

## National Programme

### “Values Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013”

#### INTRODUCTION

The National Programme “Values Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013” aims to maintain and develop the values that ensure human and social development in Estonia, thereby fulfilling prerequisites for the rapid development of the Estonian economy and other spheres, and for the successful integration of Estonia into the European Union.

The basis of the Programme is to unite the values that are expressed in the preamble of the Estonian constitution and in the founding documents of the European Union. Among these values is the appreciation of the Estonian language as an advanced language of communication within multiethnic society in Estonia.

These values can be distinguished in the following way:

- **Moral values** (e.g. honesty, care, fairness, human dignity, respect toward oneself and others);
- **Social values** (e.g. freedom, democracy, lawfulness, solidarity, responsibility, nationalism, the mother tongue, cultural diversity, tolerance, gender equality).

The need to maintain and develop these values is indicated by broad-based surveys,<sup>1</sup> and media stories concerning values and citizens’ opinions.<sup>2</sup> Sociological surveys have shown that the sustainability of Estonian society is jeopardised by ignoring moral norms, lack of social cohesion, rising individualistic consumer mentality and hedonistic lifestyles, weak national sentiment, carelessness regarding health and environment, low respect for human life, replacement of stable families by temporary cohabitation, low population growth, spreading

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. *Eestimaalaste moraal ja väärtushinnangud* (Morality and value judgments of inhabitants of Estonia, 2003, <http://www.ekn.ee/dokumendid/2003/sots2003.pdf>) by the Estonian Council of Churches;

*Eesti elavik 21. sajandi algul: ülevaade uurimuse Mina. Maailm. Meedia tulemustest.* (Estonia in the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Overview of the Outcomes of the Survey “Me. World. Media”) Ed. Veronika Kalmus, Marju Lauristin and Pille Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt. Tartu: Tartu Ülikool, 2004;

Value survey conducted by EMOR in 2004 <http://www.riigikantselei.ee/?id=372>;

Strömpl, Judit; Selg, Marju; Soo, Kadri; Zahverdov-Zarkovski, Beata. *Eesti teismeliste vägivallatõlgendused: uuringuraport* (Interpretations of Violence by Estonian Teenagers: Research Report). Tallinn: Sotsiaalministeerium, 2007.

According to The Economist’s index of democracy in 2006, Estonia is among the countries with flawed democracies due to citizens’ low participation in politics ([http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY\\_INDEX\\_2007\\_v3.pdf](http://www.economist.com/media/pdf/DEMOCRACY_INDEX_2007_v3.pdf))

<sup>2</sup> E.g. analysis of 326 entries for the President’s essay contest *In Which Estonia I Want to Live?* [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee)

violence, low citizen involvement, lack of integration of ethnic minorities, and many other factors. *The Estonian Human Development Report* (2006, 2007) indicated developments in Estonia's economic capacity but also pointed to problems in human and social development.<sup>3</sup> Lennart Meri referred to the same problem in his *Political Testament* (2007): "We have been successful in everything except in recreating the Estonian value system." Comparative value surveys show that, in comparison with the European Union average, people in Estonia are more prone to individualistic pleasures and consider collective responsibility less important.<sup>4</sup> After joining the European Union, there has been a significant increase in global integration and people's mobility in Estonia, and growth in numbers of new immigrants is to be expected. This is happening amid conditions of rapid economic, political and social development following the restoration of independence, and offers Estonia challenges previously unseen in its recent history. The difficulties involved in adapting during rapidly changing conditions may escalate social tensions and xenophobia, limit opportunities for using the Estonian language and cause people to leave Estonia or to orientate themselves toward hedonistic pleasures and short-term needs. Like other European nations, the Estonian people must discuss how to combine national identity (which may in turn be divided into cultural-linguistic and citizen identity) with European identity. The various activities of the National Programme serve to initiate discussion about the human, national and European common values that form the basis of our various identities as persons, Estonians and Europeans, and about our options for the future. The Programme's goal is to aid in embedding common values that have been clarified by these discussions.

Nationalism (or patriotism) in Estonia can have two forms: cultural-linguistic nationalism focused on Estonian language, culture and traditions, and citizen nationalism supported by the political values that form the basis of the Estonian State, e.g. freedom, democracy and justice. Unlike cultural-linguistic nationalism, which distinguishes between representatives of

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<sup>3</sup> *Estonian Human Development Report 2006*. Tallinn: Ühiskondliku Leppe Sihasutus, 2007. *Estonian Human Development Report 2007*. Tallinn: Eesti Koostöö Kogu, 2008. <http://www.kogu.ee/index.php?id=10979>

<sup>4</sup> J. Hämmäl 2007. The Estonian population's world of values. *Estonian Human Development Report 2006*. Tallinn: Ühiskondliku Leppe Sihasutus, pp. 60–63. According to the *World Values Survey* by R. Inglehart and C. Welzel (2005, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>), there are two main characteristics of Estonia on the value map. First, Estonian human development is very advanced on the axis of traditional/secular authority (values related to religion, authority, and patriotism are less important); second, Estonian human development is relatively backward on the axis of individuality/self-expression (Estonia is among the last countries in Europe for its tolerance of differences, public freedom of expression and support for political and citizen liberties).

According to *Eurobarometer 2005* ([http://ec.europa.eu/public\\_opinion/archives/eb/eb64/eb64\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb64/eb64_en.htm)), Estonians relate the EU with travel, working possibilities and funding, whereas European unity and cooperation are not considered important.

The survey *Global Youth* (2006), by Swedish consulting firm Kairos Future, showed that in comparison with other European youth, Estonian youth are more appreciative of material values, social status and good appearance, and less appreciative of curiosity and creativity.

different cultures, citizen nationalism is open to everyone who acknowledges the political values. These two forms of nationalism need not be in contradiction with one another, but until now these issues have not been given proper consideration and there have been very few attempts to combine the two. For Estonians, cultural-linguistic nationalism has been particularly significant. It has helped Estonians preserve their language and culture while under a foreign regime, but it does not automatically qualify all Estonians as good citizens. Thus, it is important to foster good citizenship among both Estonians and ethnic minorities, along with willingness to participate in democratic structures, loyalty to the state and tolerance of cultural differences. In order to integrate minorities into Estonian society more effectively, they should be helped to acquire Estonian cultural-linguistic identity in addition to citizen identity.

Although people's value positions generally remain inert, it is possible to direct them consciously. During recent decades, the USA and many Western European countries have had success in fostering citizenship and healthy lifestyles, in changing people's eating habits and developing environmentally sensitive attitudes; and it is crucial that health behaviour and attitudes toward the environment be improved in Estonia as well.<sup>5</sup> The sustainability of Estonia depends on whether its citizens value freedom and democracy and understand the true meaning of these basic values.<sup>6</sup> The experience of building the European Union confirms that, keeping in mind the common goal, it is possible to develop a constant and coherent value system, on which a new collective identity can be based. The aforementioned problems clearly show that Estonia needs to develop values purposefully and in such a way that will also help to strengthen citizens' Estonian national identity and European identity, and prevent conflict between different identities.

A common worldview and value system is formed and stands with the support of a coherent field of informational and educational systems. In today's open world, people are influenced by various fields of information of different intensities, which often represent different value systems and worldviews. Without an operative strategic programme of values development, it is increasingly difficult for persons and peoples in free ideological and cultural competition to form a holistic worldview and shared value system. "The Development Strategy of the Estonian Language" (2004–2010), approved by regulation of the Government of the Republic of Estonia on 5 August 2004, stipulates launching the National Programme "Estonian

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<sup>5</sup> Kaasik, Ain-Elmar 2007. Väljavaated Eesti elanikkonna tervise parandamiseks (The Prospects for Improving the Health of the Estonian Population). – *Eesti Arst*, No. 2.

<sup>6</sup> According to the *Eurobarometer* 2006, only 13% of Estonian respondents considered democratic order good and important, whereas the average in Europe was 38%.

Identity”. The National Programme “Values Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013” encompasses most of the issues related to the reinforcement and encouragement of identity. The main focus of this programme has been specified: the objective of values development in the whole of Estonian society is to encourage values education of children, both within formal education and outside school, with the aid of the public, private and third sectors. Since values are formed primarily during childhood, it is reasonable to concentrate on the development of character and attitudes in children at pre-school and school. Focusing on children and young adults may contribute a breakthrough in the development of Estonian society. (See also the section “Values education and Its Significance”.)

The National Programme “Values Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013” draws on the National Programme “Estonian Language and National Memory 2004–2008”, which included among its goals the creation of resources for identity development. The latter programme states that “unfortunately, there is no national programme for youth identity development in Estonia”. The National Values Development Programme is also connected to the National Programme “Estonian Language and Cultural Memory 2009–2013”. Since the National Programme “Values Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013” focuses on the values development and values education of children and young adults, it can be regarded as a supplement to the national identity development programme focused on the Estonian language.

On 15 February 2008, the initiating committee of the National Values Development Programme, drawing on research findings,<sup>7</sup> on other national initiatives, and on the opinions of professionals regarding the draft Programme, proposed the launch of the National Programme “Values Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013”.

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For background surveys see [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee) and [www.eetikakeskus.ut.ee](http://www.eetikakeskus.ut.ee)

## THE GROUNDWORK AND TARGET GROUP OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME

The Programme focuses on values education for children and adolescents. Therefore, the main target groups of the Programme are people who play a significant role in the education of children and adolescents: parents, teachers, school leaders and play workers, school and pre-school personnel, youth workers, etc. In addition, it is important to engage youth organisations and non-governmental organisations, the private sector, the media and the wider public in order to make youth values development the “business of the whole society”. These groups should be seen as additional target groups for the Programme. On that basis, it is possible to expand the Programme to engage new groups in the activities.

The planning of the Programme draws on regulations, strategic and educational policies, scientific research and the background surveys, documents and recommendations of the European Union (e.g. *Recommendations of the European Parliament and of the Council on key competences for lifelong learning*, 2006). Based on the values emphasised in the Estonian constitution, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the founding documents of the European Union, and taking into account the surveys and discussions that were conducted during the preparatory period,<sup>8</sup> the Programme has been created primarily in order to develop moral and social values. The Programme supports already existing initiatives (e.g. development of national curricula, creation of holistic values education programmes for schools and pre-schools, and implementation of the Development Strategy of the Estonian Language 2004–2010) and aspires to create synergy by gathering and disseminating information on existing experiences.

## VALUES EDUCATION AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE

The key area of the Programme is values education in the education system (both formal and non-formal). Values education is to be understood as character education in the broad sense, which encompasses personal moral education as well as helping children to develop into active citizens and creative and enterprising persons capable of reasoning. At the present moment, in the rapidly changing and increasingly diverse world, young people face increasingly many choices and more decisions are demanded of them. Therefore, the guidance

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<sup>8</sup> E.g. the President’s essay contest *In Which Estonia I Want to Live?* (2007); value surveys by non-governmental organisations; surveys of papers on values in the media in 2006-2007; conferences on values: *Contemplating Estonia: Values and Choices* (2007), *Upholding Common Values* (2008) and *What is happiness?* (2008); and the series *Õnne õpituba* (Workshop of Happiness) broadcast by Estonian Radio (see [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee)).

and fostering of the moral development of a young person, preparing him/her for making mature and responsible decisions, is especially important. In many countries, values education has become a compass for the whole school.<sup>9</sup> This has been characterised as a shift from knowledge-centred to values-centred schooling. The purpose of the National Programme is to cause similar changes in Estonia, where knowledge acquisition has previously been the major focus of attention. However, it is no less important which character traits and value judgments are fostered in young people. It is in the power of teachers (and of the teaching resources and environment) to develop students' awareness of values, and to encourage their moral development; and it is possible to emphasise related values within every subject. For example, teachers of Estonian language and literature are particularly responsible for promoting national values, but value issues should be comprehensively discussed across all subjects, and every teacher must provide a role model for his/her students through his/her behaviour.

Research shows that Estonian schools vary greatly in indicators such as the learning environment, the subjective welfare of students, grades, appropriate/inappropriate behaviour and coping.<sup>10</sup> One may assume that the same can be said about pre-schools. However, there are already schools and pre-schools that are aware of the significance of values education and implement it systematically. Although the significance of values education is emphasised in both the current national curriculum and the *Estonian Human Development Report (2007)*, values education at Estonian schools and pre-schools has been somewhat arbitrary rather than systematic and consistent. This is partly due to insufficient efforts to create the conditions (i.e. providing training and preparing resources) necessary for systematic values education. The few good initiatives (e.g. *Hea Algus (Step by Step)* and *Omanäoline Kool (Distinctive School)*) have not been sustained and are in need of further national support. The purpose of the Programme is to create manifold possibilities for values education at schools and pre-schools by providing training and generating resources, and to ensure the sustainability of good initiatives by introducing, disseminating and supporting them.

There is widespread agreement that the crucial factor in values education is not the content of the curricula but the social relationships within the school. The Programme also focuses on the social climate (i.e. the school culture and learning environment) of schools and pre-schools: the values on which the school bases its goals, the prevailing nature of relationships

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<sup>9</sup> See e.g. Character Education Partnership [www.character.org](http://www.character.org) or Finnish project *Suomen Tammi* <http://www.edu.fi/SubPage.asp?path=498,24009,24538,60241>

<sup>10</sup> See the surveys conducted under the nationally target-financed research grant of the University of Tallinn *Kool kui arengukeskkond ja õpilaste toimetulek (School as Developmental Environment and Students' Coping)*, the results of which have been published in the compendium *Eesti kool 21. sajandi algul (Estonian School in the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century)* (Tallinn, 2007).

within the school, and indicators of the school's stability or innovativeness. School culture is an important factor influencing students' welfare and coping at school. Teaching staff have a major role in creating the school culture. The introduction of values education into schools, both in the classroom and in the wider learning environment, presupposes novel ways of educating teachers. Teachers must observe their own values and become aware of their role in transmitting values, setting an example and initiating discussion and reflection. School leaders must play a central role in ensuring that the importance of values education and school culture is appreciated. Values education at school can only be effective if parents are also involved. It is also necessary to set out systems of motivation and evaluation.

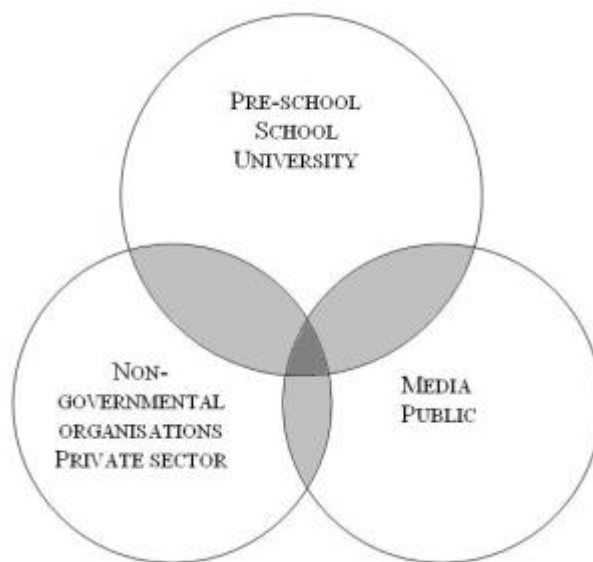
Educators (both teachers and parents) often have only limited ability in many of the necessary social skills (listening skills, conflict management skills and the ability to guide discussions and reflections on value). Therefore, training in values education should provide knowledge of modern methods of values education (value clarification and character education) and enhance social skills. For the training to be successful, it is necessary to create methodology and resources, and to disseminate good practises.

Extracurricular activities are also a significant influence on the value orientation of young people. Many non-governmental organisations, including youth organisations, have effectively carried out values development outside schools. It is necessary to support the current voluntary and project-based activities of non-governmental organisations in order to ensure sustainability, and to bring the competence and experience of non-governmental organisations into the educational system to promote and enrich values education within schools and pre-schools. Bold and innovative initiatives, based on democratic values and engaging young people, enhance standards of citizenship education and strengthen participatory democracy, which in turn encourages the development of civil society and contributes to the implementation of the Estonian Civil Society Development Concept (EKAK). In addition, the activities of private enterprises that focus on the values development of young people, and private enterprises' cooperative projects with schools and pre-schools, should be encouraged. It is also important to cooperate with the media since it is increasingly affecting children's value judgments and it provides them with role models. Although, in a pluralist democratic society, the messages conveyed by the media cannot be controlled, the potential of various media (including the internet and specialised publications such as *Roheline Värav* (Green Gate), *Keele Infoleht* (Language Bulletin) and local newspapers) should be used to disseminate positive moral and social values and to shape discussion about values. Attention should be given to the potential of the new media when organising training

or producing interactive resources. It is essential that everyone has convenient access to information about the National Programme and that the public have opportunities to discuss values education activities. The most suitable venue for this is the ethics web portal [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee), which is already in operation; and it should become a platform for finding information about the various activities of the Programme, for exchanging experiences and for discussing values and values education.

## AREAS OF THE NATIONAL PROGRAMME AND ORGANISATIONAL ISSUES

The Programme has four areas. The purpose of the first two areas (values education at pre-school and values education at school) is to create conditions for systematic, reasoned and consistent formal values education at Estonian pre-schools and schools (pre-school, basic, secondary and vocational education). The third and fourth areas (non-formal values development and values development for the public) provide support for formal values education. The third area, non-formal values development, aims to encourage values development activities of non-governmental organisations and the private sector. The fourth area incorporates values development activities for the public in the form of public events and via the media. The four areas of the Programme may be visualised in this way:



Since the Programme encompasses various areas and activities, there are many potential performers in the public, private and third sectors. Performers of the Programme can include all Estonian pre-schools, basic schools, vocational and upper-secondary schools, universities



and other research institutions. There are also several potential performers from the third sector since there are more than seventy large non-governmental organisations which have set values development as one of their goals.<sup>11</sup>

The implementation of the Programme is monitored and guided by the Programme Board. The activities of the Programme are funded through the implementing agencies.

**The implementing agencies of the Programme are:**

- The Centre for Ethics of the University of Tartu (organising the Programme's activities, values development for the public);
- The Department of Pre-School Pedagogy of the University of Tallinn (values education at pre-school);
- The Centre for Educational Studies and Curriculum Development of the University of Tartu (values education at school);
- The Open Estonia Foundation (non-formal education and values development through non-governmental organisations and the private sector).

The **Centre for Ethics of the University of Tartu** is an interdisciplinary unit which aims to coordinate interdisciplinary research on ethics, contribute to teaching ethics, impart information about ethics to various target groups, and further reflections upon values and norms in the public. The Centre for Ethics administers the ethics web [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee) which imparts information about ethics to various target groups. The mission of the Centre for Ethics within the National Programme is to coordinate the Programme's activities according to the guidelines of the Programme Board, organising conferences, seminars and training, compiling publications on values, gathering and distributing information about values education, and encouraging public discussion, mainly through the web page but also via other media.

The **Department of Pre-School Pedagogy of the University of Tallinn** administers and develops the fields and curricula of pre-school educator and pre-school counsellor-educator at the University of Tallinn. The task of the Department within the National Programme is to generate methodological resources for pre-schools, organise training and research.

The **Centre for Educational Studies and Curriculum Development of the University of Tartu** analyses, upgrades and enhances the Estonian national curriculum for public schools. The task of the Centre within the National Programme is to integrate values education into the

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<sup>11</sup> See the list of organisations at <http://www.eetika.ee/316664>

curricula of public schools and to promote cooperation between specialists in different subject fields, motivating them to incorporate value issues into curricula.

The **Open Estonia Foundation** is an organisation with fifteen years of experience in initiating and supporting projects. Today, the Foundation's focus is on open government, social integration and European integration. The Foundation's programmes are driven by a vision of democracy, civil society, and equal opportunities in democratic decision-making processes. Within the National Programme, the Foundation supports initiatives and carries out project competitions for non-governmental organisations, the activities of which pertain to values development and aim to encourage youth initiatives and active citizenship, encourage cooperation between educational institutions and non-governmental organisations, and incorporate the competence of non-governmental organisations and the private sector into school life.

The tasks of the **Programme Board** are:

1. To set the tasks of the implementing agencies, including employing a project manager for the Programme on a temporary contract.
2. To approve the results of competitions carried out by the implementing agencies.
3. To deliver funds to values development projects and to inspect their implementation according to the competition requirements.
4. To analyse the implementation and outcomes of the National Programme.
5. To compose a follow-up programme or plan of activities for 2014 onwards.

The Programme Board will include representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, implementing agencies, universities, institutions of research and education, youth umbrella organisations and non-governmental organisations (including the Estonian Mother Tongue Society and the Society of Mother Tongue Teachers), and from the private sector.

The Programme Board is designated by the Minister of Education and Research.

Since the National Values Development Programme is interdisciplinary by nature, cooperation between several ministries is possible. The participation of several ministries would assure that the values promoted through the Programme are approached comprehensively.

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND RISKS OF THE PROGRAMME

The expected outcomes of the Programme are:

1. Estonian society is more sustainable due to agreement upon common values. National identity is stronger and the Estonian language is more highly valued; the language is used more often and correctly.
2. The target groups (teachers, school and pre-school leaders, parents) are better prepared to carry out values education. They will have higher motivation, greater awareness, necessary knowledge and skills acquired through training, and there will be increased availability of methodological resources.
3. The curricula lay greater emphasis on values education.
4. The ability of teachers, school and pre-school leaders, and parents to observe values and carry out values education is significantly improved.
5. School culture and effective values education are taken into account in the evaluation process of schools and pre-schools.
6. Organisational culture of schools and pre-schools is improved by virtue of schools' and pre-schools' own values education programmes.
7. There is improved coherence between the educational system and the values upheld in society.
8. Information about values education is more easily accessible and society is more active in discussions on values.

The greatest risk for the Programme is that expectations may be too high, and there may be expectation of outcomes that are actually beyond the scope of the Programme. This should be regarded as a risk especially if the Programme is carried out only partly or with insufficient funding. The effectiveness of the Programme should be evaluated according to the concrete implementation plans generated by the implementing agencies.

Furthermore, the idea of the Programme could easily be misunderstood, ascribing non-existent intentions to it: for example, if the National Programme were to be understood as a means of imposing a certain ideology. Estonian society has come through a period of rapid change following the restoration of independence, and values have been understood very narrowly in opposition to the ideology of the occupation regime. On the one hand, this has caused vague fears about discussion of values: for example, fears that values may in some way be a tool for limiting freedoms in thought and in action. On the other hand, this has led to an inability to exercise values (to recognise and manage value conflicts, reduce destructive behaviour among young people, etc.) – the spreading of so-called value-blindness. However, there are a great number of schools, pre-schools and non-governmental organisations, whose

activities would benefit from the support of national funding, thereby ensuring the continuity and sustainability of work already done.

Since there has not yet been any systematic and continuous activity in the field of values development in Estonia, there is a significant risk that cooperation with the media may be insufficient due to limited resources. Thus, the message about values development could dissolve in the media even before serious discussion has begun, because of which it may be difficult to convince certain key groups (e.g. school leaders and parents) of the necessity of values education.

In addition, certain conditions of the Estonian educational system that are not encompassed by the National Programme may hinder attainment of the main goals. These conditions include, for example: admission to universities based solely on the results of state examinations; overburdened teachers; not accounting extracurricular work as part of paid work; and the parallel existence of Estonian-language and Russian-language schools and pre-schools, which hinders the formation of common values.

## 1. VALUES EDUCATION AT PRE-SCHOOLS

The foundations of value attitudes, including attitudes toward language, are laid in early childhood. Judgments of value asserted by both parents and pre-school teachers affect this development, but their actual behaviours and ways of speaking have an even greater influence. Research indicates that authoritarian parenting and teaching (where the child is seen primarily as one who must obey) is often used at home, at school and at pre-school, and that cooperation between the home and educational institutions is weak (the only form of cooperation is participation in meetings).<sup>12</sup> The opposite of authoritarian parenting is permissive parenting, which is often understood as a lack of parenting and can be even more devastating for the child's development.

There are many pre-schools with a clear value concept and awareness of the need for values education. In order to help these efforts succeed, to ensure the sustainability of good initiatives and to disseminate and entrench good practises, it is necessary to evaluate pre-school education and develop values education systematically.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> E.g. *Eesti kool 21. sajandi algul: kool kui arengukeskkond ja õpilase toimetulek* (The Estonian School in the Beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: School as Developmental Environment and Student's Coping) (Tallinn, 2007).

<sup>13</sup> Although there are many similarities between values education activities at school and at pre-school are similar (e.g. both need teacher training), the Programme divides them into two areas in order to prevent the risk of too much attention being paid to school education and pre-school education being left behind.

The Programme's activities aim to create methodology for pre-school values education and conditions for its implementation. The pre-school values education activities are divided into three main areas – research, training and resource materials.

## 1.1. RESEARCH

The goal of the Programme is to improve research-based pre-school values education, i.e. to base training agendas and support systems on preceding research.

### 1.1.1 Broad-based value survey

Provided there is sufficient financing, the Programme supports a broad-based value survey targeted simultaneously at several groups (children, parents, teachers, and pre-school leaders and staff). First, similar surveys carried out in Estonia and other countries need to be analysed. In Estonia, there has already been research into the attitudes of parents of pre-school children (Tulviste and Ahtonen, 2007), as well as research comparing Estonia and Finland on the attitudes and educational activities of parents and teachers of pre-school children (e.g. the project *Individual and Contextual Factors in the Development of Aggressive Behaviour among Elementary School Children in Estonia*, supported by GERGE-EI, and the project *Updating the Initial and Continuing Professional Education of Pre-School Teachers*, supported by ESF measure 1.1 *Educational System Supporting the Flexibility and Employability of the Labour Force and Providing Opportunities of Lifelong Learning for All*).

The need for a broad-based survey arises from the fact that earlier research has targeted different groups separately and on different grounds; therefore, the results are not always suitable for comparison. It is especially problematic for values education if there is a gap between the values of different groups. Thus, the purpose of the broad-based survey is to find out whether and to what degree the values of different groups are in accord with each other (e.g. whether the values transmitted by parents at home and values transmitted by teachers at pre-school are the same, whether the values of pre-school leaders and teachers are in accord with each other, etc.). Combined methods are to be used (including qualitative research). Besides studying the present situation, various methodologies of values education need to be tested and their effectiveness evaluated. The results of the broad-based survey should be taken into account when preparing training and compiling resource materials. As an important part of the broad-based survey, the role of the mother tongue in personality development should be monitored.

## 1.2. TRAINING

Training of teachers, the leaders and staff of educational institutions, and parents, should be organised within the Programme.

### 1.2.1 Teachers' initial and continuing professional education

Training is necessary for newly qualified and student teachers, as well as for more experienced teachers who are already working. First, the curricula of teacher education institutions should be analysed, and guidelines regarding values education proposed. Until now, initial training has focused on subject instruction, but it is essential that curricula contain preparation for values education (through special lectures, seminars or fieldwork). In addition to curriculum analysis, the competence of instructors of teacher training should also be enhanced. Secondly, continuing professional development in the field of values education should be provided for working teachers. In designing initial and continuing education, good practises already existing in Estonia and abroad (e.g. *Hea Algus* (Step by Step) with its value-based approach) should be analysed and used.

### 1.2.2 Training the leaders and staff of educational institutions

The effectiveness of values education becomes evident in the whole school environment and culture, which has various aspects such as the physical environment, style of communication, behaviour, customs and rituals, etc. A particularly important aspect in pre-school is the process of designing the curriculum, which is done by a team under the guidance of the leader or administration of the pre-school. Thus, values in the pre-school curriculum (both the explicit values and implicit values on which the curriculum is based) depend greatly on the administration. Therefore, it is very important to focus on training pre-school leaders and staff, to raise their awareness of the content of values education and of their role in shaping the value environment. Common training can be provided for pre-school and school leaders (see 2.2.1). Besides training, teachers and leaders must have opportunities to discuss their experiences with one another at public events (seminars and workshops) or in interactive forums on the internet (the most suitable online venue is the already operative ethics web portal [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee) – see 4.1.).

### 1.2.3 Training parents

It is crucial for effective values education that parents are included and that they are provided with training and counselling. Efforts should be made to achieve close cooperation between

parents and pre-schools and to reduce the risk of value conflict between families and pre-schools; that is, to increase support for common core values. Alternative and internet-based training programmes are preferred in order to make it easier for parents to participate and to enhance their motivation and interest. For the purpose of strengthening cooperation between parents and educators, common training for parents and teachers could be organised. Since there are already a number of organisations with competence in training parents, their experience in the field should be reviewed and taken into consideration.

### 1.3. RESOURCE MATERIALS

Resource materials help to create a learning environment that encourages values education and evaluation, to incorporate values education into the pre-school curriculum, etc. According to estimates of pre-schools, the greatest lack of resources is in Estonian-language methodological resources and study materials on values education. Handbooks for teachers, which give practical recommendations for creating a learning environment suitable for values education, as well as materials for children (workbooks, etc.) should be written and/or translated. Within the fourth area of the Programme (values development for the public), designing interactive resource materials (e.g. games and videos) is supported (see 4.3.). Resource materials should be published on paper and on the ethics web portal (see 4.1.).

## 2. VALUES EDUCATION AT SCHOOLS

Although values education has been increasingly important in many countries during recent decades, values education in Estonian schools (pre-, basic, secondary, and vocational schools) has been neither *systematic* nor *continuous*. The current national curriculum for basic schools and upper secondary schools discusses thoroughly the relationship between values and education but says little about how to connect the listed values with particular curricula (the draft of the new national curriculum aims to eliminate this deficiency). There has also been insufficient attention given to the position expressed in professional literature that effective values education should be complex, taking place not only in lessons but also in the wider learning environment (including extracurricular activities).

The Programme's activities in the field of values education at schools are complex, but two areas can be distinguished. The first area is values education in the classroom: not a separate values education lesson, but bringing values education into the lessons of various subjects. In order to proceed with values education in the classroom, teachers need to be provided with adequate knowledge, skills and resource materials. Overburdened curricula have been seen as a major problem in the Estonian educational system, but this need not be seen as a major obstacle to systematic values education, since there are already schools that are aware of the necessity of values education and practise it systematically without detriment to the teaching of the core content of particular subjects. Thus, the main problem is not that there is insufficient time available for values education, instead it is lack of interest, knowledge, skills and resources.

The second area of the Programme's activities in schools is values education in the learning environment. Focusing on the learning environment is all the more important, given that the well-being of schoolchildren in Estonia is among the lowest in Europe.<sup>14</sup> Since well-being at school is one of the most important factors affecting children's progress and coping at school, it must be enhanced. Low well-being at school is probably the result of teaching methods that suppress the student's desire to discover, question and actively participate. Thus, it is crucial that an environment be created in which persons are valued and positive values (trust, safety, care, honesty, diligence, friendliness, creativity, human dignity, democracy, patriotism, etc.) are brought to the fore. One of the purposes of shaping the learning environment should be the diversification of the student's role: students' opportunities for initiating, choosing,

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<sup>14</sup> Bradshaw, Jonathan; Hoelscher, Petra; Richardson, Dominic 2007. An Index of Child Well-Being in the European Union – *Social Indicators*. Volume 80, Number 1/January. <http://www.york.ac.uk/inst/cdw/childEU.pdf>



deciding and creating should be emphasised, and while students may make mistakes it should also be emphasised that students must take responsibility for their own actions, drawing on the understanding that students are co-participants in creating a common learning environment and that it is something for which they should also take responsibility.

## 2.1. VALUES EDUCATION IN LESSONS

The Programme aims to shape particular subjects and cross-curricular themes from the perspective of values education, paying attention to teaching methods and teachers' attitudes with regard to students. The cross-curricular themes are not simply subject-related issues but rather general competences of interdisciplinary importance. Because all other competences are acquired through the mediation of the Estonian language, the most important interdisciplinary competence is competence in the Estonian language. Since the cross-curricular themes are connected to spheres essential to students' personal and social development and these themes are a means of integration, it is possible for value judgements and attitudes to enrich and complete subject lessons with the help of the competences formed by the cross-curricular themes. It is necessary to develop curricula, train teachers and generate study materials in order to bring values education into lessons.

### 2.1.1 Curriculum development

The Programme takes the position that the development of the national curriculum should be a process that should continue unbroken even after the curriculum has been approved. Specialists and subject boards should continue to analyse curricula from the perspective of values education and according to the changing demands of society. Thus far, values are described in the national curriculum for basic schools and upper secondary schools as general educational goals and competences. The aims and outcomes of particular curricula emphasise knowledge and skills in the subject field, whereas the respective attitudes and values are not adequately described. Since values education aims to encourage the development of attitudes and values, curricular development should focus on: (a) the analysis of values and attitudes to be enhanced in all subjects; (b) the ways these values and attitudes are described; and (c) creating feedback methods (evaluating students and/or schools and/or teachers). With an emphasis on encouraging values development, the National Programme contributes to the achievement of the objectives of the national curriculum.

### 2.1.2 The continuing professional education of teachers

In current school practise, values education plays a secondary role; teachers and their trainers focus mainly on knowledge in the subject field, giving sufficient attention to shaping the relevant skills and attitudes. Therefore, teachers at all levels of education need systematic continuing professional development, the teacher education curricula should be analysed and enhanced in order to prepare and motivate teachers for values education.

Every teacher must become aware that he/she is not only a teacher of a specific subject but also a value educator (for example, providing a model for speaking in the mother tongue). The purpose of teacher training is to help teachers to observe how values are transmitted through their teaching of a subject, through communicating with students, and through the whole school culture; to advise teachers on how to incorporate clarification of values when planning the timing of lessons and the overall design of the curriculum; and to enhance teachers' skills in using modern methods of values education. Teachers and school leaders also need to be advised on how to manage value conflicts and how to engage parents.

### 2.1.3 Methodology and study materials

Since methodology and study materials for values education are almost non-existent in Estonia, it is essential to create methodological resource materials. The Programme supports the publication of compendiums or case-based handbooks that provide practical examples of how values education can proceed in the various subjects and in the whole school environment (e.g. "Values in teaching the mother tongue and literature", "Values in history classes", "Values in biology classes", etc.). While creating methodologies and study materials, recent developments in electronic learning should be considered and interactive methods should be used. In addition to creating new resource materials, existing textbooks and/or study materials should be analysed, focusing on those aspects that are significant for values education in order to provide guidelines for authors of new textbooks.

## 2.2. VALUES EDUCATION IN THE LEARNING AND TEACHING ENVIRONMENT

The national curriculum understands the learning environment to be the environment in which education proceeds based on the school curriculum. The terms "school culture" and "school climate" include the learning environment in a wider sense. In the context of values education, the learning environment consists in the physical surroundings, relationships between persons at school and, primarily, the attitudes and values that accompany these relationships. Extracurricular activities, customs of communication (e.g. conflict management,

acknowledgment, school identity, the language environment at school, etc.), rituals, school rules, responsibilities and rights, etc. are also part of the learning environment. An important role in shaping the environment is played by the school formulating a clear value concept and by critical reflection on the values transmitted in school every day.

### 2.2.1 Resource materials and training

Schools' awareness of the different aspects involved in shaping the learning environment should be promoted, in addition to observation and fostering of values transmitted in the school environment. This can be achieved by training the various target groups (school leaders, teachers, school boards, parents, etc.) and by common training for pre-school and school staff (see 1.1.2). Resource materials on values education in the learning environment should be compiled and published. This work should draw on school enhancement projects related to the international discourse on values education and activities that affect value orientation at Estonian schools. Pedagogies fostering different values (e.g. Käis' pedagogy, Freire's dialogical pedagogy, drama pedagogy, experiential education, action learning, exploratory learning, etc.) should be promoted and disseminated in Estonia through both publications and educators (for example, by including these pedagogies in teacher education curricula). These pedagogies help make the learning environment more varied, and can affect students both emotionally and socially.

### 2.2.2 Holistic values education programmes for schools

The Programme supports projects that aim to develop holistic values education programmes for schools. There are several aspects to keep in mind while designing a holistic values education programme. First, the learning environment in a broad sense: the school's mission; which values are fostered by the school; the ways these values should be expressed in teacher-student relationships and the overall organisation of the school; and which values are held by students. One goal is to create standards for schools to help them evaluate their values education. The holistic approach entails understanding all extracurricular activities in connection with values education and actively engaging students in values development through student councils, class boards, school media, etc. All subjects taught at school should also be developed from the perspective of values education. When projects are completed, the data and experiences of the programmes should be recorded and disseminated for discussion with a view to further implementation of the best practises. Good practises can be a ground for cooperative inter-school projects.

### 3. NON-FORMAL VALUES DEVELOPMENT

In parallel to formal values education at schools and pre-schools, non-formal values development also needs attention. There are approximately seventy larger non-governmental organisations active in different areas of values development. According to the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, among Estonian enterprises there is growing interest in social responsibility because the ethical face of enterprises is of increasing importance to customers. One goal of the Programme is to support the activities of non-governmental organisations that are aimed at youth values development, thereby assisting in the development of children's knowledge, skills and value attitudes, and helping them become active and responsible citizens. A second goal of the Programme is to bring the competence and experience of non-governmental organisations into the educational system in order to enhance values education at pre-schools and schools and to promote cooperation between educational institutions and non-governmental organisations. A third goal of the Programme is to engage the private sector, promoting cooperation between enterprises non-governmental organisations and/or schools and pre-schools.

#### 3.1. YOUTH VALUES DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES BY NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The Programme supports projects of non-governmental organisations (including youth organisations) that are aimed at youth values development. The projects should promote constitutional values and help young people to recognise the importance of democratic ways of life, the Estonian language, cooperation (including helping and supporting others), citizen initiatives and voluntary action. Although children and young adults are a direct target group of the projects, the projects can be aimed at other related groups that also influence children (e.g. parents, teachers, play workers, youth workers, etc.). It is especially important to engage parents in order to motivate them to assist in fostering the same values that children learn about during the projects (for example, if there is a project for promoting environmentally friendly behaviour, the same kind of behaviour should be established at home). The Programme supports new initiatives as well as pilot projects that have already been initiated. After implementation, the best practises and methodologies should be collected, recorded and introduced more widely (web site [eetika.ee](http://eetika.ee) can be used for that purpose, see 4.1.).

### 3.2. COOPERATIVE PROJECTS BETWEEN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND PRE-SCHOOLS/SCHOOLS

The Programme supports cooperative projects between non-governmental organisations and pre-schools/schools. Non-governmental organisations focus on many issues and areas that are significant for values development and that are also approached in formal education. The purpose of cooperative projects is to bring these two sectors together for their mutual benefit. Bringing the competence and experience of non-governmental organisations into the educational system would help enrich lessons (particular subject matter and cross-curricular themes) and the whole school environment (including extracurricular activities). Cooperative projects would increase the capability of non-governmental organisations to engage young people in their activities: raising the young people's awareness of the role of non-governmental organisations in society, of career opportunities in non-governmental organisations and of voluntary action. The project competition will be in the form of a contest of ideas, with the aim of finding, developing and proceeding with innovative activities that bring non-governmental organisations and pre-schools/schools together. The successful projects will involve non-governmental organisations and pre-school/schools as equal partners and aim to initiate common activities and synergy in the field of values development, in addition to giving children and young adults the experience of participating in practical initiatives and voluntary cooperation. The Programme supports both individual events and long-term cooperative projects.

### 3.3. COOPERATIVE PROJECTS BETWEEN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS AND/OR PRE-SCHOOLS/SCHOOLS AND THE PRIVATE SECTOR

The Programme supports values development projects of non-governmental organisations and/or pre-schools/schools, which involve cooperation with the private sector. Private enterprises have competence in many areas (e.g. entrepreneurship, information technology, innovation, etc.) which have not yet been sufficiently incorporated into the values development of young people. Cooperation with the private sector would help enhance the learning environment of schools/pre-schools and the values education carried out by non-governmental organisations. It would also help young people develop positive attitudes

toward entrepreneurship and participation in it. Taking into consideration the local possibilities, the projects may familiarise young people with local enterprises and non-governmental organisations that are dedicated to activities valued in society. The project competition will be in the form of a contest of ideas, with the aim of finding innovative activities that bring non-governmental organisations and/or pre-schools/schools and enterprises together.

#### 4. VALUES DEVELOPMENT FOR THE PUBLIC

The Programme also pays attention to public discussions and broader communication in the field of values. It is crucial to the successful implementation of values education that the role and importance of values education is understood and appreciated not only by professionals, but also by the wider public. Since the Programme focuses on moral and social values, it is necessary to raise competence in ethics (awareness of justifications of norms, of ethical choices and their consequences) throughout society. *Continuing* and *constructive* discussion must be initiated regarding important ethical norms, ways of developing and upholding common values, and the role of values education. For that purpose, the activities of the Programme should include presenting information about ethics and values education, and organising public discussions, conferences and broadcasts on values.

##### 4.1. COLLECTING AND PRESENTING INFORMATION ON VALUES

Information about values development and the National Values Development Programme must be made easily accessible to the wider public, and the public must also be given opportunities to discuss the values development activities. The most appropriate venue for this is the already operative ethics web portal [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee). The purpose of the portal is to disseminate knowledge of ethics, to encourage discussion on values and moral choices in society, and to gather and provide information regarding institutions, websites, news, discussions and events concerning ethics. With the support of the Ministry of Education and Research, a new section of the ethics web portal has been created, which contains references to literature on values, various methodological approaches, papers on values in the Estonian media, empirical research in Estonia and other countries, and a list of the larger Estonian organisations active in values development. The ethics web portal should become a continuing provider of information on the Programme's activities (including research,

training, publications, etc.) and a venue for discussion and feedback concerning those activities. In addition to providing information, the ethics web portal can be used as a place for introducing the projects and for gathering resource materials produced by participants of the Programme (e.g. study materials, case documents, etc.). The ethics web portal contains a forum for discussing issues of values and values education, where schools and pre-schools can exchange their experiences in the field.

#### 4.2. CONFERENCES, EVENTS AND PUBLICATIONS ON VALUES

Interdisciplinary conferences, seminars, colloquia, and workshops should be organised for the wider public in order to encourage Estonian society to reflect more actively on value issues. There have already been several successful conferences on values: *Values and Values education: The Choices and Chances of Estonian and Finnish Schools in the 21st century* (December 2008), *Upholding Common Values* (September 2008), *Native-Language Estonia, Native-Language Europe* (April 2008), *What is Happiness?* (May 2008), *Contemplating Estonia: Values and Choices* (February 2007), *How Can I Contribute to the Development of Estonia?* (November 2007), *Ethics: Interdisciplinary Approaches* (2006), *Values and Conflicts in Environmental Ethics* (2005), *Trust and Cooperation* (2004), *How to Avoid Violence at School?* (2003) and *In Search of Common Values* (2003). The conferences aroused lively interest among the public and media (some of the conference papers have been published in the supplement *Mõte* of the newspaper *Eesti Päevaleht* and in a supplement of the newspaper *Sirp*; and all of the major newspapers have reported on the conferences. Papers from the 2007 and 2008 value conferences were published in the book *Contemplating Estonia: Upholding Common Values* (2008).

In order to sustain ongoing and constructive discussion, it is important to establish a tradition of value conferences that target the wider public and take place regularly, at least once a year. Essay contests also help to engage the public in discussion on values. Besides organising public events, it is necessary to produce publications about values and ethics. With the support of the Programme, an introductory reader on various fields of applied ethics (e.g. education and ethics, environmental ethics, bioethics, sports ethics, etc.) will be published. In addition to methodological materials compiled within the other areas of the Programme, theoretical texts on values education need to be produced.

Materials providing information on values education for parents should be forwarded as early as possible. For example, when the birth of a child is registered, the parents could receive a

booklet containing information on local pre-schools and schools, and the values their work draws on, in order to encourage parents to make informed decisions from the perspective of values education.

### 4.3. VALUES IN THE MEDIA

In today's information-saturated society, the media plays a powerful role in shaping value judgments and attitudes. The National Programme should take advantage of the possibilities offered by the various types of media, in order to disseminate knowledge about ethics, form value judgments, and encourage discussion. The Programme should aim to engage the media in order to help achieve its goals (e.g. by publishing seminar and conference papers in cooperation with editorial offices, and by producing supplements, publishing columns, and publishing papers on value issues in periodicals). However, the most effective means for affecting value judgments are television and radio. The short series of radio broadcasts on values, which was launched as part of Estonian Radio's *Õöülikool* (Night University) series,<sup>15</sup> should be continued and, if possible, diversified with the support of the Programme. Television series should also be produced and broadcast. The series could analyse and discuss issues in values education, introduce good practises for schools and pre-schools, or introduce and explain the role of target groups whose activities are not widely known to the public (e.g. school boards). With the aid of television, it would be possible to inspire schools to take action in values development (e.g. by organising competitions).

The potential of new media, which is one of the most influential agents of value formation among children and young adults,<sup>16</sup> should also be used to help the Programme achieve its goals. The Programme supports the creation of interactive resource materials (computer games, videos, cartoons, etc.) which could be used at home as well as at pre-schools and schools. For example, a game in which the main idea is to consider choices and make decisions ("How can I be a good person?" – a tolerant citizen who cares for their environment and community), or a cartoon which presents values in a way that is easily understandable for children ("How can I preserve the Estonian language?"). Interactive resource materials may be created in cooperation with the Tiger Leap Foundation, which has had long experience in

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<sup>15</sup> The Ministry of Education and Research supported recording of seven broadcasts of *Õnne õpituba* (Workshop of Happiness) in 2008.

<sup>16</sup> According to the EU Kids Online ([www.eukidsonline.net](http://www.eukidsonline.net)) report *Comparing Children's Online Opportunities and Risks Across Europe: Cross-National Comparisons for EU Kids Online*, the level of the Estonian children's Internet usage and online risks is high.



bringing contemporary technology and resources into schools, and the children's portal  
[www.lastekas.ee](http://www.lastekas.ee).

## FUNDING THE PROGRAMME

One share of the funds provided for the National Programme “Values Development in Estonian Society 2009–2013” is allocated to activities, mainly through project competitions. Another share covers organisational costs including the project manager’s salary (the project manager’s responsibility is to coordinate the Programme’s activities and to find additional sources of funding), administration of the ethics web portal, and the costs of the annual national value conference. The precise allocation of the Programme’s funds, including activity costs, is decided by the Programme Board. The allocation is reviewed annually.

The Ministry of Education and Research allocates funds to the implementing agencies of the National Programme according to the recommendations of the Board. For the Centre for Ethics, funds are allocated according to the contract between the University of Tartu and the Ministry of Education and Research.

On the recommendation of the Board, the implementing agencies organise annual competitions between values development projects leading to contractual agreements with the competition winners. The results of the competitions are subject to approval by the Board.

The Programme Board is also responsible for applying for additional financing for values development in Estonia, as necessary.