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Estonian Institute



Eesti Instituut

Estonian Institute (Etinska Institutet) works to spread information about Estonian society and culture abroad, to develop cultural and educational cooperation and organise the teaching of Estonian language outside Estonia.

The foundation of the Estonian Institute as civic initiative in the late 1980s derived from the practical need to establish permanent international contacts, which would no longer be controlled by the Soviet authorities. The plan compiled in summer 1988 by Lennart Meri listed the tasks of the Institute as follows: developing permanent cultural and educational foreign relations and introducing Estonia abroad. In 1988, the cultural council of the creative associations whose purpose was to restore Estonia's independence, decided to found the Estonian Institute.

During its first years, the Estonian Institute partly fulfilled the role of a hotbed for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the future Estonian diplomats. The Institute's information and culture points operated in

various places in Western Europe and Scandinavia, and quite a few developed into an embassy of the Republic of Estonia in the course of restoring diplomatic relations. Soon things took their normal course and the Institute focused on conveying information about Estonia and promoting its culture. Supported by the state, it has become a serious institution to carry out cultural politics.

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