

**QUADRENNIAL PERIODIC REPORT ON MEASURES TO PROTECT
AND PROMOTE THE DIVERSITY OF CULTURAL EXPRESSIONS IN
THE FRAMEWORK OF THE 2005 UNESCO CONVENTION**

REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA

2012

1. GENERAL INFORMATION

Name of Party	Estonia
Date of ratification	23.11.2006
Total contribution to IFCD (to date)	\$ 5653,74

Organisation responsible for the preparation of the report

Estonian Ministry of Culture

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Name of the designated official signing the report

Mr Anton Pärn, Deputy Secretary General,
Estonian Ministry of Culture

2. MEASURES

2.1 Cultural policies and measures

The Republic of Estonia ratified the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expression on 23.11.2006. There are many initiatives and measures implemented or successfully continued since the Convention entered into force. The following contains only the most significant mechanism that has implemented to reach the aims desired.

The Programme of Estonian Government (April 2011)¹ states among other priorities the following guidelines:

a) Launching Cultural Policy Strategy 2020 (Culture 2020)²

The discussions on the field of state policy designing have clearly stated that culture has a significant role in the society. Different strategy documents conclude with one voice that it is necessary to identify cultural impacts in different policies and strategic frameworks. The process of retrofitted Culture 2020 strategy contains three different frameworks or viewpoints. First is the horizontal level that addresses the wider field of culture and refers strongly to principles of the Convention (Creation – Production – Dissemination and Distribution – Access value chain, the essence of cultural diversity etc). The horizontal level also contains postulations about centralisation or decentralisation, the growing role of the third sector and communities, transparent financial mechanisms, intellectual property etc. The second group of directions addresses different policy areas that are dependent on the developments in cultural sphere. These discussions analyse the cultural impacts in sustainable development, education, economy, regional developments, foreign affairs etc. The idea of these postulations is to make cultural policies more visible and explain the wider value of cultural richness and creativity. The third part describes general trends and factors in every subsector (arts, heritage, cultural diversity).

b) Continuing the functions of Cultural Endowment³

Cultural Endowment of Estonia is a legal person in public law the objective of the activities of which is to support the arts, folk culture, physical fitness and sport and the construction and renovation of cultural buildings by the accumulation of funds and distribution thereof for specific purposes. The functions of the Cultural Endowment are to:

¹ <http://www.valitsus.ee/en/government/Programme>

² www.kultuuripoliitika.ee

³ www.kulka.ee

support projects which promote, introduce and popularise the arts and sport, artistic associations, research related to culture and sport, and to further the development of the arts, folk culture, physical fitness and sport;

support outstanding figures in the arts and sport, and their families upon their death;

support talented persons with development potential in various areas of culture and sport and to facilitate their individual development;

support the commemoration of deceased figures in the arts and sport;

support the construction and renovation of cultural buildings which are of national importance.

In 2011 the new strategic guidelines of Estonian Cultural Endowment were approved that underline the importance of continuing according to the current principles. The role and importance of the Endowment is vital for the cultural sector, as stated.

c) Realising the growing potential of cultural and creative industries (CCI)

According to the mappings (latest research is published 2009⁴) the potential of Estonian CCI sector is remarkable: sector accounted for 3% of the Estonian economy in 2007, just as it did in 2003. For the period of 2007-2013 European Union structural funds gave Estonia the opportunity to support the horizontal development of the sector and implement measures that meet the potential witnessed in different studies. These measures cover three strategic directions:

Awareness raising initiatives. Since the awareness about the sector and its characteristics was still rather heterogeneous at the beginning of the programme, this kind of activities was a logical point to start. The most visible result of these efforts in any sense is Creative Estonia platform: *“Creative Estonia⁵, which is a national umbrella programme for all the CCIs related awareness-raising activities, e.g. web portal, newsletters, seminars, conferences, publications, studies, networking, matchmaking activities and PR-support for creative industries etc.”⁶*

⁴ <http://loomemajandus.edicypages.com/materials>

⁵ www.looveesti.ee

⁶ Policy Handbook on How to strategically use the EU support programmes, including Structural Funds, to foster the potential of culture for local, regional and national development and the spill-over effects on the wider economy? Working Group of EU Member States Experts (Open Method of Coordination) on Cultural and Creative Industries, April 2012.

Support for creative incubation: *“The Estonian national strategy for the use of Structural Funds 2007-2013 identified creative incubation as one of the key elements in fostering entrepreneurship in the cultural sector and creating favourable conditions for start-up companies. Creative incubators are created and operated by the local municipalities or educational institutions. The EU funding covers investment into infrastructure, equipment and part of running costs.”*⁷ There are two larger creative incubators operating at the moment: Tallinn Creative Incubator⁸ and Tartu Centre for Creative Industries⁹, both founded in 2009. Tallinn Creative Incubator was awarded the second Best Science Based Incubator 2010 for Combining Entrepreneurship with Creativity and Culture (9th Annual Conference on Science Based Incubation of The Technopolicy Network)¹⁰.

Support for development centres and export related activities. There are several development centres operating (e.g. Estonian Design Centre¹¹, Estonian Architecture Centre¹², Estonian Music Development Centre¹³, Estonian Theatre Agency¹⁴, Estonian Film Foundation¹⁵) to make the cooperation in the sector more efficient and initiate joint strategies or action plans. One of the priority areas of the development centres is export and all related initiatives to enhance internalisation.

d) Valuing the cultural richness and access to culture by initiating thematic years

One of the measures to introduce various cultural landscapes is to organise so called thematic years. That is a sector led initiative with an aim to place one field of culture under the spot light and use that focus throughout one calendar year. For instance, in 2006 Estonia celebrated 100 years of professional theatre so the idea was to extend the event and introduce local drama in a long-term programme. Using the same model 2007 was introduced as a Year of Design, 2009 a Year of Museums and 2010 a Year of Reading. Currently Estonia is celebrating the 100 years of film-making so 2012 is nominated as a Year of Film. Since the concept is well accepted and popular there are already a number of ideas in the waiting list e.g. 2013 as a Year of Cultural

⁷ ibid.

⁸ www.esa.ee

⁹ www.lmk.ee

¹⁰ www.artsmanagement.net/index.php?module=News&func=display&sid=1404

¹¹ www.disainikeskus.ee/en

¹² www.arhitektuurikeskus.ee

¹³ <http://www.estonianmusic.ee/?go=index&lang=eng>

¹⁴ <http://www.estoniantheatre.info/>

¹⁵ <http://www.efsa.ee/index.php?page=3&>

Heritage and 2015 as a Year of Music. In 2008 Estonia also celebrated the European year of intercultural dialogue¹⁶.

e) Emphasising the importance of digitalisation

Cultural heritage is a treasure that can't be replaced. Modern technologies create the opportunity to multiply different ways how to preserve that legacy for the future generations. Estonia has developed several digital platforms to meet these possibilities and integrate the modern IT solutions with the cultural services and databases. For instance, there is a special IT tool "MUIS" created for museums to digitalise the collections and also make these resources more easily accessible¹⁷. There are similar developments in action also in the field of cultural heritage and libraries (including the interfacing models to link with worldwide databases, e.g. services provided by *Europeana*¹⁸).

f) Continuing the measures to value cultural diversity

Estonia is a multicultural country with a strong cultural identity. The cultural diversity springs from a wealth of diverse regions, languages and cultural heritage – diverse cultural expressions and mores. The Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education and Science seek to secure equal opportunities for language and cultural minorities and special-needs groups to participate in culture and express their creativity.

There are currently seven state programmes that support regional activities to promote and protect cultural diversity in various areas of Estonia. The period of programmes is usually four years; they are updated on regular bases¹⁹. There is also financing measure to NGOs (base-line funding) that organise various events to promote and practice rich cultural tradition of different countries and regions²⁰. The state has subsidised these activities since 1991. Currently there are more than 200 NGOs that benefit from the programme. These organisations carry out different projects e.g. folk culture festivals, educational activities, seminars, work-shops and many other events related to popularise their ethnical roots. To make these initiatives more visible and spread best practices there is a website www.etnoweb.ee that is also supported by the state.

g) Implementing integration strategies

"Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013" is a development plan, establishing the bases and objectives for the integration policy in Estonia and measures required for achievement of these objectives. The Government of Estonia approved the Integration

¹⁶ See also paragraph 3.

¹⁷ http://www.muis.ee/portaal/en_GB/

¹⁸ <http://www.europeana.eu/portal/>

¹⁹ <http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x2x213x65>

²⁰ <http://www.meis.ee/eng-kultuur-ja-noorsootoo>

Strategy by the Decree No. 236 of the Government of the Republic of 11 June 2009. In 2008 extensive consultations related to the preparation of the Integration Strategy took place, involving also representatives of ethnic minorities.

In 2010 the Independent Centre of Policy Research PRAXIS conducted an extensive survey for the associations applying the activities of the Integration Strategy²¹. It is also planned to conduct consultation seminars with the representatives of ethnic minorities, which also serve as input for preparing a new Integration Strategy 2014-2020.

h) Valuing the initiatives and role of different sectors and parties

The sector oriented programmes operated by the Ministry of Culture take into account the role of different organisations that carry out cultural activities. The private sector organisations as well as different NGOs are a vital part of sustainable cultural landscape.

2.2. International cooperation and preferential treatment

The Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2011-2015 creates a strategic platform for our development cooperation. The priority partner countries for Estonia are: Afghanistan, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Moldova, Georgia, Ukraine and Belorussia. We plan to include the CCI sector in the development of SMEs.

In addition to Afghanistan we have set a goal for upcoming years to increase bilateral development cooperation capacity with some other least developed countries. There are already several civil society organizations in Estonia that hold long-term professional contacts with different countries in Africa.

Estonia has cultural cooperation agreements with more than 40 countries. Three of the four Priority Partner Countries are involved in these activities: Georgia (cultural agreement is ratified 12.10.2004), Moldova (cultural agreement is ratified 03.04.1996 / 19.10.2011), Ukraine (cultural agreement is ratified 01.04.1996). Cultural agreements are also ratified with Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, India and Indonesia.

2.3 Integration of culture in sustainable development policies

One of the starting points of new strategic guidelines of cultural policy (Culture 2020)²² is to describe mutual impacts between culture and other policy areas. That overview addresses various practices and possibilities to see culture as a catalyst for more complex solutions in education, social inclusion, integration etc.

²¹ <http://www.praxis.ee/index.php?id=717&L=1>

²² See paragraph 2.1.

2.4 Protecting cultural expressions under threat

Estonia has not identified a special situation in the meaning of Article 8.2 of the Convention.

3. AWARENESS-RAISING AND PARTICIPATION OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society organisations and initiatives play an important role in the formulation of cultural life of Estonia. These actors are not seen only as performers or authors but also natural parties in discussions and decision making. In 2011 the Estonian Chamber of Culture²³ as a new forum of debates was established. The Chamber of Culture is one of the main partners for the government organising the discussions on Culture 2020 strategy.

Estonia values the contribution of NGOs who play an important role in the realization of our development cooperation goals. We also give financial support to Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation which is a non-profit coalition of 21 non-governmental organizations that work in the field of development cooperation and/or global education.

A Development Education Centre that has been created by NGO Mondo is a good example of how NGOs can contribute to the implementation of the Convention in the field of education and awareness raising. Together with the Estonian National Commission for UNESCO the Centre has developed a well-functioning Estonian UNESCO Associated Schools Network which, *inter alia*, is an excellent tool for carrying out the objectives of the Convention. In the field of cultural diversity and dialogue learning materials have been compiled and trainings have been organized. UNESCO's methodology has been used in trainings and workshops about Islamic culture. An extensive film collection has been set up and is used during lessons and in schools' film clubs. Our schools have twinning schools in Afghanistan (11 schools) and Ghana (8 schools), soon also in Kenya. Together with guests from Nigeria, Zimbabwe, South-Africa, Afghanistan and other countries discussions, film nights, cooking lessons and other activities are organized.

In 2008 Estonia celebrated the European year of intercultural dialogue. Many of these occasions were also a result of dedicated commitment of civil society organisations. Beside many different events there was a meeting that brought together youth from Estonia, Russia and Germany to discuss history topics using theatre methods; simulations and role plays in schools were organised by two youth led NGOs that promote the skills of debating; the well-known local film festival Tartuffe dedicated their 2008 programme to cultural diversity; there were various forums and conversation evenings to discuss the role of arts (including poetry, dance, music) if just to name few initiatives that were successfully led by the civil society organisations.

²³ <http://www.kultuurikoda.eu/>

4. MAIN ACHIEVMENTS AND CHALLENGES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION

See the report by the European Union.