



# Development Plan of the ESTONIAN LANGUAGE 2011–2017

Estonian Language Foundation  
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## Contents

<b>1. Introduction. Principles of the development plan of the Estonian language</b>	<b>7</b>
1.1. Legal basis of the development plan	7
1.2. Vision and objective	8
1.3. Preparation, implementation, and reporting with regard to the development plan	9
1.4. Relation of the development plan to other strategic documents and development plans	11
1.5. National programmes that support the development plan	14
<b>2. Regulation of language use in the Republic of Estonia</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>3. Language management in Estonia</b>	<b>20</b>
3.1. General language management	21
3.1.1. Analysis of the situation	21
3.1.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	22
3.2. LSP management	22
3.2.1. Analysis of the situation	22
3.2.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	23
3.3. Name management	24
3.3.1. Analysis of the situation	24
3.3.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	24
3.4. Measure 1: ensuring uniformity, comprehensibility, relevance, and modernity of the standard language	25

<b>4. Study of Estonian and language resources</b>	<b>28</b>
4.1. Analysis of the situation	28
4.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	28
4.3. Measure 2: study of the Estonian language and development of language resources	30
<b>5. Language-technological support of the Estonian language</b>	<b>33</b>
5.1. Analysis of the situation	33
5.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	35
5.3. Measure 3: development of the language-technological support of the Estonian language	35
<b>6. Education and Estonian-language instruction</b>	<b>38</b>
6.1. General education in Estonian	38
6.1.1. Analysis of the situation	38
6.1.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	41
6.1.3. Measure 4: ensuring Estonian-language proficiency, fostering a positive attitude to the Estonian language, and creation of opportunities to use the Estonian language in Estonian-medium general education	42
6.2. Estonian language in non-Estonian-medium general education	46
6.2.1. Analysis of the situation	46
6.2.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	47
6.2.3. Measure 5: ensuring Estonian-language proficiency and fostering positive attitudes to the Estonian language in non-Estonian-medium general education	48
6.3. Vocational education	49
6.3.1. Analysis of the situation	49
6.3.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	51
6.3.3. Measure 6: ensuring Estonian-language proficiency among vocational students	51
6.4. Higher education	52
6.4.1. Analysis of the situation	52

6.4.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	54
6.4.3. Measure 7: development of Estonian-language proficiency and fostering a positive attitude to the Estonian language and preservation of the use of Estonian in higher education and research	55
<b>7. Varieties of the Estonian language</b>	<b>57</b>
7.1. Regional varieties of the Estonian language in Estonia	57
7.1.1. Analysis of the situation	57
7.1.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	58
7.1.3. Measure 8: development of regional varieties of the Estonian language in Estonia	59
7.2. Estonian language as used by Estonians living abroad	60
7.2.1. Analysis of the situation	60
7.2.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	61
7.2.3. Measure 9: support for the maintenance of Estonian-language proficiency among Estonians living abroad	61
7.3. Sign language and language use by people with special linguistic needs	62
7.3.1. Analysis of the situation	62
7.3.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	63
7.3.3. Measure 10: support for the sign language and language use by people with special linguistic needs	63
<b>8. Estonian language in the multilingual world</b>	<b>65</b>
8.1. Analysis of the situation	66
8.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	67
8.3. Measure 11: development of the Estonian language in the context of foreign languages and ensuring its international representation	67
<b>9. Supervision of the observance of the Language Act</b>	<b>69</b>
9.1. Analysis of the situation	69
9.2. Objective, impact, and indicators	70

9.3. Measure 12: supervision of the observance of the  
Language Act 71

**10. Awareness-raising activities with regard to language 73**

10.1. Analysis of the situation 73

10.2. Objective, impact, and indicators 74

10.3. Measure 13: raising of language awareness 75

# 1. Introduction. Principles of the development plan of the Estonian language

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## 1.1. Legal basis of the development plan

Strategic planning of the development of the Estonian language began in 1998 when the resolution of Government of the Republic of Estonia of April 21 assigned the Ministry of Education the task of drawing up a development strategy of the Estonian language. A decree of the Minister of Education of 6 April 2000 set up the Estonian Committee for the organization of the European Year Languages (later the Estonian Language Council); one of the tasks of this committee was to draw up this strategy. On 5 August 2004 the Government of the Republic of Estonia adopted the “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” (DSEL).

DSEL is an important strategic document; its principles have been taken into account when drawing up draft laws and development plans that are related to the Estonian language, as well as in the planning of the budget of the language domain.

DSEL has also an international dimension; the strategy supports Estonian participation in international networks of language institutions and cooperation with research institutions and specialists in different countries. The “Development Strategy of the Estonian language 2004–2010” was translated into English, Russian, Finnish, and Hungarian; embassies of many foreign states, international organizations and research institutions have shown interest in the strategy. Experts who participated in the drafting of the language strategy have been invited to assess development plans in the language domain in other countries, and language policy specialists of

other countries have taken part in the creation of DSEL and evaluation of its implementation.

The implementation part of DSEL foresaw that the Ministry of Education and Research would supervise and coordinate the implementation of the strategy; the Estonian Language Council would monitor the linguistic situation in Estonia and review the viewpoints of the strategy every two years.

The Estonian Language Council assessed the implementation of DSEL twice (implementation of the strategy in 2004–2006 and 2007–2008); final evaluation of the implementation of the strategy will be provided in 2011. Also, pursuant to the strategy the Estonian Language Council was to draw up a follow-up strategy. On 22 May 2009 the Ministry of Education and Research made a proposal to the Government of the Republic of Estonia to draw up a new development plan of the Estonian language; the government adopted it on 28 May 2009.

## 1.2. Vision and objective

The Development Plan of the Estonian Language 2011–2017 (DPLE) is a strategic basic document of the language domain, which together with its implementation plan, supporting legal and organizational measures and funding is to ensure the functioning of the Estonian language as the state language in all spheres of life and the teaching, research, development, and protection of the Estonian language and, thus, the preservation of the Estonian language throughout times. By 2017 the implementation of the development plan should result in a state of the Estonian language that will meet all the language-use needs of the Estonian state and society; the Estonian language must be capable of development and the accepted joint language of communication of Estonian residents.

The main objective of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language is to provide a uniform strategic basis and uniform aims for the sustainable development of all the domains of the Estonian language in 2011–2017. The development plan serves as a basis and guide in the development of the legal basis of the language domain, planning of more important activities, and decision-making.

The activities foreseen by the Development Plan of the Estonian Language will be funded from the budgets of the state and local governments, universities and research institutions, nation-



al programmes, various funds and foundations, grants, purpose-specific allocations, and the budgets of various government departments.

### 1.3. Preparation, implementation, and reporting with regard to the development plan

Responsibility for the drafting of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language lay with the Ministry of Education and Research, which was assigned the task of preparing in conjunction with the Estonian Language Council the “Development Plan of the Estonian Language 2011–2017” and to submit it to the Government of the Republic of Estonia for approval.

Many establishments and institutions, the positions of which are significant from the perspective of use and development of the Estonian language, took part in the preparation of the development plan: University of Tartu, Tallinn University, Institute of the Estonian Language, Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Institute of Cybernetics at the Tallinn University of Technology, Estonian Business School, Consistory of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, Language Inspectorate, Integration and Migration Foundation “Our People”, Estonian Land Board, Estonian Public Broadcasting, Estonian Institute, Estonian Literary Museum, Mother Tongue Society, Estonian Terminological Society, Estonian-French Lexicographic Society, Võro Institute, Institute of Mulgi Culture, and others.

The development plan was approved by all the ministries. Partner institutions and the general public had the possibility to acquaint themselves with the draft development plan and to express their views by means of the participation web. The development plan was assessed by international experts. The authors took into account the comments and suggestions as much as possible.

The implementation of the development plan will be supervised by the Ministry of Education and Research, and it will be assessed by the Estonian Language Council in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research.

As the state language of the Republic of Estonia the Estonian language is an official means of information exchange in all spheres of

life, and the implementation of the development plans is to ensure use, quality, and development capability of the Estonian language. The development plan includes two kinds of tasks: some have to ensure the preservation of the present level of the Estonian language (corresponds to the needs of a developing society and state); others are specific one-time tasks. Generally, implementation of the former aims is assessable, and implementation of the latter aims is measurable by precise indicators.

The specific nature of the language domain has a strong impact on the aims of the development plan and assessment of the efficiency of their attainment. Unlike many other spheres of life, the principal objective of the language domain is not to reach a new level but to ensure that the Estonian language will continuously and successfully meet the requirements that are set for the principal means of communication of society and the state. Because linguistic processes are slow, in many cases the impact of the tasks solved under the present development plan will be manifested only after its termination. Because a language and its spheres of use are in constant development and depends on many factors, it is often extremely difficult and expensive, if not impossible, to fix the source and target levels of planning in a reasonable manner.

The general objectives envisaged in the Development Plan of the Estonian Language stem from its goals; they will be specified in the implementation plans of national programmes, work plans of principal implementers, and contracts signed with them. The principal implementers are institutions that work on a contractual basis with the responsible ministries; the implementers are lower-level units.

The Development Plan of the Estonian Language will be funded by the ministries indicated in the implementation plan or institutions administered by them. The implementation plan will be specified on an annual basis depending on the development of the language situation and funding possibilities. The main funder is the Ministry of Education and Research; in the case of funding specific tasks it is intended to include also the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, and the Ministry of Social Affairs. Coordinated funding of the development of **domain-specific** terminology is devised with the involvement of all the ministries. The language domain is closely related to other spheres of life whereby the financial resources foreseen in the implementation plan could partly overlap with those of

other domains, and in this respect the implementation of the development plan could be less expensive than planned.

Because the number of tasks to be solved within the framework of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language is formidable, only the most important and general indicators are listed, which characterize the efficiency of an action. Specified indicators, which serve as the basis for preparing the reports about the fulfilment of the development plan, will be fixed annually in the contracts between the funder(s) and the main implementer(s).

Interim reports on the implementation of the development plan together with the proposals for changes and additions to the implementation plan will be submitted to the Government of the Republic of Estonia at the end of each biannual period; the final evaluation concerning the implementation of the development plan will be provided not later than on 30 June 2018. The Estonian Language Council and the Ministry of Education and Research will jointly draw up the subsequent development plan of the Estonian language, which will become effective on 1 January 2018.

#### 1.4. Relation of the development plan to other strategic documents and development plans

The strategy “**Sustainable Estonia 21**” highlights as the first goal of a sustainable society the viability of the Estonian cultural space. Preservation of cultural space and ethnic viability are endangered by the decreased number of Estonian-speaking people, replacement of the Estonian language and culture by the increasing impact of other languages and cultures, a certain degree of stagnation of the Estonian language and culture, insufficient adaptation to the requirements of the new global civilization (information society and technological culture), which results in decreased functionality of national culture and decreased motivation to preserve it, vulgarization of the Estonian language and culture due to the influence of international junk culture. According to the strategy, the most significant danger is rapid internationalization of cultural space, including the emergence of English as the most important language of communication in several spheres of life.

The development plan “**Smart and Active Nation 2009–2012**” of the Ministry of Education and Research admits that globaliza-

tion and information society have resulted in decreased use of the Estonian language in some fields of activity, which has been accompanied by decreased knowledge of the Estonian language as a mother tongue and its decreased prestige. In the language domain the plan states that the Estonian language is a constantly developing language of culture and that multilingualism should be valued in Estonia. It is necessary to take active measures to improve the public image of the Estonian language and to develop Estonian scientific and technical language. The Estonian language should be the principal common language of communication in all the spheres of public life. It is important to promote the Estonian language and to create language-learning opportunities in the EU countries because it is the language of a member state. Also, considerable attention will be paid to problems related to the knowledge of the Estonian language among the non-Estonian population.

The **Development Plan of the General Education System 2007–2013** prioritizes the Estonian language first and foremost in relation to the education of pupils whose mother tongue is not Estonian and the transition of the non-Estonian-medium upper secondary schools to partly Estonian-language teaching, paying also some attention to the role of the Estonian language in teacher training. The goal is to include the teaching of practical Estonian in the curricula of teacher training of all the school subjects and in-service training of teachers.

The **Development Plan of Estonian Vocational Education 2009–2013** envisages improvement of Estonian-language proficiency among vocational students through the field of activity “**Supporting transition of Russian-medium study groups to Estonian-medium instruction in vocational education**” and **curriculum development** (renewal of general education subjects and promotion of key competencies (incl. teaching of the Estonian and Estonian as the second language) in vocational secondary education).

The **Development Plan of Adult Education 2009–2013** is aimed at increasing competitiveness of adults by promoting key professional and lifelong competencies (incl. study of the Estonian language and Estonian as a second language) at the training centres of adult education.

The **Estonian Foreign Language Strategy until 2015** focuses on foreign-language instruction of all residents of Estonia. In the field of general education the strategy considers it necessary to apply the language proficiency levels, which are described in the Common

European Framework of Reference for Languages, to the teaching of foreign languages, including Estonian as a foreign language. The principles of the common framework should also be applied to occupational standards; when drawing up curricula in vocational education, one should take into account the proficiency requirements for Estonian and foreign languages, which are provided in the occupational standard of the relevant speciality.

The **Strategy of Teacher Training for 2009–2013** foresees that in the course of passing through the teacher-training curriculum the oral and written proficiency of students will be assessed in Estonian and in at least one foreign language.

The **Estonian Higher Education Strategy for 2006–2015** foresees the granting of continuation and development of Estonian-medium tertiary education in the open educational space of Europe in a way that in all fields of study Estonian-medium higher education will be provided on all study levels.

The **Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2007–2013 “Knowledge-based Estonia”** states that the role of the public sector will increase in the appreciation of knowledge-basedness; thus, it is necessary to balance the risks, changes, and the subjective sense of danger that is caused by the application of new technologies (e.g. pressure of the use of information technology on the Estonian language). It foresees a measure to develop human capital by supporting use of the Estonian language as a language of science.

The **Internationalization Strategy of Estonian Higher Education for 2006–2015** admits that in the course of almost a century there has not been any other period in our history when Estonian-medium higher education was faced with major changes that entail both opportunities and challenges: emigration of top specialists, employment of qualified foreign specialists by research institutions and higher educational establishments, preservation and development of the Estonian language as a language of science, an increase in the scope of foreign-language study, and an increase in the proportion of international students. When introducing an international dimension in each curriculum, one has to ensure the preservation of the Estonian language as the primary language of instruction and science in higher educational establishments.

The **Development Plan of Estonian Information Society 2013** foresees the granting of continuity of the Estonian language and culture in the development of information society.

The purpose of the **Estonian Integration Plan 2008–2013** is to support the belonging of permanent residents to Estonian society by sharing common values and knowledge of the state language. The strategy regards Estonian-language proficiency as a prerequisite for successful integration; the long-term aim is to achieve the situation when all permanent residents of Estonia are able to communicate in the state language.

The **National Strategy for the Use of Structural Instruments 2007–2013** highlights the development of human resources; one field of activity is improvement of the integration of non-Estonians first and foremost by creating additional opportunities for the study of the Estonian language. In order to achieve this aim, a programme for the development of language study was launched in the field of lifelong learning of the “Implementation plan for the development of human resources”.

## 1.5. National programmes that support the development plan

Activities of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language will be funded by the following national programmes (most programmes require the preparation of a follow-up programme):

- Estonian Language and Cultural Memory (2009–2013);
- Language-technological Support of the Estonian Language (2011–2017);
- Preparation and Publication of Estonian-language Textbooks for Institutions of Higher Education (2008–2012);
- Support for Estonian-language Terminology (2008–2012);
- Programme of Academic Studies of Estonian Language and Culture Abroad (2011–2017).

The implementation of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language is also supported by the following programmes:

- Compatriots’ Programme (2009–2013);
- Kindred People’s Programme III. National Aid Programme for the Support of Uralic (Finno-Ugric and Samoyedic) Indigenous Languages and Cultures (2010–2014);
- Setomaa Cultural Programme (2010–2013);

- Old Võrumaa Cultural Programme (2010–2013);
- Mulgimaa Cultural Programme (2010–2013);
- Development of Finno-Ugric Languages (2010–2014);
- Value Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013.

## 2. Regulation of language use in the Republic of Estonia

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According to the **Constitution of the Republic of Estonia**, the state is to ensure the preservation of the Estonian nation, language, and culture throughout time; Section 6 of the constitution provides that the state language of Estonia is the Estonian language. The state is responsible for granting everyone's right to Estonian-language education (Section 37), everyone's right to administration and communication with the state authorities in the Estonian language (Section 51), administration in the Estonian language in government offices and local governments (Section 52).

According to the **Language Act** (Section 1, subsection 1) the state language of Estonia is the Estonian language; subsection 2 provides that official use of Estonian is based on the norm of the standard language. The law provides lays out the compulsory domains of using the Estonian language, conditions and extent of using foreign languages in state authorities and local governments, use of minority languages in cultural authorities, use of regional varieties of Estonian in public information, and conditions of using the Estonian sign language and language use by people with special needs.

The Language Act served as a basis for setting job-related requirements of Estonian-language proficiency; those people who have not received an Estonian-medium education have to prove their language proficiency at an examination.

Estonian-language use of the business and non-profit-making sectors and their workers is regulated in those cases when it is justifiable in the public interest, which according to the Language Act is public security, public order, public administration, educa-



tion, health care, consumer protection, and occupational safety. The Language Inspectorate is responsible for the supervision of the Language Act and the legal acts established on its basis.

In the autumn of 2008 the Ministry of Education and Research started to draw up a new draft of the Language Act.; in August 2010 the Government of the Republic of Estonia approved it (with comments) and decided to submit it to the Estonian parliament.

According to the **Government of the Republic Act**, the Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for the elaboration of language policy and the relevant draft legal acts.

According to the **Citizenship Act**, a citizenship applicant and pursuant to the **Aliens Act** an applicant of the long-term residence is required to have Estonian-language proficiency at least on the level B1.

According to the **Republic of Estonia Education Act**, the state and the local government ensure on the territory of Estonia an opportunity to receive Estonian-medium education in public educational institutions and universities on all education levels. Teaching of the Estonian language is granted in all the non-Estonian-medium educational institutions and non-Estonian-medium study groups.

According to the **Act on Preschool Institutions**, educational activities in child-care institutions are carried out in the Estonian language. Educational activities in some other language are permitted by a decision of the local government council. In a child-care institution or in its group where educational activities are not carried out in the Estonian language, study of the Estonian language is granted on the basis of the national curriculum of preschool child-care institutions.

According to the **Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act**, any language can be used as the language of instruction in a basic school. In the case of municipal schools the language of instruction is determined by the local government council and in the case of state schools by the Minister of Education and Research. On the upper secondary school level the language of instruction is Estonian, but on the upper secondary school level of a municipal school any other language can be used as the language of instruction. A permit for study in some other language is issued by the Estonian Government on the basis of an application by a local government council. The language of instruction of a school or a class is the language in which study makes up at least 60 per cent of the scope of a curriculum. Study of the Estonian language from the first form is

compulsory also in those cases when Estonian is not the language of instruction of a school.

According to the **Universities Act**, Estonian is the language of instruction of a university; use of other languages is decided by a university council. In case a student without Estonian-language proficiency studies the Estonian language with the purpose of coping at an institution of higher education on conditions and manner set by the Minister of Education and Research, the nominal period of studied will be extended up to one academic year.




According to the **Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act**, Estonian is the language of instruction of an institution of professional higher education. Use of other languages is determined by the minister of the ministry that is responsible for the administration of the pertinent institution of higher education. In case a student without Estonian-language proficiency studies the Estonian language with the purpose of coping at an institution of higher education on conditions and manner set by the Minister of Education and Research, the nominal period of studied will be extended up to one academic year.

According to the **Vocational Educational Institutions Act**, Estonian is the language of instruction of a vocational educational institution. Use of other languages as a language of instruction is determined by the Minister of Education and Research.

According to the **Standard of Higher Education**, the language of instruction is the language of study. Language(s) of instruction and other languages that are required to achieve learning outcomes are determined by the curriculum. The standard describes the competencies related to both the language of instruction and the foreign languages for bachelor, master, and doctoral studies.

Several other laws include provisions that regulate language proficiency and language use. Thus, work-related language proficiency is regulated by the Public Service Act, Local Government Organization Act, Defence Forces Service Act, Courts Act, Prosecutor's Office Act, Bar Association Act, Authorized Public Accountants Act, Patent Agents Act, Bailiffs Act, and many other laws. The professional standards prepared by the Qualification Authority determine the level of Estonian and foreign-language proficiency that is required for an occupation.



According to the Administrative Procedure Act, Estonian is the language of administrative proceedings, and it extends also to administrative proceedings related to many other laws. Estonian is



also the language of court proceedings; legal acts regulate the use of other languages in court proceedings, as well as translation of documents and use of an interpreter. The Consumer Protection Act stipulates that the information provided to the consumer has to be presented in Estonian; an Estonian-language translation is required for instruction manuals in a foreign language. Pursuant to the relevant laws, state registries (e.g. the Criminal Record Registry, Business Registry) are kept in the Estonian language.

Upon accession to the European Union, the Estonian language became an official language of the European Union. Pursuant to the **founding Treaties of the European Union**, every citizen of the Republic of Estonia has the right to turn to the EU institutions (the European Parliament, European Ombudsman, European Commission, etc.) in the Estonian language and to receive and Estonian-language reply.

Estonia has joined several documents of international law that regulate the rights of ethnic minorities, persons with undetermined citizenship, and citizens of other countries in Estonia to use their mother tongue.



### 3. Language management in Estonia

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Language management is conscious development, enrichment, stabilization, and updating of the standard language. The standard language as the core keeps together the national language; it serves as a basis for the languages of administration, instruction, science, public information, as well as many other language varieties that act as prerequisites for the functioning of society and state. It is important to ensure uniformity, comprehensibility, relevance, and modernity of the standard language, especially, the languages of administration and public information, because it is in the interests of the state, as well as all of its citizens, granting the latter an equal opportunity to participate in social life and thus acting as a guarantee of a democratic state.

The task of language management is to provide society with language resources (dictionaries, manuals, and databases) and guidance (incl. advice and courses), which are trustworthy, efficient, and purposeful. The language user needs to be shown richness of the language and its possibilities on different levels; one has to teach the user to consciously act and cope in the multilingual and multilevel (standard language, everyday language, slang) environment.

Language management has to be based on modern theory of language management and the most recent results of Estonian-language research. It is necessary to study change and variation in actual use of the language.

The main fields of language management include general language management, specialized language management, and name management. The practical outlet of language management (explanation of recommendations, teaching, and implementation) is called language maintenance.

## 3.1. General language management

### 3.1.1. Analysis of the situation

Standard Estonian is stable, modern, and rich; however, it requires constant development in order to meet the needs of changing society. In addition to the standard language, several varieties of social, domain-related, and other interest groups – both written and spoken – have emerged, which blur the role of the standard language. The language users must be able to orient themselves in them, and one has to enhance the awareness of the advantages of the standard language as the central language variety of society. It is necessary to avoid the restriction of the functions of the standard language (especially with regard to the languages of administration and instruction); at the same time the general public needs to be informed about those areas of public use of the language where higher requirements are set (observance of official norms of the standard language) and the areas where language users themselves act as decision-makers. Special attention should be paid to the language of administration, the teaching of the standard language at school, the language of public information, and the Estonian language as used in EU documents.

General language management is dealt with by the language committee of the Mother Tongue Society (provision of norms and recommendations in fundamental questions), the department of language management at the Institute of the Estonian Language (compilation of the dictionary of correct usage), principle of language management, language maintenance, etc.), teaching staff of institutions of higher education (theoretical problems of language) and the Tartu Language Maintenance Centre (promotion of the languages of administration and journalism). The implementers are closely related with each other; the role division is specified by the Regulation of the Government of the Republic on the order of implementation of the norm of the standard language. The task of the Institute of the Estonian Language, the University of Tartu, and Tallinn University is to enlarge and systematize language corpora and databases and to carry out studies of language use that are needed for language management.

### 3.1.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

#### Objective

- mainly stable (unified, covered by norms and recommendations), modern (taking into account the needs of changing conditions) and rich (enabling stylistic variation) standard language

#### Impact:

**granted quality of Estonian legal and public linguistic space, efficient functioning of linguistic communication in society**

Indicator	2010	2017
Number of registered occasions of language advice (since 1993)	130, 000	180, 000
Publication of new language-management resources that include norms of the standard language (dictionary of correct usage, manuals)	0	3

## 3.2. LSP management

### 3.2.1. Analysis of the situation

Professional communication in Estonian requires systematized and extensive specialized terminology, which has a history of at least a hundred years. In Estonia an original LSP theory and system of LSP management has been developed, which has enabled rapid adaptation to the changing times. The main working format is term committees, which mostly function in cooperation between professional and language specialists and are mostly affiliated with the interested institutions or organizations. Specialized terminology is created and systematized also by the teaching staff of institutions of higher education in the course of writing textbooks and by professional associations during the elaboration of professional and other standards.

It is important to avoid extensive gaps in the vocabulary of different domains, which could result in replacement of Estonian as a language of communication in some speciality by some other lan-

guage (domain loss). Until now efforts to create a situation where all the government institutions (ministries and boards) deal in a coordinated manner with terminological problems, including the funding of these activities, have not been fully successful.

There is a national programme “Support for Estonian-language Terminology (2008–2012)”, which provides funding for terminological committees and establishment of their network and organization of their work, terminological dictionaries, training and continuing education of terminologists, creation of a uniform IT environment to support term creation (uniform term base, etc.), and institutions dealing with terminology. Terminological work is carried out by the terminological department of the Institute of the Estonian Language (coordination of terminological projects, technical and know-how support, participation in committees) and the department of language management (participation in the work of terminological committees, eurolanguage maintenance), the Estonian Terminological Society (support and supervision of the terminological committees, mediation of terminological scholarships), the Estonian Association for Applied Linguistics (support of terminological dictionary projects), institutions of higher education (training of terminologists, continuing education of the language of science, support of the terminology of taught specialities). Terminology plays an important role in the implementation of the national programme “Preparation and Publication of Estonian-language Textbooks for Institutions of Higher Education (2008–2012)”.

### 3.2.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

#### Objective

- modern Estonian specialized language and terminology that will cover different domains as uniformly as possible

#### Impact:

**more uniform use of specialized language in Estonian-language texts and more efficient professional communication**

Indicator	2010	2017
Number of Estonian-language terms entered in the uniform term base	0	50, 000

### 3.3. Name management

#### 3.3.1. Analysis of the situation

Unlike other fields language management, in name management legal acts regulating the official use of various kinds of names (personal, place, and business names) play a more important role. Estonia has its Place Names Act (1997, 2004), Names Act (2004), Commercial Code (1995), etc. Use of names in Estonia is characterized by openness and susceptibility to foreign influences, especially in the case of personal and business names. There is no legally provided possibility to systematize the linguistic shape of business names. Conformity of names to general language rules and prevention of foreign influences is complicated by conflict between names as conventional designations of object identification and names as elements of natural language.

Name management is carried out by the language committee of the Mother Tongue Society (provision of general rules and recommendations for spelling names), the Institute of the Estonian Language (promotion of scholarly name management) and the Võro Institute (name management of historical Võrumaa), the committees on personal and place names (at the Ministry of the Interior, promotion of national personal and place-name management, respectively), institutions of higher education (teaching the basics of name management), the Estonian Public Broadcasting (recommendations with regard to the pronunciation of names).

#### 3.3.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

##### Objective

- unambiguous and precise names in communication



**Impact:**

**efficient use of names based on cooperation between the institutions of state (administrative) and scholarly name management**

Indicator	2010	2017
Proportion of linguistically systematized names among regulated names	20%	60%

### 3.4. Measure 1: ensuring uniformity, comprehensibility, relevance, and modernity of the standard language

#### Actions

##### General language management:

- to develop principles of language management, to specify the basis for establishing norms of the standard language (incl. if necessary to renew the relevant Regulation), to explain them to all language users;
- to provide uniform language norms and recommendations;
- to compile language-management resources (dictionary of correct usage, language manuals, databases);
- to continue general language maintenance, including text maintenance – free public linguistic advice in several channels (by phone, email or letter, on the Web), courses in language maintenance, public presentations and articles; to enhance awareness about the possibilities of receiving linguistic assistance;
- to ensure training and continuing education in the field of language management at institutions of higher education.

##### Principal implementers

Language committee of the Mother Tongue Society, Institute of the Estonian Language, Tallinn University, University of Tartu, Tartu Centre for Language Maintenance

### **LSP management:**

- to develop the terminology of those branches of science, technology, and economics, as well as areas of interest, that are important to Estonia; to achieve the participation of all the government institutions in the development of the terminology of their domains;
- to nationally support different forms of terminological work (terminological committees of specialities, terminology scholarships, preparation of terminological dictionaries, speciality textbooks or handbooks, creation of term standards and term bases);
- to draw up the national programme for the support and development of Estonian-language terminology (2013–2017);
- to develop a modern system of term advice and LSP maintenance, including a uniform term base;
- to ensure extensive dissemination of LSP information (general accessibility of term bases and other sources, information about terminological dictionaries and databases, their criticism) and use of Estonian-language terminology (incl. extended Estonian-language summaries of doctoral theses in case a doctoral thesis is in a foreign language);
- to provide LSP training to specialists and philologists as part of higher education or continuing education, to promote the study and development of principles of terminology;
- to facilitate terminological cooperation between different institutions, especially cooperation between Estonian institutions and officials working at EU institutions, to increase general awareness by means of training sessions in general and specialized language.
- to participate in international terminological cooperation and international research in this field;
- to initiate an action on the level of the European Union for the development of terminology in lesser used languages.

### **Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research and other ministries, Institute of the Estonian Language, Estonian Terminological Society, Estonian Association for Applied Linguistics, institutions of higher education



### **Name management:**

- to monitor the impact of the Names Act and the Place-Names Act on society, and to amend the laws if necessary;
- to amend the Commercial Code with clauses regulating the language of business names;
- to achieve unified use of official place and personal names, including determination and fixing of personal names in state registries and databases according to uniform rules; systematization of place names, especially names of cadastral units;
- to prepare handbooks of name management, to carry out evaluations of name use, to explain to the general public the aims and tasks of name management;
- to create databases granting the preservation of names (incl. databases of place names, personal names, pronunciation of names, etc.) and guides (e.g. book of place names), to update the existing name collections;
- to continue participation in international cooperation in the field of name management.



### **Principal implementers**

Language committee of the Mother Tongue Society, Institute of the Estonian Language, Võro Instituut, Ministry of the Interior, Land Board, Tallinna University, University of Tartu

### **Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 3,003,847 euros\*

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\* All the sums in the development plan and its implementation plan concerning the period until 31 December 2010 are presented in Estonian kroons (EEK); for the period starting with 1 January 2011 the kroons have been converted into euros.

## 4. Study of Estonian and language resources

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The study of the structure, use, and change of the Estonian language provides knowledge about development activities that are related to the Estonian language. The success of language management (see Chapter 3), language teaching (see Chapter 6), and language-technological applications (see Chapter 5), as well as the preservation of Estonian as a cultured language that meets all the requirements of society, all depend on the level of language study. In order to achieve the general objectives of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language, it is important, in addition to the structure of language, to study also the linguistic environment, including language use in different functions, sublanguages, contacts with other languages and their impact on language change. The study of genetically related languages supports the study of the history Estonian. The efficiency of language study depends on the data or language resources that meet all the demands of research tasks.

### 4.1. Analysis of the situation

The “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” contributed to the situation that at present the Estonian language is studied on the internationally accepted level in many branches of contemporary linguistics at the University of Tartu, Institute of the Estonian Language, and Tallinn University. The quantity and quality of studies has increased, and many highly capable researchers have emerged. Good progress has been made in several research areas, such as (morpho)syntax, lexicography, study of dialects and the old written language, and sociolinguistics. One should highlight

the completion of the Explanatory Dictionary of Standard Estonian (in 1988–2007 in fascicles, the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition in six volumes in 2009, and a web-based version in 2010). There has also been some success in supplementing the existing language resources, which are needed for research, and their usability has been improved. Considerable additions were made to the corpora of Standard Estonian, the old written language, spoken language, and dialects; several special-purpose corpora and other databases were set up.

Nevertheless, the study of Estonia as a whole is not in a fully satisfactory condition, and some research areas need more attention (morphology, word-formation, articulatory phonetics, etc.). As before, the most serious problem in the study of the structure of the language is absence of comprehensive studies in several areas (history of the standard language, historical grammar, and dialect grammar); it could start to influence the quality of individual studies and the choice of research priorities. There is a need for a new scholarly grammar. An obstacle is a one-sided system of assessing research results, which prioritizes articles by comparison with monographs. Also, more cooperation is needed between the language institutions in establishing and studying priority research themes.

There is an obvious need for new studies also from a methodological perspective. Previously, the structure of Estonian has been studied mainly from the perspective of written standardized use and on the basis of the linguistic competence of the researcher; there has been less focus on language use in different communicative situations and the impact of the linguistic environment on the structure of language. Insufficient knowledge of spontaneous Estonian and linguistic alternations in different usage situations has hindered the creation of various applications in language technology, language teaching, and elsewhere.

## 4.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

### Objective

- adequate level of the study of Estonian and language resources for the understanding linguistic processes in society, their efficient guidance, and creation of necessary resources for the language user

**Impact:**

**regulation of the management, teaching, and use of the Estonian language in society; development of the language-technological support will be based on language resources and the level of their study**

Indicator	2010	2017
Number of published comprehensive scholarly treatments of the Estonian language	0	6
Number of published scholarly dictionaries of the Estonian language	0	5
Size of corpora and databases	100%	150%

### 4.3. Measure 2: study of the Estonian language and development of language resources

#### Actions

##### Study of the structure of written and spoken Estonian:

- to study Estonian phonetics and grammar;
- to prepare scholarly dictionaries and grammars of Standard Estonian;
- to prepare comprehensive scholarly treatments of Estonian phonetics, phonology, morphology, word-formation, and syntax;
- to study Estonian vocabulary; to compile a single-volume explanatory dictionary of Standard Estonian with a supplemented structure;
- to study the structure and functions of spoken and written texts, including academic texts and language of communication.

##### Study of Estonian dialects:

- to study the spread of dialect phenomena and the relations between dialects and closely related languages;
- to prepare grammatical surveys of Estonian dialects, scholarly dictionaries, and other comprehensive treatments;

- to continue the preparation and publication of the “Dictionary of Estonian Dialects”;

**Study of the Estonian linguistic environment:**

- to study the use of Estonian in different communicative situations and the impact of the linguistic environment on the structure of the Estonian language;
- to study the acquisition and teaching of Estonian as a native language, as a second language, and as a foreign language;
- to analyse the basics of Estonian language policy and language management;
- to study Estonian specialized language and professional communication.

**Study of language contacts and language change:**

- to study language use and attitudes in a multilingual environment;
- to promote translation studies;
- to study the relations between Estonian and genetically related languages and Indo-European languages;
- to study the historical development of the grammatical structure and vocabulary of Estonian; to prepare a comprehensive survey of the history of the Estonian language;
- to study the development of Standard Estonian; to prepare a comprehensive survey of the history of Standard Estonian;
- to publish an etymological dictionary and to prepare its extended version;
- to compile an etymological dictionary of Estonian place names.

**Research and development on genetically related languages:**

- to study the phonetics and grammar of genetically related languages in the context of the historical development of the Estonian language;
- to compile dictionaries of Estonian and genetically related languages, including electronic dictionaries;
- to modernize and update the archives and language resources of genetically related languages;

- to study the dynamics and sociolinguistic situation of genetically related languages and to participate in the corresponding international cooperation projects.

**Development of linguistic resources:**

- to constantly update, technologically modernize, and improve user-friendliness of the existing databases (general corpus of Estonian, dialect corpus, corpus of the old written language, corpus of the spoken language, etc.);
- to create new resources from the perspective of needs of research, management, and teaching of the Estonian language;
- to continue integration of various databases.

**Principal implementers**

University of Tartu, Institute of the Estonian Language, Tallinn University, and Institute of Cybernetics of Tallinn University of Technology. The Võro Institute, Institute of Mulgi Culture, Estonian Literary Museum, and other institutions will participate in carrying out specific tasks.

**Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 12,143,213 euros



## 5. Language-technological support of Estonian

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### 5.1. Analysis of the situation

The language-technological support consists of language software and its applications as well as linguistic resources. It is expedient to make a distinction between speech technology (speech recognition and synthesis) and the technology of processing written texts or language technology in the narrow sense. Language resources are electronic data collections that are used for the elaboration of language software. Language software includes methods, algorithms, and computer programmes for the processing of **spoken and written** language material and serves as basis for language-technological application systems.

The tasks foreseen by the “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” with regard to creation of the language-technological support of the Estonian language were completed – Estonian is among 50 languages of the world with a highly developed language technology. This goal was achieved with the help of the national programmes “Estonian Language and National Memory (2004–2008)”, which funded language-technological work in 2004–2005, “Language-technological Support of the Estonian Language (2006–2010)”, as well as the doctoral school “Linguistics and Language Technology” that existed at the University of Tartu in 2005–2008. Development of the language-technological support of the Estonian language is necessary for the creation of the e-environment around us. If we do not implement the development plan for language technology or do not cooperate with other countries in the same direction, in future Estonian will not function in this environment and will be marginalized in information society.

The general trends and needs to keep the level of language-technological software and its applications are as follows: in speech technology: 1) the level of speech recognition will enable its use outside laboratory conditions, 2) the quality of speech synthesis will become more similar to natural speech; in language technology: 1) in the area of software, automatic analysis and synthesis on all language levels (morphology, syntax, semantics, pragmatics) that are required by the corresponding applications, 2) in the area of applications, existence of the corresponding application systems (information search, machine translation, translator's tools, lexicographer's and terminologist's workbenches, etc.); in the area of integrated applications and their software: integration of various devices of language and speech technology for the creation of the necessary applications. In the area of language-technological resources (corpora and dictionaries), it is necessary to have corpora and dictionaries that meet the needs of software development and application projects. Estonia has specialists for the creation of language resources, language software, and their applications, as well as opportunities to train new specialists in the field of computational linguistics and language technology at the University of Tartu. Target-financed research themes at the University of Tartu and the Institute of Estonian language have made a considerable contribution to the development of language technology. A "Centre of Excellence in Computer Science (2008–2015)" was set up with the participation of also language technologists from the University of Tartu and the Institute of Cybernetics of the Tallinn Institute of Technology. In 2009 two new doctoral schools were launched for doctoral students in computer science and language technology: doctoral school of information and communications technology (which includes language technologists) and doctoral school of linguistics, philosophy, and semiotics, which includes computational linguists in the framework of general linguistics.

The follow-up programme of "Language-technological Support for the Estonian Language (2006–2010)" is in preparation\*.

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\* The programme was approved by Directive No. 71 of 25 January 2011 of the Minister of Education and Research.

## 5.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

### Objective

- language-technological support for the Estonian language will be on an equal level with that of other languages in countries with developed language technology (e.g. Nordic countries) with regard to the trends that are required by Estonian-oriented software developments and applications.

### Impact:

- **programmes that process language material adequately will be widely used in society;**
- **Estonian is regarded as a language with developed language technology; Estonia will be among countries with most advanced language technology.**

Indicator	2010	2017
By comparison with countries with advanced language technology, possibility of natural speech synthesis, speech recognition for limited domains, man-machine dialog system, and machine-translation prototype	50-60%	70-80%

## 5.3. Measure 3: development of the language-technological support for the Estonian language

- to support participation of Estonian language technologists in the international division of labour, creation of open-code applications, and protocols and standards of one's resources and solutions;
- to create a central depository for the administration of language resources and reusable software.

### Actions

#### Speech technology:

- to work out speech recognition applications in different areas

(automatic transcription of spontaneous dialogue speech, as well as radio and television broadcasts, dialog systems in restricted domains, speech recognition in communications channels of restricted frequency bands);

- to create a prototype of automatic recognition of spoken language;
- in speech synthesis to use syntactic and semantic analysis in prosodic models;
- to work out a prototype of audiovisual speech synthesis (so-called talking head).

#### **Language technology:**

- to work out a syntactic parser that could analyse any sentences and takes into account the peculiarities of spoken language;
- to work out syntactic synthesis on the basis of semantic presentation;
- to work out analysis-synthesis of cohesive texts;
- to work out semantic analysis of complex sentences and cohesive texts (in certain domains), as well as devices for semantic synthesis;
- to work out an automatic identifier of text types;
- to work out modules of a translator's workbench, terminologist's workbench, and lexicographer's workbench, which could be modified if necessary;
- to create a machine-translation system, where all the existing devices for the processing of Estonian are adapted for the needs of machine translation.

#### **Integrated software and its applications:**

- to create man-machine dialog systems in restricted domains, for example, phone enquiries (speech recognition and synthesis, dialog models, syntax, semantics);
- to create tools for people with special needs.

#### **Language-technological resources (corpora and dictionaries):**

- to develop language resources that are needed in language and speech technology (syntactic tree bank, semantic database, lexi-

co-grammatical database and other dictionary databases, frame lexicon, domain-specific ontological databases;

- to convert dictionaries into standard format and to make them reusable databases;
- to make electronic dictionaries publicly usable;
- to renew the database of bilingual dictionaries (Estonian and language X) and to extend the possibilities to use it in different applications;
- to convert the headers of all corpora and dictionaries into electronic format and to make them computer-processable;
- to develop programme supply for corpora that will allow search, mark-up, and analysis of various linguistic phenomena. The corpora have to be marked up both morphologically and syntactically;
- to create an Estonian web corpus and a system of document indexing, which will allow establishment of authorship and plagiarism;
- to develop large-scale parallel corpora for the needs of statistical machine translation (EU documents, major areas of international communication of Estonian scientists);
- to further develop audio and video corpora of Estonian;
- to develop a systematic corpus of Internet language;
- to enlarge and to annotate the Estonian Dialog Corpus;
- to enlarge learner corpora;
- to create a balanced corpus of fiction;
- to develop a corpus of Estonian academic language.

#### **Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research, University of Tartu, Institute of the Estonian Language, Institute of Cybernetics of Tallinn University of Technology

#### **Total cost of the measure:**

Anticipated total cost of funding in 2011–2017 amounts to 7,605,486 euros.

## 6. Education and Estonian-language instruction

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Education is one of the main assurances that the Estonian language and Estonian national cultural space will persist. The goal of education is to provide general and professional proficiency in Standard Estonian and to develop a positive attitude towards the Estonian language. General education is of vital importance; the goal of its compulsory component or basic education is to achieve on the basis of what was achieved during the preschool period proficiency of all the Estonian-language skills and to develop attitudes that value the Estonian language; Estonian-language instruction in the upper secondary school will further develop both the specific skills acquired in the basic school and value judgements.

### 6.1. General education in Estonian

#### 6.1.1. Analysis of the situation

The opportunity to attend a child-care institution or its group with Estonian-medium educational activities in one's rural municipality or town of residence is granted by law to all the Estonian-speaking children. In recent years the number of children attending Estonian-medium groups of institutions of preschool education has witnessed a constant increase, reaching 48,580 children (of them 45,691 native speakers of Estonian) in the 2009/2010 school year. The "National Curriculum of Preschool Institutions" states that the goal of Estonian-language instruction in preschool education is to ensure

that a child is able to cope in everyday communication. Estonian-language instruction will deepen the child's skill to pronounce accurately, to use appropriate grammatical forms and relevant syntactic structures; it will provide primary reading and writing skills and generates an interest in children's literature.

The National Curriculum of Basic and Upper Secondary Schools states that the Estonian language is a compulsory subject on the level of basic and secondary education (incl. vocational secondary education). The number of daytime students in Estonian-medium basic schools in the 2009/2010 school year was 90, 837 (of them 84, 900 native speakers of Estonian). The number of daytime students in Estonian-medium upper secondary schools in the 2009/2010 school year was 23, 769, of them 22, 741 native speakers of Estonian. The changes in the syllabus that became effective at the beginning of 2010 emphasize as the main trend that when teaching the Estonian language more emphasis should be placed on language use in different communicative situations (incl. comprehension of texts).

There are textbooks that are necessary for teaching; their renewal should be started from the ones used in upper secondary schools. In a situation where the state has no control over the content and style of textbook manuscripts, one has to find possibilities how to ensure a good level of language of the textbooks in order to achieve the goals foreseen in the national curriculum. Now there are possibilities of finding information about the Estonian language on the Internet. One can witness an increase in the teaching of Estonian for pedagogical specialities in institutions of higher education, and continuing education of teachers of Estonian and other subjects is taking a more systematic character and increased volume. The proportion of young teachers and males continues to be low among mother-tongue teachers.

Estonian-language instruction and its results, as well as attitudes towards the Estonian language in Estonian-medium general education schools, are influenced by extracurricular foreign-language activities, use of informal language caused by computer-based communication, and an increased number of students with a non-Estonian mother tongue. The marks of the final paper in Estonian (in basic schools) and the national examination (in upper secondary schools) have remained rather stable (in basic schools a constant but statistically insignificant decrease in marks has been characteristic of recent years). The results of PISA 2006 showed that although the majority of the students of Estonian general education schools

achieve the basic level of functional reading skill, there are very few whose functional reading skill is excellent. A study of Estonian-language proficiency conducted among first-year university students in the second half of 2009 (Estonian-language proficiency of university students. Summary of the study. Tartu, 2010) indicates at the same time paucity of linguistic knowledge – proficiency of Standard Estonian and the functional language skill was good or close to good in 57 per cent of first-year students, poor in 21 per cent, and unsatisfactory in 19 per cent.

The National Examinations and Qualifications Centre has initiated preparatory work of a two-part text-based national examination of the Estonian language, which consists of (1) an essay and (2) reading comprehension exercises. In 2009 and 2010 trial examinations were conducted with success; information about examination development is provided on a regular basis on the homepage of the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre and in the media. According to the plan, the examination will become effective in 2012 and will consist of an essay based on a base text and tasks that require reading comprehension; it is designed to influence the development of Estonian-language teaching in the functional direction. A possible obstacle to positive development is little attention to the teaching of structure of the Estonian language and the basics of linguistics, as well as an evasive attitude towards the intended format of the new national examination.

One can witness some livening of extracurricular activities concerning the Estonian language, including the work of the Estonian Society of Mother Tongue Teachers, organization of Estonian language contests, activities of the science school of the Estonian language, promotion of Estonian-language web environment.

At the same time the Estonian-medium school is becoming multinational and multicultural; in Estonian-medium forms of study (incl. language immersion) are characterized by an increase in students whose mother tongue is not Estonian. In the school year 2009/2010 as many as 5,937 students whose mother tongue was not Estonian attended basic school (which constitutes almost 22 per cent of all basic school students whose mother tongue is not Estonian and 6.5 per cent of all Estonian-medium students). By comparison with the academic year 2005/2006 their proportion in Estonian-medium instruction has considerably increased – in the academic year 2005/2006 their number was 4,364, which is about 10 per cent of all basic school students whose mother tongue is not Estonian and 4



per cent of all Estonian-medium students. The situation is similar in preschool child-care institutions – in the academic year 2009/2010 among the students of Estonian-medium groups the mother tongue of 5 per cent of children was not Estonian, and about 20 per cent of all children whose mother tongue is not Estonian studied in Estonian-medium groups (because the data of preschool child-care institutions have been entered in the information system of Estonian education as late as in the academic year 2008/2009, it is impossible to point out any trends).

### 6.1.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

#### Objective

- all students will value the Estonian language and Estonian-language cultural space and proficiency of all the Estonian-language skills that meets the needs of present-day society, opportunities for active and passive use of Estonian

The achievement of this objective presumes the solution of many individual tasks in cooperation between several institutions and the existence of financial resources granted (first and foremost) by the Ministry of Education and Research and covering the relevant fields (the projection of the cost of the present development plan does not have in mind salary costs of teachers of general education schools). The principal partners of the Ministry of Education and Research in the implementation of the tasks, organization of implementation, and funding are the National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, Institute of the Estonian Language, University of Tartu and Tallinn University (incl. its information centre of mother-tongue instruction), local governments, Estonian Society of Mother Tongue Teachers, and Mother Tongue Society. The contribution of partners in cooperation and possible additional partners will be agreed upon separately.

#### Impact:

**Estonian-language space will be extensive and of high quality; good Estonian will be held in high esteem and used in the entire linguistic space and in all spheres of life**

Indicator	2010	2017
Proportion of first-year university students with a good or excellent proficiency in the mother tongue	57.1%	60%
Average mark of the national examination in the Estonian language in general education schools	58.6%	over 58%

### 6.1.3. Measure 4: ensuring Estonian-language proficiency, development of a positive attitude to the Estonian language, and creation of opportunities to use Estonian in Estonian-medium general education

#### Actions

##### Curriculum development:

- to ensure an adequate volume of Estonian-language instruction and efficient use of the time resource in order to achieve good learning results in the national curriculum;
- to deepen the degree of integration between Estonian-language instruction and the teaching of other school subjects;
- to work out and to implement the principles of more efficient provision of general knowledge of the Estonian language and Estonian-language cultural space, which values the Estonian language and encourages its use;
- to work out and offer selected courses dealing with topics that increase attractiveness of Estonian-language instruction;
- to launch in the academic year 2011/2012 a two-part problem-based national examination with the use of base texts, which consists of (1) an essay and (2) tasks of reading comprehension;
- to continue the development of the national examination in the Estonian language in the direction that contributes to deeper knowledge of the language, its more skilful use, and more objective assessment of the examination results.

##### Principal implementers

National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, Ministry of Education and Research, schools, preschool child-care institutions

**Textbooks, incl. textbooks of the Estonian language and other materials concerning the Estonian language:**

- to analyse the quality of the published textbooks, to inform the general public about the results of the analysis, to support the preparation of textbook manuscripts;
- to prepare web-based materials for the teaching of Estonian together with examination development, including harmonization with electronic examinations, and to support making them available to schools;
- to extend the spread freely available information about the Estonian language for students on the Internet (dictionaries, handbooks, and language journals);
- to increase the volume of Estonian-language web-based study materials with the purpose of covering the study content with freely available web-based materials in all the fields of general education.

**Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research, National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, Institute of the Estonian Language, institutions of higher education, Tiger Leap Foundation, Estonian Information Technology Foundation

**Training and continuing education of teachers:**

- to increase the Estonian-language component and the role of *Estica* in the training of teachers of preschool child-care institutions, teachers of the Estonian language and literature, and class teachers;
- to supplement the training of teachers of the Estonian language with courses that contribute to the teaching of Estonian as a second language;
- to include a course in Academic Estonian (3 ECTS) in all the curricula of pedagogical specialities, to ensure good professional and general Estonian-language skills of the graduates of initial training curricula;
- to develop the Information Centre for Mother Tongue Instruction at Tallinn University;
- to develop continuing education of teachers of the Estonian lan-

guage and literature in the direction of deepening their knowledge of the Estonian language;

- to establish the volume of regular compulsory professional continuing education as 10 ECTS for a period of every five years; to seek possibilities of working out the system of a sabbatical year or half-year and its gradual implementation for all teachers.

#### **Principal implementers**

University of Tartu, Tallinn University, school administrators, Ministry of Education and Research

#### **Teaching of the Estonian language and the language environment at school:**

- to support the fulfilment of the Estonian-language curriculum with regard to all the compulsory topics, working towards a manner of teaching that takes into account students' different types of thinking;
- to ensure full-scale Estonian-language and Estonian-medium instruction on the level of basic school and upper secondary school also in those regions of Estonia where the Estonian community is small;
- to create opportunities for group teaching of the Estonian language;
- to introduce a more efficient methodology of teaching Estonian that will facilitate the acquisition of functional proficiency of language;
- to improve the opportunities for the acquisition of the Estonian language and other subjects among students with a different mother tongue and students who have returned to Estonia from abroad;
- to favour the enhancement of Estonian-language awareness among teachers of all school subjects and to create for them opportunities for continuing education in the field of the Estonian language;
- to improve the Estonian-language environment in schools (homepages, information boards, documentation, computer software, etc.) and to create additional possibilities for good-level use of the Estonian language;

- to favour cooperation between teachers of Estonian and other school subjects in the field of language.

#### **Principal implementers**

county and city governments, schools and preschool child-care institutions, school administrators, Ministry of Education and Research, Estonian Society of Mother Tongue Teachers

#### **Extracurricular activities in the field of the Estonian language:**

- to continue the organization of Estonian-language contests for students of basic and upper secondary schools;
- to develop courses of Estonian in science schools at institutions of higher education;
- to support teachers and students in extracurricular activities in the field of the Estonian language;
- to support media publications that deal with the Estonian language or support Estonian-language creative work and to support contests of Estonian-language creative work;
- to develop TV and radio games and newspaper quizzes that focus on the Estonian language;
- to develop and to disseminate games enabling computer-based communication in the Estonian language and to initiate international cooperation in this field;
- to support teaching of the Estonian language and to disseminate such information abroad.

#### **Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research, University of Tartu, Tallinn University, Estonian Public Broadcasting, media publications; Estonian Society of Mother Tongue Teachers

#### **School-external activities of teachers:**

- to promote closer professional contacts between teachers of Estonian and other teachers;
- to support the participation of mother-tongue teachers in the discussion of problems related to the Estonian language and their solution;
- to promote the profession of a mother-tongue teacher.

### **Principal implementer**

Estonian Association of Mother Tongue Teachers

### **Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 3,387,317 euros.

## **6.2. Estonian language in non-Estonian-medium general education**

### **6.2.1. Analysis of the situation**

Non-Estonian-medium educational activities are permitted at a preschool child-care institution by a resolution of a local government council. The number of children attending non-Estonian-medium groups at preschool child-care institutions constitutes about 25 per cent of the total number of children attending preschool child-care institutions, amounting to 14, 049 in the academic year 2008/2009 and 14, 224 in 2009/2010, which constitutes 22.6 per cent of the total population of children attending preschool child-care institutions. According to the national curriculum, which became effective in 2009, Estonian-language instruction begins at the age of three years. The state supports the local authorities both in the organization of teaching (by funding 0.25 teacher positions per two groups) and in the purchase of study aids and information materials. It also supports continuing education of kindergarten teachers. The number of preschool child-care institutions, where educational activities are not carried out in Estonian or Russian, is marginal.

Estonian-language proficiency among non-Estonian school-children has shown constant improvement (Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013). In addition to Russian-medium schools, some English- and Finnish-medium schools have been set up in Estonia. However, Estonian-language proficiency reveals regional differences and is relatively low in those areas where the Estonian-language environment is almost absent (e.g. in Narva). Also, the situation is further complicated by the fact that teachers of non-Estonian-medium schools have little motivation to study the Estonian language and that Estonian-language instruction is too politicized.

The year 2007 saw the beginning of transition to partial Estonian-medium instruction in Russian-medium state and municipal upper secondary schools. In addition, language immersion and other models of bilingual education have been applied. In 2009 the first class of early language immersion programme finished basic school. While in the academic year 2005/2006 only 0.1 per cent of all basic school students (151) attended language immersion classes at basic schools, by the academic year 2009/2010 their number had reached 3,760, and their proportion amounted to 3.3 per cent of all basic school students.

Estonian-language proficiency is higher in those schools that have undergone transition to partial Estonian-medium subject teaching regardless of whether there is Estonian-language environment or not.

The number of students attending Russian-medium general education schools is declining – while according to the Estonian Educational Information System, 28, 240 basic school students attended Russian-medium forms in the academic year 2005/2006 (about 21 per cent of all basic school students), in 2009/2010 their number amounted to 22, 082 (about 20 per cent).

In many cases Estonian-language proficiency of graduates of non-Estonian-medium general education schools does not meet the requirements set by the national curriculum or the “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010”.

## 6.2.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

### Objective

Estonian-language proficiency of graduates of non-Estonian-medium basic schools will be on the level B2 and that of upper secondary schools will be on the level C1

### Impact:

**a graduate of a non-Estonian-medium general education school will cope with his or her Estonian-language proficiency both on the next educational level as well as at work**

Indicator	2009	2017
Proportion of upper secondary school graduates who passed the national examination of Estonian as a second language with at least 60 per cent result	66.3%	70%

### 6.2.3. Measure 5: ensuring Estonian-language proficiency and fostering positive attitudes to the Estonian language in non-Estonian-medium general education

#### Actions:

- to create a favourable atmosphere for the Estonian language and to provide elementary knowledge of the Estonian language in non-Estonian-medium kindergarten;
- to begin with partial Estonian-medium subject teaching in Russian-medium basic schools since the academic year 2015/2016;
- to increase the prestige of the Estonian language in non-Estonian-medium schools;
- to develop and organize continuing education for teachers of Estonian as a foreign language and language-immersion schools, to work out relevant courses and curricula;
- to support the use of language portfolios;
- to develop and support continuing education for Estonian-medium subject teachers in the field of subject-focussed Estonian language Estonian, including support for the Estonian-language instruction of teachers with mentor programmes;
- to develop and support models of bilingual education, including language immersion and content and language integrated learning (CLIL);
- to continue continuing education for Estonian-medium teachers of Russian-medium schools in the field of CLIL methodology;
- to develop training modules that will foster a positive attitude to the Estonian language and Estonian-medium content instruction among Russian-medium content teachers of Russian-medium schools;
- to continue the elaboration of language examination that correspond to the language proficiency levels of the European Commission;



- to develop and apply the existing programmes that contribute to adaptation among new immigrants;
- to develop modules of multicultural education and to ensure that upon completion of teacher training all young teachers will have acquired the knowledge and skills that are necessary for the Estonian-medium instruction of students whose mother tongue is not Estonian;
- to work out measures that ensure the presence of qualified teachers of Estonian as a foreign language in those regions where the Estonian-language environment is almost absent; to extend the opportunities of teachers of Russian-medium schools to work temporarily in the Estonian-language environment;
- to extend Estonian-language instruction in informal settings.

#### **Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research, Tallinn University, University of Tartu, Ministry of Culture, Integration and Migration Foundation "Our People", school administrators, schools, pre-school child-care institutions, youth centres and societies

#### **Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 4,665,550 euros

## **6.3. Vocational education**

### **6.3.1. Analysis of the situation**

Pursuant to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act the language of instruction in vocational educational institutions is the Estonian language; use of other languages is decided by the Minister of Education and Research. In the academic year 2008/2009 there were forty-five vocational educational institutions in Estonia; the Estonian language was the language of instruction in twenty-six of them; in five private schools and one state vocational educational institution instruction was carried out only in Russian; there were thirteen schools where the languages of instruction were Estonian and Russian. 74.2 per cent of the students of state and municipal

vocational educational institutions studied in Estonian and 25.8 per cent in Russian.

The compulsory general educational content of the curricula of vocational educational institutions is determined by the national curriculum of basic and upper secondary schools. The volume of general educational subjects, including the volume of Estonian-language instruction, is much smaller in vocational educational instruction than in upper secondary school instruction. The compulsory volume of Estonian-language instruction in Estonian-medium groups in vocational educational instruction is three study weeks; in Russian-medium groups it is four study weeks (one study week equals forty hours).

There are plans to offer vocational educational institutions an option to give graduates of vocational educational instruction a voluntary additional year of general educational instruction and in future to associate in vocational education the study of general educational subjects, including Estonian-language instruction, more closely with vocational and professional studies.

According to the repeat study "Extension of Estonian-medium instruction in vocational educational institutions with Russian-medium study groups", the Estonian-language proficiency is poor; however, by comparison with the data for 2004 professional Estonian-language proficiency showed some improvement; also, the availability of study materials and various support activities has improved; there is also some progress in teacher training.

In order to improve Estonian-language proficiency and professional coping among Russian-medium vocational students, the Ministry of Education and Research drew up an action plan for the transition to gradual Estonian-medium instruction in vocational educational institutions (Development Plan for the Estonian Vocational Education and Training System 2009–2013). The transition will take place by integrating vocational and general educational subjects. When implementing the action plan, it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that the final examinations at vocational educational institutions should take place in the Estonian language.

Estonian-language instruction in Estonian-medium vocational educational institutions and groups is carried out on the basis of the subject syllabus for Estonian-medium general education schools, whereby it will not be discussed separately.

### 6.3.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

#### Objective

- language instruction in vocational educational institutions will yield the results set by the curriculum

#### Impact:

**graduates of non-Estonian-medium vocational educational institutions will be competitive in the labour market**

Indicator	2009	2017
Proportion of vocational students who passed the qualification exam of the Estonian language among all the vocational students who took the exam	11.4%	20%

### 6.3.3. Measure 6: ensuring Estonian-language proficiency among vocational students

#### Actions:

- to offer instruction of professional Estonian and Estonian as a foreign language on the level that is required for one's job;
- to analyse the situation of Estonian-language instruction in Russian-medium groups, to update the requirements for Estonian-language proficiency, and to organize integrated continuing education of professional and language instruction for the principals and teachers of vocational educational institutions;
- to organize preparatory courses for the Estonian-medium vocational exam for Russian-medium students and adults who work in the corresponding specialities, to support student practice in the Estonian-language working environment;
- to work out the language portfolio model for adult learners.

#### Principal implementers

Ministry of Education and Research, National Examination and Qualifications Centre, Integration and Migration Foundation "Our People", Professional Qualifications Foundation, institutions of higher education that train teachers, vocational educational institutions

#### **Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 1,418,839 euros

## **6.4. Higher education**

### **6.4.1. Analysis of the situation**

In higher education efforts are made to seek balance between the national and international components, that is, between the functions of Estonian and English; Russian is used, too. The situation is somewhat different with regard to study levels (bachelor study, master's study, doctoral study, professional higher education) and levels of study programme classification (broad group of studies, field of studies, study programme group).

According to the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), study programmes are divided into eight broad groups of education (e.g. education, humanities and arts, health and welfare). Broad groups of education are divided into field of education, for example, the broad group of the humanities and arts includes two fields of education (arts and humanities); the broad group of science is divided into three (life sciences, physical sciences, mathematics and statistics). The next level of classification, groups of programmes, brings together programmes of close specialities, for example, the field of humanities is composed of three groups of programmes (religion and theology, foreign languages of cultures, native languages, history and archaeology, philosophy, and ethics); physical sciences includes three groups (physics, chemistry, and geosciences). The next level of classification concerns the concrete programmes of institutions of higher education, such as the bachelor's programme of Middle Eastern and Asian Studies at Tallinn University or the master's programme of geography at the University of Tartu.

Estonian-medium instruction is available for most study programme groups on most levels of study. At present a student who entered Estonian-medium bachelor's studies can generally complete both this level and also more advanced levels of study by means of Estonian-medium instruction, which could include some subjects or subject groups that are taught in a foreign language.

Institutions of higher education are working out principles of using languages. The University of Tartu has adopted its own language principles, which foresee that Estonian-medium bachelor's and master's education should be granted in all fields of study and that foreign-language-medium programmes, subjects and groups of subjects (modules) should be developed on all levels of study.

Because of internationalization of the academic sphere the role of English-medium education is on the rise, especially on higher educational levels. Also, the documents of higher education strategy and the language policy of universities take this factor into account. "The Estonian Higher Education Strategy 2006–2015" aims to ensure the existence of Estonian-medium education on all educational levels in all fields of study, thus creating a possibility of using foreign languages for the teaching of most specialities within the same field of study. The "Strategy for the Internationalization of Estonian Higher Education 2006–2015" diminishes the role of Estonian-medium education further by removing the requirement of the existence of Estonian-medium education from doctoral education.

As of now not all specialities are covered with terminological dictionaries and Estonian-medium educational literature, but constant work is underway in both directions and is supported by national programmes. Academic Estonian is taught at institutions of higher education with various degrees. Increasingly more research results are published in English. Publication in the Estonian language is supported by the fact that several Estonian-language journals are indexed by the Thomson-Reuters database Web of Science and the European Reference Index for the Humanities (ERIH). The majority of doctoral dissertations are in English. English is overwhelmingly predominant in medicine and sciences, but, for example, in law and agricultural science most dissertations are in Estonian. A dissertation in a foreign language is usually supplied with an Estonian-language summary and vice versa. Employees of institutions of higher education and students are involved in popularization of science in the Estonian language.

The language proficiency of many graduates of non-Estonian-medium upper secondary schools is inadequate for Estonian-medium education. Universities have worked out different methods for the testing and improvement of language proficiency of their students. Also, Estonian-language courses are offered to students and personnel who have come from abroad. There are no special courses for new immigrants and Estonians who received their gen-

eral education outside Estonia. There are no criteria for defining the language of higher education.

The language environment of institutions of higher education, especially public universities and state institutions of professional higher education is predominantly Estonian. Taking into consideration foreign lecturers and international students, efforts are made to forward important information and to attend to matters also in English.

#### 6.4.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

##### Objectives

- Estonian-medium higher education ensuring a high level of Estonian-language proficiency among graduates of institutions of higher education will be available on all levels of study in all groups of programmes, whereas opportunities of instruction in foreign languages will be supported, too;
- major research results will be published also in Estonian, thus, preserving and developing the Estonian language of science and avoiding complete transition to a foreign language in any branch of science.

##### Impact:

**Strong position of Estonian as a language of higher education and science will support cohesion in knowledge-based society and appreciation and sustainability of Estonian-medium education**

Indicator	2010	2017
Proportion of study programme groups that include Estonian-medium study programmes among all study programmes groups	100%	100%
Proportion of defended foreign-language doctoral dissertations in the scope of a research publication together with an Estonian-language summary or proportion of Estonian-language doctoral dissertations of all doctoral dissertations	80%	95%

**6.4.3. Measure 7: development of Estonian-language proficiency and fostering a positive attitude to the Estonian language and preservation of the use of Estonian in higher education and research**

**Actions:**

- to legalize preservation of Estonian-medium instruction in all study programme groups on all levels of study;
- to set a requirement that a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral dissertation has to be supplied with an exhaustive summary Estonian; in the case of a doctoral dissertation its scope should correspond to that of a research article in the respective field;
- to define the proportion of the language of instruction and other languages in a curriculum;
- to ensure the Estonian-medium study foreseen by Estonian-medium curricula;
- to determine the need for Estonian-language specialists and to ensure their training by submission of a directed state order for curricula of the Estonian language on all levels of study at the University of Tartu and Tallinn University;
- to establish speciality coefficients that correspond to the actual cost of teaching the Estonian-language specialities;
- to work out the principles that could serve as a basis for Estonian-language proficiency requirements for student applicants of institutions of higher education who are graduates of non-Estonian-medium upper secondary schools;
- to support the teaching of Professional and Academic Estonian and the language support for students with a non-Estonian mother tongue;
- to launch a continuing education system of Standard Estonian for students who received their secondary education abroad;
- to supply specialities with terminological dictionaries and study literature in the Estonian language;
- to value the publication of research findings in the Estonian language by keeping a high standard of Estonian-language scholarly publications; to continue seeking their coverage in international databases, to seek a higher value for Estonian-language scholarly publication with an international distribution in the hierarchy of research publications;

- to continue supporting activities that popularize science in the Estonian language;
- to continue the development and implementation of flexible methods of teaching Estonian and testing language proficiency.

**Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research and the ministries that administer institutions of professional higher education, institutions of higher education, research institutions, editorial boards of scholarly publications, Archimedes Foundation

**Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 8,308,514 euros



## 7. Varieties of Estonian

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### 7.1. Regional varieties of the Estonian language in Estonia

#### 7.1.1. Analysis of the situation

The “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” set an objective to create conditions for the use of and preservation of regional varieties of Estonian as a cultural treasure, a source for the development of Standard Estonian, and a local bearer of Estonian identity. This objective has remained highly topical, and at the same time it is extensive. Estonian dialects or regional varieties are part of Estonian cultural heritage; they serve as a vital basis for Estonian specialized language, especially terminology, an important component of rural development and regional identity, and a source of viability of the Estonian language. This objective of the development strategy in the broader sense will remain largely the same.

The past 10–15 years have witnessed an increase in regional activity and emergence of local identities. There has been more focus on the dialects in the media and public sphere; use of dialects has been supported by national programmes, and the availability of information about dialects has improved (incl. CDs with dialect speech and songs, dialect textbooks, and other literature). At the same time it is evident that society lacks an adequate knowledge of dialects. The Estonian Public Broadcasting has no action plan and own resources for the preparation of dialect programmes. One can come across mixed attitudes to dialects among the general public and at schools, and there is no coordination on the national level with regard to actions aimed at the preservation of dialects. Nor has the use of dialects in administration been regulated by means of legal acts.

For this reason, initiation of national dialect programmes that will involve the entire Estonia will be a priority of the next period.

Use of regional varieties or dialects of Estonian, their development (e.g. preparation of dictionaries, text collections, and audiovisual materials) and increased appreciation could serve in future as a basis for introducing the concept of *Estonian regional language*, which denotes a level between Standard Estonian and its dialects. A regional language is a language variety based on the historical dialects of Estonian, which is used in the historical area of these dialects and for which a standard language has been created (incl. grammar, dictionaries, educational literature, periodicals, virtual media, etc.). A supradialectal regional language serves the interests of its regional identity, cohesion, and better life.

#### 7.1.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

##### Objective

- regional varieties of Estonian will act as a cultural treasure and part of everyday life, a source for the development of Standard Estonian, and a bearer of local Estonian identity

##### Impact:

**people who use regional varieties of Estonian feel togetherness and linguistic attractiveness of their region of residence**

Indicator	2010	2017
Volume of TV and radio programmes in dialect language per week	20 min	50 min
Number of publications in dialect language	12	15
Number of participants in dialect-language mass events	7,000	8,000
Number of dialect-language entries by schoolchildren at contests	100	150

### 7.1.3. Measure 8: development of regional varieties of the Estonian language in Estonia

#### Actions:

- to initiate Estonian-wide national programmes for the revival and development of Estonian dialects and local culture;
- to favour the use of Estonian dialects in local administration, public signs, signposts, advertisements, notices, and advertising;
- to continue the teaching of Estonian dialects in general education schools and other educational institutions as well as the preparation of relevant educational literature;
- to support the possibility to teach Estonian dialects within the framework of the national curriculum;
- to develop in institutions of higher education opportunities of training and continuing education in the field of Estonian dialects;
- to continue research and development activities with regard to Estonian dialects (see also the study of Estonian);
- to support the use of dialects in the media and projects of regional culture.

#### Principal implementers

Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Culture, Institute of the Estonian Language, University of Tartu, Tallinn University, Võro Institute. The tasks will be implemented with the help of local governments, Institute of Mulgi Culture, Institute of Kihnu Culture, Mother Tongue Society, etc.

#### Basic cost of the measure:

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 2,172,996 euros

## 7.2. Estonian language as used by Estonians abroad

### 7.2.1. Analysis of the situation

The “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” set a goal to help the Estonian communities and scattered Estonians abroad to preserve the ability to communicate in Estonian so that their possible repatriation would be easier and that there would be more possibilities to spread pro-Estonia information abroad.

The objective is highly topical because during the past 10–15 years the number of Estonians living abroad has increased. More people have left Estonia in order to work and/or study abroad than those who have returned to Estonia. There are also more people who live and work both in Estonia and abroad. The general reason for such movement is open borders, the principle of free movement of labour in the European Union, and the implementation of various educational exchange programmes. Estonians who left Estonia temporarily in order to study abroad or moved abroad could in the course of time become Estonians living abroad in case they become adapted to the new host country. The educational and work experience acquired by Estonians abroad will be useful for Estonia, especially if this experience is put to use in Estonia. The need to promote the return of Estonians (living abroad) to Estonia is increased by shortage of qualified labour in Estonia.

Because the Estonian community that resides temporarily abroad (workers of Estonian embassies, workers of the European Union, the European Commission, NATO, and other international organizations) is on the increase, it is necessary to grant their children the opportunity to receive (partly) Estonian-medium education also abroad so that they will be able after returning to Estonia to continue their studies in Estonian-medium schools.

The state support for the study and use of the Estonian language is manifested in aid to European schools, foreign municipal schools that teach Estonian or in Estonian, and in other ways. There is the national “Compatriots’ Programme (2009–2013)”, in the framework of which the Mother Tongue Society organizes in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research Estonian-language days for Estonians living abroad (since 1989 52 language days in 13 countries with 231 presentations).

## 7.2.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

### Objective

- Estonians residing abroad will preserve Estonian-language proficiency

### Impact:

**Estonians residing abroad will maintain contacts with Estonia, their possible repatriation is easy, and the possibilities of spreading objective information about Estonia abroad will improve**

Indicators	2010	2017
Number of Estonians living abroad who participate in Estonian-language study and days in Estonia and abroad	1,500	2,800

## 7.2.3. Measure 9: support for the maintenance of Estonian-language proficiency among Estonians living abroad

### Actions:

- to support the teaching of Estonian and in Estonian, to create Internet-based study opportunities in schools abroad and the study of Estonians living abroad in Estonia;
- to favour the availability of Estonian-language information abroad (print and electronic media);
- to organize language days for young Estonians living abroad, including young people who study at foreign universities, that will introduce the Estonian language and language policy and motivate them to return to Estonia; to seek new formats for language days and to organize them together with more events and partners;
- to record and study language use among Estonians living abroad and the Estonian-language materials that are located abroad.

### Principal implementers

Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Culture, Foreign Ministry, Ministry of the Interior, Estonian Institute, Institute of

the Estonian Language, University of Tartu, Mother Tongue Society

**Basic cost of the measure:**

The anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 3,336,188 euros

### 7.3. Sign language and language use by people with special linguistic needs

#### 7.3.1. Analysis of the situation

The “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” set a task to ensure favourable conditions for study, communication, and work for sign-language users and other people with special linguistic needs.

During the past 10–15 years one could observe that the conditions of communication, study, and work in society have improved among sign-language users and people with other special linguistic needs. A new transcription system for the Estonian sign language and the signed Estonian language has been worked out; language-technological devices have been developed, which enable the blind to use a computer and the Internet. The version of the Language Act, which took effect on 1 March 2007, recognized the Estonian sign language as a separate language and the signed Estonian language as a special variety of Estonian; the state is obliged to promote the use and development of the Estonian sign language. Starting with 25 August 2009 the Estonian Public Broadcasting transmits a news programme in the Estonian sign language (in place of a news programme that had been translated into the Estonian sign language). At the same time the study and teaching of the sign language suffers from lack of systemicity; groups of people with special linguistic needs have not been determined, nor has the adequate volume of translation services been granted.

### 7.3.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

#### Objective

- to determine groups of people with special linguistic needs, to develop systemic instruction and study of the sign language and to grant the necessary translation services

#### Impact:

**sign language users and other people with special linguistic needs will have favourable conditions for study, communication, and work; social cohesion will have improved**

Indicator	2010	2017
Volume of TV programmes translated into the sign language	40 min	60 min
Number of qualified sign language interpreters	27	40

### 7.3.3. Measure 10: support for the sign language and language use by people with special linguistic needs

#### Actions:

- to specify the definition of groups of people with special linguistic needs (the deaf and people with hearing impairment, the blind, the deafblind, dyslectics, aphasics, and dysarthrics) and the size of each group;
- to grant deaf children the opportunity to choose between Estonian-medium or Estonian-medium and sign-language-medium education
- to grant in deaf schools the teaching of the Estonian Sign Language in all forms;
- to develop the Estonian Sign Language, to work out curricula and syllabi for the teaching of the Estonian Sign Language as a first language, to develop the methods of teaching the Estonian Sign Language as a second language;
- to grant technical devices (e.g. for sending a short message) for people with special linguistic needs, which allow forwarding emergency messages to the emergency centre;

- to develop the sign language interpreting service (incl. the written translation service) into a state-wide system so that the quick interpreting service will be accessible for each person with hearing impairment;
- to develop the possibilities of digital television (to translate into the sign language at least 10 per cent of the programmes of Estonian television channels, to supply with Estonian subtitles at least 10 per cent of the Estonian-language original programmes, and to supply a part of the programmes of public television with subtitles that forward the announcer's text in a condensed manner).

**Principal implementers**

Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of the Interior, Rescue Board, local governments, Institute of the Estonian Language, University of Tartu, Estonian Association of the Deaf

**Basic cost of the measure:**

The anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 3,457,620 euros



## 8. Estonian language in the multilingual world

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It is important for the development of the Estonian language that the Estonian language should be well represented both in Europe and around the world (incl. the existence of qualified interpreters and translators, academic studies of the Estonian language abroad, and diverse cooperation in language matters), as well as good Estonian and foreign-language proficiency among Estonian residents. In addition to English, there are other languages that are important in the world and in international communication (Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Chinese, Russian, Italian), languages that are genetically related to Estonian (Finnish, Hungarian, and other Finno-Ugric languages), languages of close neighbours (Latvian, Lithuanian, Swedish), and classical languages. In addition, the languages of the EU member states and oriental languages are important, too. Specialists and expert users of foreign languages are required for the functioning of the state, as well as for the maintenance and development of economic and cultural ties. Language proficiency is included in the professional skills of workers in several domains; it ensures competitiveness, favours study and self-improvement, familiarization with other cultures and introduction of the Estonian language and culture in the world; it develops the skill of international and intercultural communication and enhances cultural awareness and tolerance.

## 8.1. Analysis of the situation

The “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” served as the basis for drawing up the “Estonian Foreign Language Strategy 2009–2015” and the “Implementation Plan of the Estonian Foreign Language Strategy 2009–2011”; academic studies of the Estonian language abroad were developed in accordance with the “Programme of Academic Studies of Estonian Language and Culture Abroad (2005–2010)” (incl. awarding of Estophilus scholarships of Estonian language and culture to international students). In the academic year 2011/2012 new curricula will become effective (the National Curriculum for Basic Schools and the National Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools), where the teaching of foreign languages has been harmonized with the principles of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

Several Estonian schools adopted in the academic year 2009/2010 the Estonian model of the European language portfolio for 12–16-year-old students (forms 6–9 of basic schools). Estonian institutions of higher education train interpreters and translators; according to estimates, their number is insufficient, but there is no accurate survey of needs. Since 1995 Estonian has initiated in the programmes of the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML) in Graz, as well as in the language programmes and projects initiated by the European Commission.

In 2007 the preparation of a survey of Estonian language education (language profile) was started in cooperation with the Language Policy Division of the European Council; this project is in its final phase.

Estonia participates in international cooperation in terminology and language technology; it has participated in the work of the European Federation of National Institutions for Language (EFNIL) since 2004, the Network to Promote Linguistic Diversity (NPLD) since 2008, and in the work group of Early Language Learning of the European Commission since 2009.

## 8.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

### Objective

- awareness of the Estonian language and culture in other countries and awareness of other languages and cultures in Estonia will increase

### Impact:

**increased integration of Estonia in the cultural, economic, and political processes of the world**

Indicator	2010	2017
Number of training centres of Academic Studies of Estonian Language outside Estonia	11	18

## 8.3. Measure 11: development of the Estonian language in the context of foreign languages and granting its international representation

### Actions:

- to develop diverse international cooperation in the field of language;
- to actively develop the Academic Studies of the Estonian Language Abroad according to the national programme;
- to determine the need for interpreters and translators and to train them in the required numbers;
- to support contrastive studies of Estonian and foreign languages;
- to publish bilingual dictionaries;
- to increase the role of the Estonian language in the curricula of foreign philology;
- to ensure Estonian and foreign-language proficiency of all the teachers;
- to ensure the quality of language-teacher training, and to improve the prestige of language teachers in society;

- to develop an Estonian-language model for adult language learners;
- to integrate Estonian and foreign-language actions in the next development plan of the Estonian language;
- to continue implementation of the language proficiency levels of the European Union and organization of research that supports the know-how of testing.

**Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, University of Tartu, Tallinn University, Estonian Institute, Institute of the Estonian Language

**Basic cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 8,947,631 euros

## 9. Supervision of the observance of the Language Act

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### 9.1. Analysis of the situation

Supervision of the observance of the Language Act is carried out by the Language Inspectorate, which is authorized to check compliance of official language use with the norm of the standard language and observance of the requirements for the language of administration in local state institutions and local governments during their sessions, in the procession of documents and communication with people; the establishment of language-proficiency requirements for public servants, workers, and self-employed persons and their Estonian-language proficiency; the use of Estonian and foreign languages in professional communication and information transmission.

The supervisory authority of language officials in the checking of language proficiency is adequately regulated by legal acts; response to the precepts issued by language officials differs with regard to domains and regions; teachers of Russian-medium schools have shown more modest results, especially in eastern Virumaa, where motivation for language study is low because of the mainly Russian-language environment. Nor is there any control over the quality of adult language study, whereby the results of language study are poorer than intended. Also, supervision is more complicated because of the fact that in Estonia the language-proficiency requirements are not taken into account when issuing a work permit.

According to the Language Act, official language use has to comply with the norm of the standard language; however, the requirement of correct language use has not been set in several important

domains of public language use (official websites, signs, signposts, advertisements, notices). Legal acts do not define the concepts of a language of administration and an in-house language of administration, which complicates supervision in these domains.

The Commercial Code does not regulate the language of business or company names, whereby increasingly more foreign and foreign-like have emerged that are inaccurate from a language perspective. Because of inadequate regulation alcoholic products do not provide any consumer information in the Estonian language. Language use remains unregulated in political advertising, public display of information that are registered trademarks, the language of contracts, etc. Several previous regulations of language supervision need specification.

## 9.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

### Objective

- efficient supervision of the observance of the requirements set all the domains of language use that are covered by the Language Act

### Impact:

**Estonian-language proficiency of non-Estonian-speaking workers has improved, public information is mostly in Estonian, and language use has become more accurate**

Indicator	2010	2017
Number of supervisory proceedings per year	2,500–3,000	2,500–3,000
Proportion of detected infringements	90%	70%

### 9.3. Measure 12: supervision of the observance of the Language Act

#### Action

##### Organization of supervision:

- to continue supervision of the observance of professional language proficiency requirements at least in the previous volume, focusing on the language proficiency of public sector workers (teachers, public servants, workers of state and local government institutions, workers of institutions of public legal persons), service workers employed in the public sector, and workers that are responsible for the security of the population;
- to improve supervision of the compliance of official language use with the norm of Standard Estonian, use of the Estonian language in public information, and accuracy of public language use.

##### Legal regulation:

- to amend the Language Act with provisions that regulate or specify the language use of web sites, public information provided in the public display of trademarks, contracts, and other important domains; to set a requirement for media publications to follow good practice for language use;
- to link the issuance of a work permit with the Estonian-language proficiency required for the relevant job, completion of mandatory language study, or participation in language study;
- to promote the use of Estonian-style company names by the requirement to register company names and the accompanying counselling;
- to amend the Alcohol Act with the requirement that when alcohol products are sold, the consumer should be provided with written information in the Estonian language;
- to analyse the possibility, and if possible, to set a requirement that political advertising should be in the Estonian language whole not prohibiting foreign-language advertising, and to achieve a situation when the work of local government councils in areas with a Russian-language majority is carried out in the Estonian language;

- to review the supervisory authority of the Language Inspectorate in the Language Act and to amend it with the necessary provisions (incl. meeting the quality requirements in those training institutions that are involved in state language instruction for adults).

**Principal implementers**

Ministry of Education and Research, Language Inspectorate

**Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 2,347,667 euros



## 10. Awareness-raising activities with regard to the Estonian language

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### 10.1. Analysis of the situation

The “Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010” set a goal to cultivate language attitudes and to popularize more widely good language use in society in order to ensure a positive image in the eyes of users and a high status in society as a whole. At the same time it was admitted that philologists, writers, and teachers of the mother tongue take care of the image of language only out of a sense of mission; no one does this work professionally and on a systematic basis. For this reason, the strategy set a goal to create an image-making system for the Estonian language and to develop scientifically based image-making activities.

During the implementation of the language strategy the majority of specific goals were accomplished: *Keele Infoleht* ‘Language Newsletter’ is published as a supplement of the newspaper *Sirp*, a language maintenance organization for schoolchildren was established, as well as the portal [www.lastekas.ee](http://www.lastekas.ee); the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia was amended to include a clause about protection of the Estonian language. There have been various events promoting the prestige of the Estonian language (conferences, campaigns, celebration of important dates, original TV series *Keelevägi* ‘Power of Language’ that popularizes the language, etc.). The national F. J. Wiedemann Language Award has been bestowed since 2004 (established on a voluntary basis in 1988), and the language deed of the year has been nominated since 2007; from 2011 onwards an award will be given for the best university textbook. Ac-

cessibility of language resources on the Web and the prestige of the Estonian-language web environment have improved considerably. Use of the Estonian-language computer software has increased in state and local government institutions; however, there is still a long way to go to reach the recommended level. The national programme “Value Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013” was launched. The state supports publication activities, including the publication of fiction, and the activities of libraries (which are not discussed in the development plan of the Estonian language in order to avoid double planning).

The period when the language strategy was implemented witnessed a remarkable strengthening of ethnic and conservative values, which has importantly influenced valuation of the Estonian language. It is true that societal expectations with regard to the correctness of the public language have increased, but increased use of foreign languages has not stopped. During the implementation of the strategy steps were made to improve the prestige of the Estonian language; also systematic value development activities were devised with the support of the national programme. It is highly on the agenda to obtain research-based information about the image of the Estonian language (some preparatory studies have been conducted). It is necessary to continue to actively enhance the image of the Estonian language and, thus, to create prerequisites for the development of language habits that will support sustainability of the Estonian language.

## 10.2. Objective, impact, and indicators

### Objective

- efficient, diverse, and engaging language awareness activities

### Impact:

**the language-awareness level of the general public has increased, good and expressive language use is in high esteem, new language-technological applications and the use of Estonian-language software; the general public is informed about the work carried out in the framework of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language and is engaged in its work**

Indicator	2010	2017
Number of people participating in the voting for the language deed of the year	320	1800




### 10.3. Measure 13: raising of language awareness

#### Actions:

- to inform language users about modern language resources;
- to adopt Estonian-language computer software in state and local government institutions, including foreign missions, as well as in other institutions that operate in public interests;
- to help to create and to reinforce the habits of using new applications;
- to increase general language awareness in the domain of public language use;
- to continue the awarding of the F. J. Wiedemann Language Award and the language deed of the year and the organization of related events;
- to value Estonian-language self-expression in new channels of communication;
- to support use of the Estonian language in intercultural communication;
- to value the regional, ethnic, social, and cultural sublanguages as a source of language richness, and to support their wider use;
- to inform the general public about the work carried out in the framework of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language and the achieved results;
- to present and promote the Development Plan of the Estonian Language as a popular development programme;
- to engage the society by way of popular initiatives and in a suitable manner in the implementation of the Development Plan of the Estonian Language.

#### Principal implementers

Ministry of Education and Research, institutions of higher education, research and development institutions dealing with



the Estonian language, public media and cultural journalism,  
Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of  
Culture, local governments, non-governmental organizations

**Total cost of the measure:**

the anticipated total volume of funding for 2011–2017 is 536,858  
euros

