

<b>EKK7401.HT/ EKY6105.HT</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION TO ESTONIAN STUDIES/ INTRODUCTION TO ESTONIAN CULTURE</b>	
<b>6 EAP</b>	Approximate contact hours: <b>28</b>	Semester: <b>Autumn</b>
Course objective:	The objectives of the subject are to create possibilities to acquire basic knowledge of Estonian studies in the broadest sense (Estonian language, culture, identity, national self-image, history and society). To create possibilities for synthesis of the acquired knowledge. To create possibility for acquisition of competences necessary for the orientation in Estonian culture and society.	
Brief description of course content:	Main principles of Estonian studies. Definition and analysis of Estonia and Estonianess. What is Estonia (name, territory, people, language)? How do we define Estonian culture? (Ethnic-linguistic, territorial approaches). Nationalism and its challenges. Formation of Estonian identity. Connections between language and identity. History of research on Estonian language as reflection of self-image. Introduction to Estonian culture and literature. Dynamics of self-image in time. Multiculturalism in Estonia. Baltic German Culture and Estonia. State, policy and society in Estonia. Transnational Estonia. E-Estonia. The challenges of Estonian Studies. All participants of the course must register to e-learning environment Moodle <a href="https://moodle.tlu.ee/course/view.php?id=5224">https://moodle.tlu.ee/course/view.php?id=5224</a>	
Learning outcomes:	Students have acquired basic knowledge of Estonian studies (Estonian language, culture, identity, national self-image, history and society) and are able to synthesize their knowledge. Students have acquired competence for orientation in Estonian culture and society.	
Assessment method:	Exam	
Teacher responsible for the course:	Prof. Piret Viires, prof. Anna Verschik	
Title in Estonian:	<i>Sissejuhatus Eesti uuringutesse</i>	
Prerequisite course(s):	–	
Compulsory literature:	<p>Ago Pajur, Tõnu Tannberg. History of Estonia 1918–2017: a brief overview. University of Tartu Press, 2017.</p> <p>Hilary Bird, Lembit Öpik, Ulvi Mustmaa. Xenophobe's Guide to the Estonians. Xenophobe's Guides Limited, 2010.</p> <p>Selected articles about Estonian language and Estonian culture for the final seminar (the texts are in Moodle).</p> <p>Literary texts describing "Estonianess" by Jaan Kaplinski, Andrus Kivirähk, Valdur Mikita, Justin Petrone. The copies of the texts are in Moodle.</p> <p>Additional literature will be specified during the lectures.</p>	
Recommended literature:	<p>Andres Kasekamp, A History of the Baltic States. Palgrave Macmillan, 2010.</p> <p>Mart Laar, Birds-eye view of Estonian history. Tallinn, 2005.</p> <p>Marju Lauristin et al. (eds), Return to the western world: cultural and political perspectives on the Estonian post-communist transition, Tartu: Tartu University Press, 1997.</p> <p>Marju Lauristin, Peeter Vihalemm (ed). Estonia's Transition to the EU: Twenty Years on. Special issue of the Journal of Baltic Studies. Routledge, 2009.</p>	

	<p>Toivo Miljan, Historical dictionary of Estonia. Scarecrow Press, 2004.</p> <p>Toivo Raun. Estonia and Estonians. Hoover Institution Press Publication, 2002.</p> <p>Indrek Rohtmets. A cultural guide to Estonia. Tallinn, 2006.</p> <p>Lauri Vahtre. Estonians Inside and Out. Tallinn: Pilgrim, 2017.</p> <p>Human Development Reports  <a href="https://www.kogu.ee/en/activity/human-development-report/">https://www.kogu.ee/en/activity/human-development-report/</a></p>
Subscription to the course and exam:	<p>Participation in the lectures and seminars, active participation in discussions.</p> <p>Participation in seminars is required 100%. In case of absence the instructor gives the student a replacement assignment.</p> <p>The prerequisites to the exam:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) one short essay on the topic „What is Estonia for me“;</li> <li>2) reading the literary texts describing „Estonianness“ and discussing them in the seminar. In case of absence a replacement assignment has to be submitted.</li> <li>3) group work and presenting the results of the group work in the final seminar.</li> <li>4) participation in the study trips or submitting independent assignment</li> </ol>
Requirements for independent work:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A student has to write a short essay on the topic „What is Estonia for me” - <b>800 words</b>.  <b>Deadline for the essay: 30 October 2025.</b>  <b>The essay should be uploaded to Moodle.</b></li> <li>2) A student has to read the literary texts describing “Estonianness” and discuss them in the seminar on <b>27 November 2025</b>. In case of absence a replacement assignment has to be submitted.</li> <li>3) The group work on selected texts on Estonian language and culture - results to be presented in the seminar on <b>11 December 2025</b>. <b>The slides of the presentation should be uploaded to Moodle after the seminar.</b>  More detailed instructions about the group work will be available in Moodle and will be explained during the classes.</li> </ol>
Assessment criteria:	<p>The exam consists of the following components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A short essay on the topic „What is Estonia for me“. <b>Grading: pass-fail assessment.</b></li> <li>2) Reading literary texts and discussion in the seminar (or submitting replacement assignment). <b>Grading: pass-fail assessment.</b></li> <li>3) Participation in the study trips (or submitting independent assignment). <b>Grading: pass-fail assessment.</b></li> <li>4) Results of the group work presented in the seminar on 11 December 2025. <b>Grading: differentiated assessment. 30% of the final grade.</b></li> <li>5) Written test on the topics discussed in the lectures and seminars. <b>Grading: differentiated assessment. 70% of the final grade.</b></li> </ol>

On <b>Thursdays, 12:15 - 13:45</b> , for rooms check ASIO	
	<b>Information about the content of the course:</b>
1. <i>Lecture</i> 04.09.2025	Introductory lecture. What are “Estonian Studies”? Information about the course (prof. Piret Viires)
2. <i>Lecture</i> 11.09.2025	Language and identity in Estonia (prof. Anna Verschik)

3. <i>Lecture</i> 18.09.2025	Estonian culture and identity. Estonian self-representations (prof. Piret Viires). Estonian identity in diaspora. Personal story (Erik Kõvamees)
4. <i>Lecture</i> 25.09.2025	Estonian state, politics and society (ass. prof. Tõnis Saarts)
5. <i>Lecture</i> 02.10.2025	Introduction to Estonian folklore and traditional culture (ass. prof. Marju Kõivupuu)
6. <i>Lecture</i> 9.10.2025	Ethnic minorities in Estonia (prof. Anna Verschik)
7. <i>Lecture</i> 16.10.2025	Baltic German culture and Estonia (ass. prof. Maris Saagpakk)
	<i>Reading week. No lectures</i>
8. <i>Lecture</i> 30.10.2025	Estonian education system (lect. Merje Kuusk)
9. <i>Lecture</i> 06.11.2025	Some key issues of Estonian history and cultural memory (prof. Marek Tamm)
10. <i>Lecture</i> 13.11.2025	Introduction to Estonian literature. (prof Piret Viires)
11. <i>Fieldwork</i> 20.11.2025	Study trip to Estonian Literature Centre (Sulevimägi 2–5, prof Piret Viires: Ms Ilvi Liive, director of ELIC) NB! for Estonian Studies and Liberal Arts students only! Independent work for the others.
12. <i>Seminar</i> 27.11.2025	SEMINAR on “Estonianness” (discussion on literary texts describing „Estonianness“) (prof Piret Viires)
13. <i>Fieldwork</i> 04.12.2025	E-Estonia. Study trip to e-Estonia Briefing Centre (Valukoja 8, Ernst Õpik Building)
14. <i>Seminar</i> 11.12.2025	FINAL SEMINAR. Presentation of group works. The challenges of Estonian studies (prof. Anna Verschik, prof. Piret Viires)