



The Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers

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[Uudiskiri 10/2023](#)

[Uudiskiri 11/2023](#)

[Uudiskiri 12/2023](#)

ACTIVITY REPORT 2023

Eesti Võõrkeeleeõpetajate Liit (EVÕL, -The Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers) is a strategic partner of the Ministry of Education, a strategic partnership contract for the support of EVÕL activities from 2022 – 2024 has been signed.

Strategic partnership activities I

Promoting cooperation among foreign language teachers and raising the valuing the profession, emphasizing the importance of language skills and supporting the professional development of language teachers, creating opportunities to share the best practices of language teachers both in Estonia and abroad.

1.1. Eight board meetings have been conducted online (16.01, 10.02, 16.04, 22.05, 18.06, 28.08, 11.11, 01.11).

1.2. **Three extended board meetings** have been conducted (26.05 (via Zoom), 05.08 (in Toila, during the subject associations' summer seminar), 17.11 (via Zoom)).

26.05: Discussions on cooperation with regional subject sections.

05.08: Discussions on preparations for the European Day of Languages event (30 September) and the autumn conference, as well as preparations for the regional training day (17-18 November).

17.11: Discussions on involving young teachers and master's students as members of subject associations.

1.3. **A roundtable discussion on "Focus on the Future of Foreign Language Teachers"** took place on February 15th via Zoom. Participants included program directors, curators, and faculty members from Tartu University, Narva College of Tartu University, and Tallinn University, along with representatives from language teacher associations, the Ministry of Education and Research, totaling 35 participants.

An article in Estonian "*Tee tööd armastusega, siis ei näe vaeva*" by Kati Bakradze-Pank has been published in *Õpetajate Leht*, March 23, 2023. [Link](#)

An article in English "*Love what You Do and You Do Not Work Hard*", The Nordic-Baltic Region Electronic Newsletter No.1 (March 2023), pp 17-20 [Link](#)

1.4. Ene Peterson, as a representative, **participated in the FIPLV/NBR conference "Future of Languages" (June 8-9, Reykjavik)**, and the World Council meeting (June 7). She presented on "How to make teacher professional development (TPD) effective and engaging" on June 8. An article about the conference was published in the NBR Electronic Newsletter in June 2023. E. Peterson's article "Iceland and Estonia: Two Different Chapters of a Captivating Book" is on pages 9-15. [Link](#)

1.5. **EVÕLi annual meeting and regional training day.**

1.5.1. **The annual meeting** took place on May 26th in Pärnu, with 31 participants. The meeting included presentations from language teacher

associations, approval of the 2022 financial report, and the election of a new board.

Financial Report: The financial report for 2022 was presented and approved at the annual meeting on 26 May 2023. The main sources of income were membership fees, project grants, and event participation fees. Expenditures included administrative costs, event organization, training activities, and international cooperation.

1.5.2. The 10th regional training day on "Language Technologies and Artificial Intelligence in Language Learning" occurred on May 27th in Pärnu Koidula Gymnasium, with 55 participants.

The new board was introduced, and discussions focused on "EVÕL 2023-2026: a new board is elected, what next?". Presentations included Hanno Saks on data protection, Karola Velberg on Chat GPT, and a workshop by Merike Saar on effective online learning environments and strategies. An article and presentations from the training day are available on the website: P. Toompere. "Foreign Language Teachers Educated Themselves in Artificial Intelligence in Pärnu." Read the article on the [association's website](#).

Presentations

["Language Technology and Artificial Intelligence in Foreign Language Learning"](#) – Aleksandra Ljalikova, Tallinn University, Associate Professor of French Didactics

["What is Data and its Protection, its Need and Emerging Threats?"](#) – Hanno Saks, CISO, IT Manager and Information Security Specialist at Pärnu Mai School

["Chat GPT"](#) – Karola Velberg, Lecturer at Tallinn University and Finnish Language Teacher at Tallinn Secondary School

Estonian Association of Foreign Language Teachers [Activity Report 2022](#)

1.6. The language fair "Multilingualism Enriches!" dedicated to European Language Day was held on September 30th at Jõhvi Basic School. The event had 92 participants, including 25 speakers, 22 of whom participated in an EVÕLi event for the first time. The event received recognition as the **"Achievement of the Year 2023."**

The event was realized through thorough preparation, close cooperation among team members, partners, and presenters. Team meetings were held via Zoom three times, and separate meetings were held with the Jõhvi Basic School administration and teachers. The goal was to raise awareness of Europe's rich linguistic and cultural diversity, share best practices in language teaching, and introduce new methods and initiatives in language teaching and learning. Participants included various educational and cultural institutions. The event received a "2023 Achievement of the Year" certificate.

Exhibition: „One language- many stories“

<https://www.goethe.de/ins/ee/et/kul/sup/ges.html>

Link 1: [Article, plenary, presentations](#)

Link 2: [Article on the website of EPÕS](#)

1.7. 9th autumn conference "At the Roots" and the regional training day "Let's Start from the Beginning" were organized in Tartu on November 17-18. The autumn conference had 95 participants, and the regional training day had 83 participants.

1.7.1. The 9th autumn conference "At the Roots" was held on 17 November in the Ministry of Education and Research Hall. Topics included teacher policy, teacher recruitment, and retention, new curriculum perspectives, and various approaches. The format included keynote speeches, presentations, and discussions. Total participants: 95 (15 speakers, 13 partners, 67 language teachers).

1.7.2. The regional training day took place at Tartu Tamme Gymnasium on 18 November. Topics included teacher retention, subject associations, curriculum and project discussions. The format included keynote speeches, school tours, presentations, and workshops in English, Russian, German, French, and Estonian. Total participants: 83 (16 speakers, 6 partners, 61 language teachers).

Article by P. Toompere: „Sügiskonverents „Juurte juures“ ja koolituspäev „Alustame algusest“ Tartus“ [Link](#) .

1.8. EVÕL representatives and members participated in the teachers' cooperation association's summer seminar organized by the NGO Teachers' Cooperation Board and HARNO in Toila from 2-4 August. Workshops were conducted by Ingrid Prees on correct Estonian language use and Marleen Liinold on games as motivators and activators for learners.

1.9. EVÕL representatives participated in discussions, information and cooperation seminars (e.g. the development of the new national curriculum, teaching B-foreign languages), and meetings organized by the Ministry of Education and Research (HTM), HARNO, the NGO Teachers' Cooperation Workshop, and other subject associations.

1.10. Strengthening cooperation with other educational and cultural institutions. EVÕL continued partnerships with universities, cultural institutes, embassies, and other organizations to promote language learning and teaching and to enhance the professional development of foreign language teachers.

1.11. The activities of the association and language teacher subject associations have been presented **using various information channels**, including EVÕL and subject association websites, Facebook, EVÕL newsletters, subject association newsletters and lists, articles in "Õpetajate Leht" (Teachers' Newspaper), and newsletters from networks outside Estonia (e.g. FIPLV Newsletter, NBR Electronic Newsletter).

Developing and updating EVÕL's website and social media channels to improve communication and information sharing with members and stakeholders. Regular updates were made to the website and social media channels with information on upcoming events, training opportunities, and news related to language teaching. EVÕL [Newsletters](#) No 10, 11,12 /2023 kept members informed about EVÕL activities and important developments in language education.

Strategic Partnership Activities 2

Promoting Multilingualism and Disseminating Knowledge on International Language Learning in Estonia

2.1. Supporting CertiLingua Program Activities

2.1.1. A seminar was organized on April 3, 2023, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Research and the European Commission representation at the European Commission's office. with participation a representative from from the US Embassy Representatives from Tartu Annelinna Gymnasium, Kristjan Jaak Peterson Gymnasium, Kadriorg German Gymnasium, Viljandi Gymnasium, and Tallinn Coeducational Gymnasium, along with guests from Jõhvi Gymnasium, participated. A total of 21 participants attended.

2.1.2. Estonian representatives participated in steering group meetings and the annual meeting in Milan from 13-16 September. Participants included representatives from the Ministry of Education and Research (Pille Põiklik and Marika Peekmann) and Tiia Pukk from Viljandi Gymnasium. Main topics were developing intercultural competence and the impact of artificial intelligence on language learning and CertiLingua program activities.

2.2. Dissemination of International Language Education Knowledge to Estonia

2.2.1. A discussion day on "The European Language Education Framework So Far, Now, and in the Future" was held in Tartu on March 13, with 40 participants.

2.2.2. The companion volume of the European Language Education Framework has been translated into Estonian.

Feedback on the translation was collected until April 15, 2023. The final version of the translation was completed in December 2023 after coordination with the Council of Europe. Available [here](#)

2.2.3. The training "Supporting Multilingual Classrooms" offered by the **European Centre for Modern Languages and the European Commission** was conducted in Rakvere on May 16-17, with 37 participants. [Link](#)

2.3. Development of the European Centre for Modern Languages Local Network

2.3.1. A seminar for experts involved in the Centre's projects was held in Tallinn on April 18, 2023, with a focus on sharing the Graz experience with Estonian teachers. The seminar was organized by Pille Põiklik and Kati Bakradze-Pank, with 13 participants.

2.3.2. The distribution of Centre's materials and tools among language teachers, including presenting the results of the Centre's 2020–2023 program projects in Estonia, began in 2023 and will continue into 2024.

2.3.3. The Centre's contact person and representative participated in the program conference in Graz, December 12-14, 2023.

2.3.4. Participation in the celebration of European Language Day on September 26, 2022. Official information about the celebration was shared with Estonian schools, language teachers, and target groups.

2.3.5. Marika Peekmann, Senior Expert in the Field of General Education (Foreign Languages, International Education) at the Ministry of Education and Research represented Estonia at the European Centre for Modern Languages summer academy from July 2-7, 2023.

An article about the second ECML summer academy. [Link](#)

The report was prepared by

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11 July 2023