011 in Estonia

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Topics to be covered

- **background, earlier studies**
- **research questions and methods**
- **preliminary findings**
- **conclusions**

Background

- **Elections as one of the most important milestones to evaluate the level of democracy in society**
- **Estonia as good case for describing possible influence and effects of internet on democracy**

Earlier studies

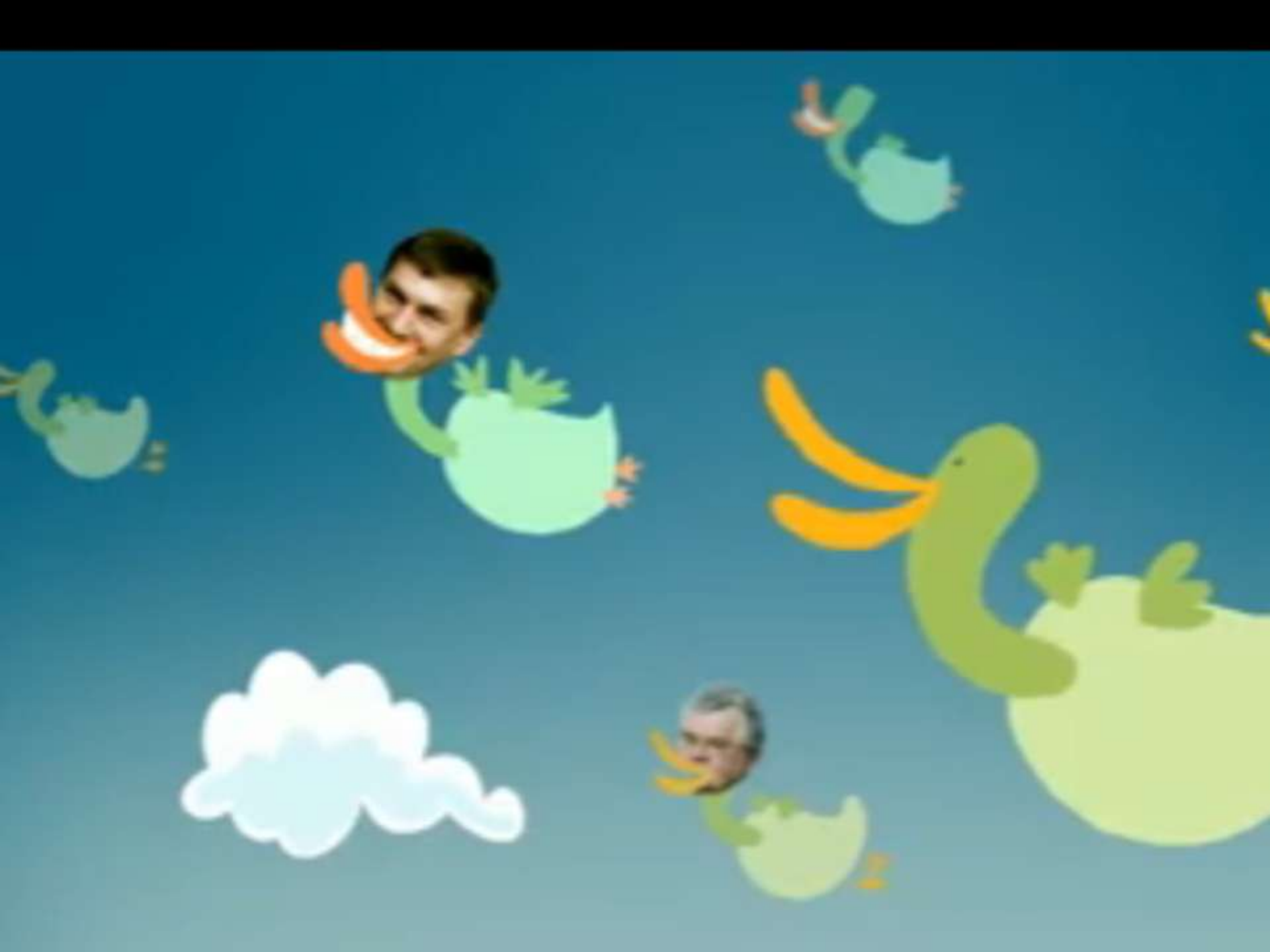
June 2009 EP elections and –

discourse analysis of online-campaigns in various *online*-environments, including social media

October 2009 local elections –

Altogether 227 official web pages of local governments, 472 items of social media (includes Facebook, Twitter, blogs), 29 online newspapers were analysed using observation, content and discourse analysis methods

2010 - Study on use of social media among members of last Estonian Parliament



**What characterizes political communication
in *online*-environments in period preceding
Estonian Parliamentary elections 2011?**

Methods

- **Quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods combined**
- **Analyzed by experts of eGA and MA students of communication studies of University of Tartu**
- **Research period 13.02 – 3.03.2011**

Analýzis

- **Parties** – campaigns on a) official websites; b) social networks; c) *online*-newspapers
- **Candidates** – campaigns on a) blogs , b) social networks, c) *online*-media
- **Confirmity of campaign to the Code of Good Practices on Elections**

FINDINGS

official websites of parties

- **Linked to FB and blogs (Reform Party actively sharing almost every sub-page through social networks, Central Party linking to blogs)**
- **2 parties promote e-voting**

IRL

Eesti keeles | По-русски | In English

Toeta erakonda! Liitu erakonnaga! OTSI

Kodukulude alandamiseks anna e-häääl siin!

Esileht

- Riigikogu valimised 2011
- IRLi leping Sinuga**
- Valitsemisprogramm 2011

IRLi leping Sinuga

IRLi VALIMISNIMEKIRI

TASUTA KÕRGHARIDUS

EMAPENSION

KODUKULUD ALLA

IRL leping Sinuga - Mart Laar

IRLi leping Sinuga

6. märtsil Riigikogu valimistel otsustad, keda usaldad end arendama. Haldus seab, et järgi kuulatakse ta lubadusi

- 3 parties remarkably invested on website before elections
- no interactivity
- tricks and slogans as
“Enough”,
“New Start”,
“It ´s time!

Kust tulevad kõrged hinnad?

**Reformierakond: meie
tõstsiime elektri hinda!**

Kust tulevad kõrged hinnad?

**Reformierakond: meie
tõstsiime toasooja hinda!**

Kust tulevad kõrged hinnad?

**Reformierakond: meie
tõstsiime kütuse hinda!**

parties in social media

- **Leading party in social media seems to be Reformist Party: has 2300 “likers”, every day 6-8 postings, 420 followers in Twitter, 25 videos in Youtube**
- **However, the use of social media is surprisingly modest**

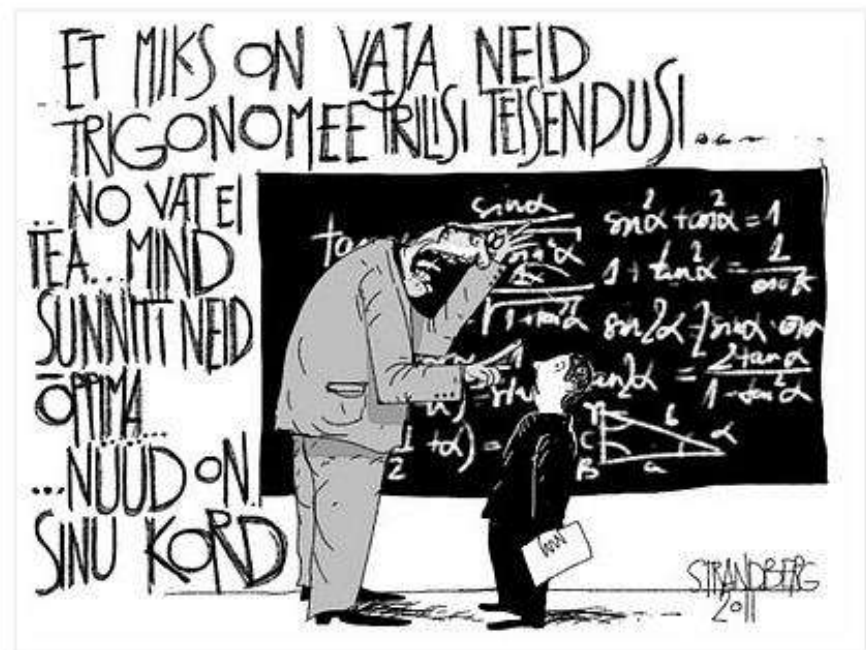
candidates in social media

- **FB is dominating – 70% of candidates are there, but not very actively**
- **No network, fight is individual**

blogs

- 14% of candidates are bloggers, 51% of them present political message
- Less than half of the candidates refer to program or link the blog with social networks
- Only couple of “top-bloggers” are getting commented

ON AEG HARIDUSREVOLUTSIOONIKS



Candidates and parties in *online*-newspapers

- Very modest and unfashionable
- Game “Help to clean up Tallinn and win iPad!”



**conformity of *online*-campaign
to Good Practices on Elections**

Cases of threatening, smearing or mocking of oponents

Võid kindel olla HINNATÕUSUS ja TÕÖPUUDUSES



- Tõstsiime käibemaksu 18% -> 20%
- Tõstsiime toasooja käibemaksu 5% -> 20%
- Tõstsiime maagaasi aktsiisi 1000m³ 0 -> 367 kroonile
- Tõstsiime raamatute ja õpikute käibemaksu 5% -> 9%
- Kaotasime matusetootuse ja tõstsiime matuseteenuste käibemaksu 5% -> 20%
- Tõstsiime kontsertide, spordiürituste, etenduste, muuseumide ja kinopiletite käibemaksu 5% -> 20%
- Tõstsiime majutusteenuste käibemaksu 5% -> 20%
- Tõstsiime kütuseaktsiisi 36%
- Kehtestasime omaosaluse hooldusravis kuni 3000 krooni kuus (191,73 €)
- Kaotasime hambaravi 300 kroonise (19,17 €) hüvitamine 19-62 aastastele
- Kehtestasime pakendiaktsiisi 10-40 krooni (0,64 - 2,56 €) kg kohta
- Vähendasime kohalike omavalitsuste tulubaasi 11,93% -> 11,4%-le
- Peatasime pensioni II samba riigi poolsed maksed
- Üritasime kehtestada kilekotimaksu (plastkotiaktsiisi)



Isamaa ja Res Publ



VÕID KINDEL OLLA

Kui majandus on kindlate uutest käibemaksu- ja **HINNATÕUSU** tege

- Võtsime vastu uue toolepingu seaduse
- Tõstsiime pensioniiga, arvestamata rahva arvamusega
- Lõpetasime pensionide TASUTA kojukande ja tõstsiime hinna 72-le kroonile (4,6 €)
- Karpisime oluliselt haigus- ja hooldushüvitisi
- Tõstsiime ametiautode erisoodustumäära 2000 -> 4000 kroonile (256 €)
- Sulgeme kohalikke postkontoreid ning vähendame ühistranspordilaine
- Vähendasime üliõpilaste sõidusoodustust 500 -> 440 kroonile (28,12 €)
- Vähendasime ülikooli põhitoetust 1000 -> 875 kroonile (55,92 €)
- Kaotasime maksusoodustused ännepelaenu intressidelt

EESTI
upuks võlgadesse

Picking words of oponents out of context



rus / est

Edgar Savisaare Blogi

Blogi

otsi...

Reformierakond ja IRL ajavad sind Eestist ära!

Keskerakond - uus jõud maaelus

[Vaata minu täielikku profilli >](#)

Conclusions

- **Webpage is place for showing your own strengths and desires, social media for oponents' weaknesses and evils**
- **Confusion of roles and individualism**
- **Still, political argument is clearer than before**
- ***online*-environments 2011 are more educative – electors' compasses and games**

What next?

- **Elements of campaign and real outcome**
- **Parties' self-evaluation of campaign**
- **Real effect of online-campaigns on election behaviour**

Thank you!

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