

## **National English Language Competition 2017/2018**

Hosted by the University of Tartu

### **General topic: Republic of Estonia 100: Estonia in the world, world in Estonia**

The aim of the National English Language Competition is to create interest in topics concerning the English language and the societies and cultures of the UK, USA and other English-speaking countries. We seek to develop students' understanding of different cultural phenomena and intercultural links, but especially to guide them to see the points of connection between the English and Estonian culture through independent research and analysis. The general aim is to encourage students with academic interests in their first scholarly endeavours and to offer them an opportunity to hone their skills of research, analysis and writing in English. This not only meets one of the requirements of the Estonian National Curriculum but also improves analytical and writing skills that students will need on entering the labour market.

This year we specifically invite students to think about Estonia's position in the world and the presence of English-speaking world in Estonia in the 100-year history of the Republic of Estonia. We suggest that students concentrate on a specific issue that allows them to analyse communication between Estonia and the English-speaking countries.

We expect independent student research papers (10-15 double-spaced pages in 12-point Times New Roman font) on some question of intercultural communication (for general guidelines see *How to write a research paper*). The papers are supposed to show some background research but also to contain a clear section of independent analysis by the student. The paper should focus on one subject area and clearly formulate a narrower research question within the area (some suggestions are given below). In view of the length of the paper, the topic should be relatively narrow to enable its in-depth analysis. The list below is not exhaustive but rather seeks to demonstrate the wealth of topics available and to stimulate students' imagination and creativity. We want to see students' ability to select an appropriate topic area, define a research question or hypothesis, gather information about it, analyse the information and draw conclusions from it.

#### **Assessment**

The papers will be assessed by the jury of the competition in one round and two stages. In the first stage the jury will assess the written paper, its content and its accordance to the requirements set for the projects (see *How to Write the Research Project*). The analytical side of the paper will be the main focus. Up to 15 best papers will advance to the second stage of assessment. The second stage will take place at the University of Tartu in the form of a mini conference where all participants will present the results of their research orally (the use of visual aids is permitted). This stage will assess the students' command of the topic of their paper, their ability to present the results in an oral presentation and to respond to spontaneous questions on the topic of the paper.

**Possible research topics within the general theme "Republic of Estonia 100: Estonia in the world, world in Estonia":**

The suggestions below are only suggestions and you may also choose to pursue other alternatives, as long as you stay grounded in the description and analysis of specific cases/texts. Although critical reading of previous work done in the field is central to any research, you should not forget your own empirical analysis.

- **Estonian and English-speaking culture in translation**  
You may want to take up an investigation of the translation of an Estonian work of literature or film into English or study the translation of some English-language work of literature or film into Estonian, etc.
- **Representation of Estonia in the world**  
You may want to explore the way in which Estonia is being represented in English-language media, social media, Wikipedia or other sources that help to create the image of our country in the English-speaking world, etc.
- **English language as lingua franca**  
You may want to study the presence and impact of English in Estonia in the past 100 years in different contexts, the teaching of English in Estonian schools, etc.
- **Estonians in the English-speaking world**  
You may want to look into patterns of immigration to English-speaking countries over Estonian history, the way in which expatriate communities have adapted to the English-speaking world, the ways in which Estonian culture and language are transformed in the English-speaking world, etc.
- **Political and diplomatic relations between Estonia and the English-speaking world**  
You may want to look at the relations between Estonia and English-speaking countries (diplomatic, political, economic relations), etc.
- **Any other subject that resonates with the general topic “Republic of Estonia 100: Estonia in the world, world in Estonia”**

For writing guidelines see the general instruction sheet *How to write a research paper*

**For further information please contact:**

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