

Patron: President Toomas Hendrik Ilves

Organisers: Centre for Ethics, University of Tartu & the President's Academic Advisory Board

Partners: Office of the President of the Republic; Ministry of Education and Research within the National Programme 'Development of Values in Estonian Society 2009–2013'; Akadeemia and Akadeemiake journals; Estonian Language Foundation; Digira; Petrone Print.

The jury for the writing bee chose four winners, who were:

- **Mihkel Kama**
- **Ragnar Mägi**
- **Kadri Raudsepp**
- **Margit Tõhk**

Also recognised were **Catherine Oliver** for the best entry in a foreign language and **Rein Leetmaa** for the best entry submitted by a school student.

The President presented the winners with their awards at Kadriorg on 12 July 2011.

A total of 98 entries were submitted from 22 countries. Those taking part were of all ages,

ranging from teens to the over-70s. The reasons most of the author gave for people leaving and returning to Estonia were emotional ones, although some proffered much more specific considerations. Project managers from the Centre for Ethics are currently working with students from the University of Tartu to analyse the problems and solutions highlighted in the essays.

## Objective

Throughout history, people have left Estonia to seek their fortune abroad – and many have also returned. Their reasons for leaving have varied over time. Many fled war or occupation; many left in search of greater opportunities for success, to obtain a better education and more experience, to seek a better life, to explore the world, and to find themselves. However, Estonia's doors have never been as wide open as they are today.

So why are people still leaving the country? And why are they coming here, or coming back? What should we be doing to ensure that Estonia does not 'bleed out', as it were? So that people want to live here; so that it is the best place to live, and to make something of yourself, and to raise children, and to grow old? So that people do not feel like strangers in their own home, or at home away from home?

As President Ilves said in his Independence Day speech in 2011, "Estonia's drawing power cannot be coercion, fear or obligation. Estonia's appeal must lie elsewhere. Estonia must be such a likeable and liveable place that those who are here want to stay; those who have left want to return; and all the rest, who have skills and savoir faire and take an interest in – or even love – our land and people, want to come here. But this does not mean attracting foreign investment. This does not mean higher salaries or lower tax rates than elsewhere – no, far from it. The key here lies somewhere else altogether: being the kind of country where we ourselves want to live."

The goal of the "In and out of Estonia's doors" writing bee is to create a collection of experiences and stories of different people which relate to:

- going abroad and coming back again;
- the openness and chances of success of people in Estonia and from other countries at home and abroad; and
- (re)integration at home and away.

## Rules

1. Stories must be between 500 and 2000 words long (1.5-5 pages).
2. Stories must be submitted via e-mail to [eetika@eetika.ee](mailto:eetika@eetika.ee) or by post to the Centre for Ethics of the University of Tartu, Ülikooli 7, Tartu 51003, Estonia.
3. The deadline for submission is 9 May 2011 (Europe Day).
4. The winners will be announced and the awards ceremony will take place in June 2011.

The stories will be judged anonymously on the following criteria:

1. Clarity of thought
2. Engaging presentation
3. Originality

## Awards

- All participants will receive a signed photo of President Ilves.
- The winners will be invited to a reception hosted by President Ilves in June.
- The best stories will be published in the Akadeemia journal or in a separate collection. The best stories written by students will be published in the Akadeemiake journal.
- The winners of the writing bee will be awarded prizes from the Ministry of Education and Research, Digira, the Estonian Language Foundation and Petrone Print.
- The most interesting stories and the results of the writing bee will be published (anonymously, if requested) on the [www.eetika.ee](http://www.eetika.ee) website.