

President Toomas Hendrik Ilves signed the decision to award decorations before the 95th anniversary of the Republic of Estonia to 99 people for their services to Estonia.

Estonia thanks and recognises these people of various walks of life who have shown great professionalism, ingeniousness, persistence and sometimes also courage, the Head of State wrote in the foreword of the decision, adding: "They care about Estonia and the values on which our state is founded."

"Your dedication to your vocation or activities to the benefit of your homeland has helped make Estonia greater, better and safer. You have done more than is professionally expected of you," President Ilves emphasised. "Estonia also thanks our supporters abroad, those who understand our aims and ambitions and thanks to whom we have become more secure and strong."

The Order of the Cross of Terra Mariana, first class, is awarded to **Hans-Gert Pöttering**, a long-time supporter of Estonia's foreign policy aims and the President of the European Parliament from 2007 to 2009; and to

**Hillary Clinton**

, the former Secretary of State of the United States and the developer of transatlantic co-operation and ties between NATO allies.

The Order of the Cross of the Eagle, first class, is awarded to NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, Admiral **James Stavridis**, who helped Estonia to co-ordinate the development plan of its defence forces with NATO defence planning and also achieve the solution to Baltic Air Policing. The Order of the Cross of the Eagle, second class, is awarded to the long-time promoter of Estonian-Finnish defence and security co-operation Admiral

**Georgij Alafuzoff**

. The Order of the Cross of Terra Mariana is awarded to the promoter of Estonian-Polish defence co-ordination, two-time Minister of Defence

**Janusz Onyszkiewicz**

and one of the founders of the newspaper Novaya Gazeta and its editor-in-chief since 1995, defender of freedom of speech

**Dmitry Muratov**

from Russia.

Estonia recognises our talented scientists. Decorations are awarded to **Jüri Elken**, the founder and director of the Institute of Marine Systems at Tallinn University of Technology, the leader of several marine exploration trips on the Baltic Sea and the Atlantic Ocean; to

**Krista Kodres**

, professor at the Estonian Academy of Arts, art historian and the author of the series the History of Estonian Art; to

**Aadu Paist**

, a renowned scientist in the field of engineering, power engineer professor from Tallinn University of Technology, who has in recent decades focused on the energy use of local fuels and waste; to

**Urmas Varblane**

from University of Tartu, an economist and academician, who is also one of the leaders and primary members of the monitoring programme of Estonian research and innovation policy; to

**Andrus Salupere**

, the director of the Institute of Cybernetics, professor of mechanics; to

**Jaak Vilo**

, the professor of bioinformatics and academician from the University of Tartu, one of the most cited Estonian researchers, whose work has also included making the original research results of Estonian gene researchers and technologists available to the international world of researchers; to

**Irja Lutsar**

, professor of medical microbiology and virology at the University of Tartu, the director of the Institute of Microbiology of the University of Tartu, whose main research interests have been connected to the pathogenesis and treatment of infectious diseases in mainly newborn and HIV positive patients; to cybernetic

**Monika Oit**

and computer scientist and programmer

**Arne Ansper**

, both from PLC Cybernetica.

Decorations will be awarded to cultural figures, whose works are known and loved in tens and thousands of homes, and in some cases even outside Estonia. They include our leading actors

**Ines Aru**

,

**Marika Vaarik**

and

**Hannes Kaljujärv**

; composer

**Anti Marguste**

; conductor

**Paavo Järvi**

; opera singer

**Ain Anger**

; violinist and professor of the strings department of the Estonian Academy of Music and

Theatre

**Mare Teearu**

; director of the Estonian History Museum

**Sirje Karis**

; and director of the Estonian Maritime Museum,

**Urmas Dresen**

, who led the restoration of the hangars of the Seaplane Harbour; theatre researcher and translator

**Mardi Valgemäe**

; founder and artistic director of the theatre Varius

**Heidi Sarapuu**

; graphic artist

**Silvi Liiva**

; soloist of the Estonian Philharmonic Chamber Choir

**Kaia Galina Urb**

; puppeteer, theatre producer and children's author

**Helle Laas**

; and poet and cultural journalist

**Karl-Martin Sinijärv**

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Estonia thanks and recognises our medics. An Order of the Estonian Red Cross is awarded to cardiologist and developer of Estonian-Latvian healthcare co-operation **Merike Salumäe** from Valga hospital; neurologist, an excellent university teacher and eminent researcher, academician

**Toomas Asser**

from Tartu University Hospital; surgeon and oncologist

**Riina Kütner**

from the North Estonia Medical Centre, who has operated on and treated breast cancer patients for decades; the department head of the same hospital, surgeon

**Jaan Tepp**

, who has taught many younger Estonian surgeons and has also worked twice as a military surgeon in Afghanistan.

The Order of the White Star is awarded to several education workers. They include the director and supervisor of the Rapla Song Studio and music teacher **Thea Paluoja**; director of the Narva Creative House for Children

**Galina Moldon**

, who as the deputy mayor organised Estonian language classes in the city's schools, signed the first agreement with the University of Tartu and is on the regulatory committee of the International Chopin Piano Competition; to

**Jaan Kalda**

, the assistant professor of the Institute of Cybernetics at the Tallinn University of Technology, who has for over 15 years organised national physics Olympiads and has been the mentor of Estonian teams in international Olympiads; to

**Enel Mägi**

, the long-time head of the Tiger Leap Foundation; to kindergarten teacher

**Naima Mahon**

, on whose initiative the system of complex forms was implemented 27 years ago, following the example of the Rõõmutareke kindergarten, and who helped put together a suitable curriculum for complex forms consisting of children of various ages; to

**Geenart Nagel**

, who has worked as a teacher of manual training and technology at the Vastselinna school for 35 years, and also authored several textbooks and teaching materials.

On the eve of the 95th anniversary of independence, Estonia thanks those who have stood up for our independence in the past. Decorations will be awarded to **Jaak Jürjado** from Sweden, the former chairman of the Association of Estonian Prisoners of Conscience; and the former volunteer in the Finnish Army

**Uno Mändla**

, who answered Admiral Pitka's call to come to the defence of the Republic of Estonia.

Estonia thanks our present military staff. The Order of the Cross of the Eagle with swords is awarded to Corporal **Janno Jänts**, who has served in seven overseas missions and repeatedly led successful actions of his troops, as well as to soldiers who have sustained serious injuries while on a NATO mission in Afghanistan; to Sergeant **Janno**

**Lepik**

and to pioneers, who have discovered numerous improvised explosive devices, to Sergeant

**Madis Põri**

and Corporal

**Raigo Roots**

. The Order of the Cross of the Eagle is awarded to

**Elle Jürgenson**

, who served on two successive six-month deployments as the emergency nurse of the Estonian contingent in Afghanistan.

Estonia recognises its fine police and border officials. The Order of the Cross of the Eagle is awarded to **Jüri Nurme**, who - as the first leader of the newly refounded police agency in 1990-1992 - led the police organisation in its most climactic and difficult time; to Police Colonel

**Aivar Alavere**

, the developer of the modern and professional surveillance capabilities centre of the Central Criminal Police; to Police Captain

**Kaido Kõplas**

, a long-time leader of the fight against drug-related crime and the head of several successful operations in the North Prefecture; to senior border guard

**Kuldar Merimaa**

of the Mustjõe Cordon, the assistant to the border representative of the Narva border section, and an active member of National Defence League, who has also guarded the external Schengen border in Greece and Bulgaria; to Security Police official

**Marko Rohtmets**

; to Border Guard Major

**Rando Kruusmaa**

, who worked out a unique system for managing border crossings and eliminating border queues while working at the Ministry of Interior Affairs, now used as an example by several European Union member states as well as Russia.

Estonia thanks its civil servants. The Order of the White Star is awarded to state archivist **Priit**

**Pirsko**

; to

**Irene Käosaar**

, the department head of the Ministry of Research and Education; to

**Väino Sarnet**

, the manager of the privatisation drive in Estonia; to

**Andres Talijärv**

, the deputy secretary general of the Ministry of Environment and one of the most influential people in Estonian forestry in the past 20 years; to

**Diana Beltadze**

, the main organiser of the 2011 Population and Housing Census; and to

**Heiki Hunt**

, the promoter of information security.

Estonia recognises volunteers, advancers of local life, their sense of responsibility to the society and their neighbourhood. Decorations are awarded to the developer of Estonian Wikipedia, assistant professor at the University of Tallinn **Andres Luure**; the developer of Estonian meteorology **Leo Rannaleet**; the managing director of the Estonina SOS Children's Villages Association

**Margus Oro**

; to

**Ulvi Tammer-Jäätes**

, who has headed the Estonian Diabetes Association for 20 years; to the main representative of the trade union of Estonian Railways

**Tatyana Gladilina**

. The Order of the White Star is also awarded to

**Airi Rütter**

, the director of Jõgeva Cultural Centre and the long-time promoter of cultural work in Jõgevamaa county; to

**Heinrich Männa**

, the recorder of the cultural history of Saaremaa; to

**Alli Laande**

, the project manager of the Mulgi Cultural Institute and promoter of Mulgi culture and language; to

**Alla Jakobson**

, the head of the Estonian Jewish Community; to

**Õnne Põllumets**

, the head of activities in Prandi village of the Koigi commune of Järvamaa county; to

**Alviine Schmuul**

, former director of Muhu Museum and collector of folklore and national costumes; to

**Villu Jahilo**

, the recorder of the history of the Vihula commune of Lääne-Virumaa county; and to

**Raissa Polyakova**

, the village elder of Varnja village on the side of Lake Peipus.

Estonia awards decorations to entrepreneurs and farmers, whose activities have advanced the development of their region or the entire country. Among the awardees are **Avo Samarüütel**, an innovative farmer, the owner of Männiku Piim and the initiator of several welfare projects in the Haaslava commune of Tartumaa county; to

**Edda Vahtramäe**

, the director of PLC Laatre Piim and promoter of village life; to

**Väino Kaldoja**

, entrepreneur, promoter of competitive vocational education and supporter of young researchers; to major entrepreneur

**Vladimir Volohhonski**

; to

**Margus Vanaselja**

, one of the owners of PLC Baltic Workboats and an important employer in Saaremaa; to

**Feliks Mägi**

from Nordic Hotels Ltd., promoter of entrepreneurship and vocational studies; to

**Tarmo Tein**

from Jõgevamaa county, one of the founders and owners of the machine industry enterprise Same Ltd.; to the promoter of Estonian bread industry

**Ants Promann**

; to entrepreneur and investor

**Allan Martinson**

; and to

**Paavo Lampinen**

, one of the owners of Viljandi Aken ja Uks and head of the renovation of the Õisu manor.

Decorations are also awarded to **Vladimir Olissov** from Eesti Energia Narva Elektriijaamade AS (Narva Power Plants of Estonian Energy Company), who mastered a method for reducing the waste of sulfur dioxide in the smoke of oil shale boilers, and to

**Viktor Nikolai**

, who has done excellent work for a long time at the Ahtme mine of Estonian Oil Shale, has been active in the Estonian Popular Front and the elections of the Estonian Congress, and later in the Jõhvi city council and municipal council.

On the eve of the Day of Independence, Estonia recognises journalists, their professionalism and dedication. Decorations are awarded to **Ragnar Kond**, the Valgamaa county correspondent-cameraman of the Estonian Public Broadcaster, who often brings us news from Latvia; to

**Eve Viilup**, the director of the music studio of the children's programme and head of numerous television programmes such as "Laulukarussell", "Kaks takti ette", "Tähed muusikas" and "Perepidu"; and to

**Arvo Tarmula**

, long-time press photographer, chronicler of Läänemaa county and recorder of local history.

Of the athletes and trainers who have brought international fame to Estonia, **Heiki Nabi**, winner of the Olympic silver medal in wrestling, and his trainer

**Henn Põlluste**

are decorated, as well as football player

**Konstantin Vassiljev**

.

The Order of the Estonian Red Cross is awarded to **Valeriy Baluev** and **Petr Prusak** from Kohtla-Järve, who have donated blood 124 and 105 times respectively; and to

**Aili Käiro**

from the Mäksa commune of the Tartumaa country, who has donated blood 102 times.

Estonia thanks our friends and supporters abroad. Decorations are awarded to **Mats Johansson**

, the

long-time supporter of our independence and bolsterer of Estonian-Swedish ties; to

**Giuseppe Antonio Barranco di Valdivieso**

, the Estonian honorary consul in Lombardia; to

**Vishnu Khare**

from India, the translator of the Estonian national epic "Kalevipoeg"; to

**Carl-Otto Riesenkauff**

, supporter of the practical training of Estonian students in Germany; to

**Aarno Cronvall**

, the promoter of Estonian music culture in Finland and the former head of music programmes at the public broadcaster YLE; and to

**Valeri Vershinin**

, promoter of relations between Estonia and Mari El, whose Mari translation of "Väike Illimar" by Friedebert Tuglas was recently published, and who collected nearly a thousand signatures in 1991 in support of the restoration of Estonian independence.

President Ilves will present the decorations on 23 February at the Kadriorg Museum of Art. The decision of the President of the Republic regarding the decorations can be found here: <http://www.president.ee/et/ametitegevus/otsused/8584-224-riiklike-autasude-andmine>

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