

PROGRAMME OF ACADEMIC STUDIES OF ESTONIAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE  
ABROAD 2011-2017

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Current developments of the Estonian studies abroad

The tradition of academic teaching of the Estonian language has lasted the longest in Finland and Sweden. In the 1833rd and 1834th academic year the first lecturer on Finnish Carl Niclas Keckman at the University of Helsinki shared knowledge about the Estonian language within the course of comparative grammar of related languages. The first course of the Estonian language at Uppsala University took place in the 1901st and 1902nd academic year which was conducted by Karl Bernhard Wiklund. The first lectureship of the Estonian language was opened in 1923 at the University of Helsinki, where there was a lecturer Villem Grünthal-Ridala who worked there as a linguist and folklorist. In 1935 the Estonian language was started being taught in Paris at the National Institute of Languages and Oriental Civilisations (INALCO), In 1938 to 1946 there was a scholar of literature Aleksander Aspel who worked there as a lecturer. In 1938 under the guidance of a folklorist and linguist Felix Oinas the Estonian language was started being taught at the University of Budapest.

The number of universities abroad who provided systematic teaching of the Estonian language increased in the second half of the 20th century. During the Cold War, according to transnational agreements the Estonian lecturers sent abroad had the opportunity to work in Finland and also in the short term in West Germany. The lecturers in other places were Estonian scientists or Estophiles with academic interests living abroad. After Estonia regained its independence the lecturers were chosen and sent abroad on the basis of the agreements between universities. Unlike most of the partners, Estonia had no public support for teaching their language and culture in another country. At the end of the 1990s, the first signs that emerged showed that it was not possible to maintain the level nor geographic reach of the foreign study of the Estonian language and culture without the public support activities.

In August 2001, on the basis of the decree of the Minister of Education, the Council of Academic Studies of Estonian Language and Culture Abroad (hereinafter the **Council of Estonian studies abroad**) began developing the national programme of the Estonian studies abroad as their main task. By the decision of the government it was implemented for the period 2005-2010. A lecturer who was posted with the support of Estonia, started working in Vilnius University and in the University of St. Petersburg already in the fall semester in 2002, and in 2003 in Paris at the National Institute of Languages and Oriental Civilisations (INALCO). The recruitment of the lecturer resulted in the development of the Estonian language curriculum at the University of St. Petersburg and at the INALCO. In the fall semester in 2004 a new faculty Lithuanian philology and foreign language (Estonian language) was opened at Vilnius University.

Within the framework of the academic study programme 2005-2010 ten study centres abroad were opened in total together with the aforementioned, which were equipped with study resources and materials. The visiting courses and the participation of the international students in summer universities and seminars in Estonia were supported; Estophilus-scholarships have been granted to do research work about Estonia; conferences focusing on studies like "Estonian language and culture in the world" and follow-up training seminars for lecturers in the Estonian language and culture who are working abroad have been arranged. As a result of the recruitment of the lecturer the Estonian language curriculum has been developed in Vilnius, St. Petersburg, INALCO and Moscow. Lecturers in the Estonian language and culture working at Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest, University of Debrecen, University of Szeged and University of West Hungary (Szombathely) in Hungary have been

granted contribution for expanding the curriculum-based teaching with promotional activities about the Estonian culture.

Lecturers from Estonia teaching with the support of the programme of academic studies:

- at Vilnius University in Lithuania since 2002;
- at Saint Petersburg State University in Russia since 2002;
- at the National Institute of Languages and Oriental Civilisations (INALCO) in Paris, France since 2003;
- at Georg August University of Göttingen in Germany since 2005;
- at the University of Warsaw in Poland since 2007;
- at Ivan Franko National University of Lviv in Ukraine since 2009;
- at Masaryk University in Brno in Czech since 2009;
- at Beijing Foreign Studies University in China since 2010;
- at the University of Latvia in Riga since 2011.

In 2009, the Council of Estonian studies abroad began developing the academic studies abroad follow-up programme for 2011-2017. Some of the important inputs of developing the follow-up programme have been the monitoring document "The evaluation of the programme of academic studies of the Estonian language and culture 2005-2010" submitted by the external experts, feedback gained from the conferences "The Estonian language and culture in the world" II (2004) and III (2008), and the activity reports of the lecturers in the Estonian language and culture who are working abroad.

The conclusions of the mentioned monitoring document are positive: "Being familiar with the materials and reports related to the academic programme, we can say that the programme has been implemented with determination and success. On the basis of the lecturers' reports it may also be stated that the situation in the study centers abroad are mostly good. Teaching the Estonian language and culture in all new study centers has been actuated successfully. Each study center has started studies for at least a fair number of students and the number of students in a number of places has been almost surprisingly high. Teaching has expanded rapidly, both quantitatively and qualitatively. /.../ This programme has been versatile and ambitious from the beginning. All the central needs of teaching language abroad have been taken into account from posting lecturers to follow-up training, material support and support measures. Based on the results, the programme may already be considered a great success."

The success of "The programme of academic studies of Estonian language and culture abroad (2005-2010)" approved by the officially recorded decision of the Government in 2004, confirms the need to continue and expand the activities of studies abroad in the future.

## 1.2. Basic definitions of the programme

The programme of academic studies of Estonian language and culture abroad (hereinafter **Estonian studies abroad**) is a continuous teaching of the Estonian language and culture in universities outside Estonia, including its support activities in Estonia and elsewhere.

Study centre abroad is a division operating in a university abroad which carries out the teaching that is directly subject to the scope of the programme, or a memory institution (libraries, archives, etc.)

outside Estonia, which contains study assets and information assets about Estonia used in studies abroad.

The administrative or organizational form of a study centre abroad may differ depending on the rules of procedure established in the local institution of higher education.

The target group of the Estonian studies abroad is:

- a) students studying in universities abroad;
- b) local opinion leaders and experts as the image makers of Estonia and promoters of mutual relations;
- c) enthusiasts of the Estonian language and culture worldwide.

### 1.3. Vision and Objectives

#### VISION

As a result of the implementation of the programme, the positive image of Estonia in the world and the position in the international academic life is improved. Study centres abroad provide a high level of studies about Estonia and the possibility of academic self-realization. There are now universities abroad, where the Estonian language and culture curriculum has been confirmed. The academic study of Estonian language and culture takes place in at least forty universities abroad and about a thousand international students are involved, regardless of their narrower specialization. Many of them have received additional training in Estonia. Therefore, there are more Estophiles in the world and Estonia has gained more friends.

#### OBJECTIVES

In the implementation of the programme the following objectives are set to achieve the vision:

- in collaboration with the local university, studies based on the Estonian language and culture study programme are assured for Estonia in significant areas;
- in collaboration with the Estonian universities, the professional competence of the lecturers has been strengthened. For that purpose, optional modules have been integrated with the Estonian language, Estonian language as a foreign language and foreign philology study programme, which give the sufficient qualification to stay on practice in the study centres abroad and work as a lecturer in the Estonian language and culture outside Estonia;
- in addition to stationary lecturers, visiting lecturers have also been included in the activity of the study centres; visiting professors work in the study centres and courses are conducted by visiting lecturers;
- the study centres abroad are equipped with study assets which consider the student's source language and the proficiency level in Estonian, including electronic study environment and distance learning applications;

- the opportunities of the study centres abroad for the Estonian language and culture students to gain short-term follow-up training, to pursue master's studies or to conduct doctoral-level studies in Estonia have been expanded.

## 2. Activities of the programme

### 2.1. Establishing study centres abroad

Taking into account the considered development, geographical coverage, high level and sustainability of the academic studies abroad, study centres abroad for the Estonian language and culture are established in universities abroad which is arranged (the choosing of the host country or area and the university) by the Council of Estonian studies abroad. In order to establish the study centres abroad on the basis of the programme, an agreement is concluded with the university abroad which is prepared by the Council of Estonian studies abroad. The Estonian party of the agreement is the implementation division of the programme, and if necessary, the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research as the national institution ensuring the activity.

The purpose of the study centre abroad established within the framework of the programme is to achieve, within the next three academic years since the opening, the regular study which is integrated in the study programme of the respective university and which encompasses the Estonian language and culture at least in the volume of 45 ECTS.

The established study centre abroad will be equipped with the necessary study assets and the provision of the necessary infrastructure (office, furniture, equipment, etc.) will be supported wherever possible.

When choosing the state or area for a study centre abroad the Council of Estonian studies abroad takes into account the following aspects:

- the states who mutual educational and cultural cooperation agreements have been concluded with are preferred; where there is interest in Estonia and support for the teaching of the Estonian language and culture; where the presentation of Estonia and the forming of favorable attitude towards Estonia is important due to political, economical or historical and cultural reasons;
- geographical balance: the distribution of the foreign study centers between different regions as evenly as possible;
- the opportunity to cooperate with other programs and partners: the states where there are co-sponsors for teaching the Estonian language and culture are preferred.

When developing the network of the study centres abroad, the Council of Estonian studies abroad takes into account the need to ensure the teaching of the Estonian language and culture primarily in the neighboring countries and in the countries of the European Union, followed by other countries important for Estonia, which are defined along with the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

When choosing the institution of higher education for a study centre abroad the Council of Estonian studies abroad takes into account the following aspects:

- the interest of the university in teaching the Estonian language and culture and the wish to substantially support it: willingness to conclude a cooperation agreement with Estonia, inclusion of the

Estonian language and culture study in the study programme or the willingness to integrate it into the study programme, considered teaching arrangements, ensuring the contemporary working and living conditions for the lecturer and contribution to the financing of the teaching of the Estonian language and culture;

- the interest of students: there is a sufficient number of motivated students, whose number persists or increases over the years;
- previous experiences and achievements of the university in teaching the Estonian language and culture (incl the existence of the Estophile-environment in the area of influence of the university);
- the existence of the studies of the corresponding regional research or related languages.

In order to find out about the sustainability of the future study centres abroad the basic courses in Estonian language and culture may be implemented as a pilot project in these universities which show a clear willingness to support the respective study and where the estimated number of students is sufficient.

## 2.2. Supporting the operating study centres abroad

The preservation of the study centres abroad with long-time traditions are supported in case the university abroad shows a clear interest in the continuation of the teaching of the Estonian language and culture and is ready to support the studies itself.

In order to ensure the availability of the necessary, timely and high quality study assets for teaching the Estonian language and culture, the study centres abroad are sponsored with study assets. The distribution plan of study assets is confirmed by the Council of Estonian studies abroad and the implementation division of the program obtains and distributes the study assets.

The study centres abroad have to ensure the registration, preservation and the purposeful use of the study assets.

A lecturer in the Estonian language and culture whose task in addition to teaching the Estonian language is to introduce the Estonian culture, is sent to the study centres abroad which are established within the framework of the programme or which are important for Estonia. The wages of the lecturer is covered from the budget of the programme in the amount agreed on with the host institution.

The selection of the lecturer in Estonian language and culture, who is sent to the study centre, is arranged by the Council of Estonian studies abroad on the duty regulations of lecturers. The instructions are brought out in the addition 3 of the programme.

In order to intensify the study of the Estonian language and culture, and to extend its reach, visiting lecturers are sent to the study centres abroad with the support of the programme, to conduct courses on additional subjects about the study programme of the Estonian language and culture within a shorter period of time.

If possible, open courses on the Estonian language and culture are supported and conducted for the beginners as well as for the advanced learners.

### 2.3. Supporting the students of the Estonian language and culture

In order to enable living and studying in the Estonian environment and to integrate the international students of the Estonian language and culture more closely to the Estonian cultural context, scholarships and targeted subsidies are granted.

The scholarship Estophilus is intended to support the master's and doctoral level research concerning Estonia and carried out in Estonia, in accordance with the guideline of the scholarship.

The target group of the Estonian studies abroad is allocated subsidies in order to participate in supplementary extracurricular activities of the university in Estonia (summer universities, special courses, seminars, etc.) according to the procedure of requesting subsidies.

Within the programme, the procedure of granting subsidies for the students in the target group of the Estonian studies abroad is developed to continue master's level studies in Estonia in faculties concerning the Estonian language and culture.

### 2.4. Training and development activity

A prerequisite of executing the programme is the availability of competent lecturers and high quality study assets. For that purpose, the Council of Estonian studies abroad arranges follow-up training for the lecturers and cooperates with the Estonian institutions of higher education and the developers of study assets.

In order to ensure the availability of the lecturers with the required qualification to teach the Estonian language and culture outside Estonia, the Council of Estonian studies abroad cooperates with the Estonian institutions of higher education (developing the relevant educational and follow-up training programs, creating opportunities for practice, etc.).

In every four years, the Council of Estonian studies abroad organizes a conference in Estonia "Estonian language and culture in the world" which involves the people who are related with Estonian studies abroad. The conference deals with the development of the Estonian society, introduces the newest study assets and the course of the Estonian studies activities.

Each year (except the conference year) the Council of Estonian studies abroad organizes the seminar in Estonia for the lecturers in the Estonian language and culture of the study centres abroad, which deals thoroughly with the Estonian language, culture, history, nature and other subjects promoting the knowledge of the country of Estonia.

If necessary, the Council of Estonian studies abroad arranges and supports the information and educational events in Estonia and in the host countries of the study centres abroad.

In order to improve the educational level of Estonian studies abroad, the Council of Estonian studies abroad initiates and finances the applied research that promotes the Estonian studies.

In order to finance the applied research related to the Estonian studies abroad, the scholarship Studium Esticum is established within the programme, and the guideline of it is developed by the Council of Estonian studies abroad.

A prerequisite of the success of the Estonian studies abroad is to develop and implement the students' level of proficiency in Estonian language and the study assets adapted to their native language, if necessary. For that purpose, the Council of Estonian studies abroad initiates and guides the compiling, supplementing, renewing and issuance of the study assets of the Estonian language and culture in Estonia and in the study centres abroad.

The purposes, content of the Estonian studies abroad and its arrangement process is presented to the public in information events and through media.

### 3. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT, FINANCING AND ADMINISTRATION

#### 3.1. Programme management

The executing of the programme is guided and carried out by the academic Council of Estonian studies abroad of the Estonian language and culture of nine members, and its composition is confirmed by the Minister of Education and Research for five years.

The Council of Estonian studies abroad shall elect its chairman. The rules of procedure of the Council of Estonian studies abroad is confirmed by the Minister of Education and Research. The Council of Estonian studies abroad shall:

- a) compile the strategic action plan of the Estonian studies abroad;
- b) compile the annual action plan of the Estonian studies abroad based on the aforementioned and the budget and submits it to the Minister of Education and Research;
- c) provide the implementation of the annual action plan and the budget;
- d) prepare and submit a report about the Estonian studies abroad programme to the Minister of Education and Research every year;
- e) select the lecturer candidates or the lecturers of the Estonian language and culture and ensure the academic supervision over their activities;
- f) approve the distribution of study assets sent to the study centres abroad within the programme;
- g) establish the guidelines of scholarships and the application procedures of subsidies;
- h) confirm the duty regulations of the lecturers working in the study centres abroad with the support of the programme;
- i) organize the competitions related to the execution of the programme and designate the beneficiaries of subsidies;

- j) keep in touch with the relevant institutions in other countries and with other partners;
- k) inform the public about the activities related to the Estonian studies abroad;
- l) advise the Minister of Education and Research in issues related to the Estonian studies abroad.

### 3.2. Programme financing and administration

The activities of the programme of academic studies of Estonian language and culture abroad is financed by the Ministry of Education and Research from the state budget.

The activities of the Estonian studies abroad is arranged and the decisions of the board are carried out by the implementation division selected by the Ministry of Education and Research, which in its work is guided by the programme, the decisions of the Council of Estonian studies abroad and the agreement concluded with the Ministry of Education and Research to carry out the programme.

The implementation division continually supervises the activity of the Estonian studies abroad and submits the information to the Council of Estonian studies abroad for analyzing. At the end of the academic year, the lecturers submit a report about their activity to the board.

In the penultimate year of the programme period, the Ministry of Education and Research orders an assessment about the status of the Estonian studies abroad and the effectiveness of the programme which is the basis for the preparation of the follow-up programme.

Piret Kärtner

Manager of linguistic department

- Addition 1. Application plan and budget of the programme (2011–2017)
- Addition 2. List of the study centres abroad
- Addition 3. Legislation of the programme and links with other development plans
- Addition 4. The lecturers' job description and work instructions

## **Addition 2**

### **LIST OF STUDY CENTRES ABROAD**

#### **EUROPE**

**AUSTRIA:** Vienna University (Universität Wien)

**HOLLAND:** Groningen University (Rijksuniversiteit Groningen)

**ITALY:** University of Florence (Università degli Studi di Firenze)

**LITHUANIA:** Vilnius University (Vilniaus Universitetas)

**LATVIA:** University of Latvia (Latvijas Universitāte)

**POLAND:** Jagiellonian University in Krakow (Uniwersytet Jagielloński w Krakowie), University of Warsaw (Uniwersytet Warszawski)

**FRANCE:** Institute of Oriental languages and cultures (Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales)

**SWEDEN:** Uppsala University (Uppsala universitet)

**GERMANY:** University of Göttingen (Georg-Augustus-Universität Göttingen), University of Hamburg (Universität Hamburg), University of Munich (Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München)

**FINLAND:** Universities of Helsinki (Helsingin yliopisto), Turku (Turun yliopisto), Oulu (Oulun yliopisto), Jyväskylä (Jyväskylän yliopisto), Tampere (Tampereen yliopisto) and University of Eastern Finland (Itä-Suomen yliopisto)

**GREAT BRITAIN:** University College London, University of Glasgow

**CZECH REPUBLIC:** Charles University in Prague (Univerzita Karlova v Praze), Masaryk University in Brno (Masarykova univerzita)

**UKRAINE:** Ivan Franko National University of Lviv (Львівський національний університет імені Івана Франка)

**HUNGARY:** Eötvös Loránd Univeristy in Budapest (Eötvös Loránd Tudományegyetem), Debrecen University (Debreceni Egyetem), University of West Hungary (Nyugat-Magyarországi Egyetem), University of Szeged (Szegedi Tudományegyetem)

**RUSSIA:** St Petersburg State University (Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет), M.V. Lomonosov Moscow State University (МГУ им. М. В. Ломоносова), Moscow State Institute of International Relations (Московский государственный институт международных отношений)

### **AMERICA**

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA:** Indiana University, University of Washington

**CANADA:** University of Toronto

### **ASIA**

**CHINA:** Beijing International Studies University (Běijīng Wàiguóyǔ Dàxué)

According to the information available to the Council of Estonian studies abroad, in 2010 it was possible to study Estonian language and culture at 34 study centres abroad .

## **Addition 4**

### **LECTURER'S TASK DESCRIPTION AND INSTRUCTION**

#### **General**

The lecturer's task description and instruction is an addition to the "Programme of Academic Studies of Estonian Language and Culture Abroad 2011–2017" (henceforth: *programme*) and applies to the lecturer working at the study centre of Estonian language and culture abroad, who has signed an authorisation agreement with the administering institution (since 2006 the Estonian Institute) and/or the university abroad.

**Teaching staff** consists of lecturers, assistants (e.g. assistant teachers) or guest professors working within the programme of a study centre abroad.

Teaching staff delivers lectures, supervises seminars, practical training, BA and MA students and participates in organising events which introduce Estonia and Estonian culture in the host country.

Teaching staff relies on the authorisation agreement, decisions of the council, the constitution of the host university and other supporting documents, rules and regulations of the organisation of studies, legislation of the host country etc.

The teaching place is the city where the study centre is located. During the duration of task, the teaching staff resides in the country of the host university.

Teaching staff must present a report to the council about the studies of Estonian language and culture and the cultural undertakings every year on 15 July at the latest. The report form is sent to the staff electronically.

Teaching staff must observe the customs and requirements of the host country and further improve Estonia's image.

#### **Electing the teaching staff**

Electing the staff is organised by the council (programme points 2.2.2. and 3.1.).

The council relies on the following criteria:

- professional competence and education (preferably Estonian philology);
- experience of teaching (experience of teaching adults, teaching Estonian as a foreign language).

In addition to the requirements given above, the following is also considered:

- being well-versed in the main topics of Estonian culture and an ability to introduce them to the students;
- correspondence to the requirements of the study centre;
- personal qualities (motivation, ability to adapt, tolerance, balance), support to a foreign assignment from the family;

- earlier contacts with the language and culture of the host country (language skills, knowing the culture, personal contact etc.).

The first authorisation agreement is signed by the administering institution mostly for one year, whereas the next contract agreement the duration to be up to five years.

### **Official duties of the teaching staff**

The duties include:

- preparing and carrying out auditorium study;
- selecting the teaching method and the relevant study materials according to good academic custom, compiling textbooks and study materials if necessary, and ordering study materials from the secretariat;
- supervising students' research work;
- participating in compiling the subject syllabus and study programme;
- individual development (primarily developing skills and knowledge necessary for teaching);
- popularising the subject of Estonian language and culture and informing students about possibilities to study and practice in Estonia and the available scholarships;
- organising events introducing Estonian history, culture and other fields;
- providing feedback to the council or the secretariat and participating in developmental processes of academic studies abroad;
- solving administrative issues connected with work.

Teaching staff agrees with the secretariat or study centre to grant the right of use of study materials compiled by them to the next lecturer teaching in the same study centre, or to other lecturers. Handing over the materials is organised through the secretariat.

The tasks of the teaching staff may include contractual works designated by the host university.

Teaching staff has no obligation to produce research work.