

**Sixth Estonian History Competition**  
**“Everyday Life in Estonia in the 21st century“**

**2004/05**

**Report**

The history research competition for pupils was organised by the Estonian History Teachers' Association for the 6<sup>th</sup> year. The concept of this competition originates from the Körber Foundation in Hamburg that also gave its financial support to this event. The patron of the competition is the President of the Republic of Estonia.

The aims of the competitions carried out by the Estonian History Teachers' Association are:

- Rendering meaning to national values, valuing the consistency and bond between generations
- Promoting students having interest in history, and broadening their minds in general
- Developing pupils' skills in doing independent research.

The Estonian History Teachers' Association has elected two coordinators and the organising commission to carry out the competition.

The competition was announced on September 1<sup>st</sup> 2004. The concept of the topic was proposed during a round table discussion with the organisers, the President of the Republic of Estonia Arnold Rüütel and Mrs. Ingrid Rüütel after the closing ceremony of the fifth research competition. The topic was supported and precisely phrased by history teachers during the Estonian History Teachers' Association's summer conference held in Valga county in August 2004. Subsequently, in September, an informative brochure consisting of requirements for participating reached all Estonian schools. Information concerning the competition can also be found on the Estonian History Teachers' Association's website, which also provides guiding materials on how to write a research paper. The same requirements were also used by the jury in assessing the research papers.

On October 27 there was an informational meeting with 72 pupils and teachers participating held in Tartu. During this get-together, historians, museum and archive workers, experienced research instructors, and history teachers all gave their advice, and talked about their experience in doing research. In addition to this informational meeting, study days about how to write a research paper, were held in different counties and schools:

- September 17 in Põltsamaa Gymnasium
- October 25 for teachers of Võru county
- October 29 in Forselius' Gymnasium in Tartu
- December 3<sup>rd</sup> for teachers of the Tartu city and Tartu county
- February 17 in Kadrina Highschool.

During these study days, the following aspects of writing a research paper were covered: working with source materials, constructing questionnaires, introducing ways to handle a computer in writing a research paper, and explaining how different subjects can be integrated into writing a research paper.

Thus, 148 research papers from 189 pupils were received this year. There were 78 teachers instructing the papers, and the papers were presented from 48 schools. One of the research papers was received with delay (being posted on April 3<sup>rd</sup>), and according to the requirements for the competition, the jury decided not to accept this paper.

The authors of 63 research papers were written by 81 basic school pupils, 82 papers were written by 108 high school pupils. All in all, during six years of competitions, there have been 837 participants represented by 616 research papers.

The research papers were assessed by a jury. They are all working as scientists either at Tartu University, either at museums. The head of the jury is professor Eero Mediainen.

The award ceremony was held in Tartu on May 14 2005 in the hall of the Ministry of Education and Science. The most honourable guests were the patron of our competition, the president of our republic Mr. Arnold Rüütel and Mrs. Ingrid Rüütel and the Cancellor of Estonian Ministry of Education and Science. All participants and their tutors were invited to join the ceremony, as well as the headmasters of the participating schools and the parents of those who received monetary awards. The opening ceremony was shown on television in the news the same day.

After the award ceremony a roundtable discussion was held with Mr. and Mrs. Rüütel, the representatives of the President's Cultural Foundation, of the Ministry of Education and Science and of the Estonian History Teachers Association, the members of the jury and the coordinators of the competition. The results of the competition were analysed and the theme of the new competition was discussed.

At the end of the day the winners of the competition were interviewed and the participants for the EUSTORY Summer Academy and the EUSTORY Young Adults' Academy were chosen.

So far from the Republic of Estonia, there have been 16 young researchers and five tutors taking part in the Summer Academies. This year 3 students and 1 tutor do it respectively. 6 students have participated in the Young Adults' Academies and this year 2 students take part in it in Venice.

The President's Cultural Foundation and also the financial support from the Ministry of Education and Research have all had a tremendous help to the Estonian History Teachers' Association and the organising body in carrying out this competition. This support has given young people who take interest in history a great chance to render additional meaning to Estonian history and identity, a chance to have an experience in doing research, and most importantly a chance to see and understand links between Estonia and the world, so that Europe could have a common concept of history.

We believe that these history research competitions organised in collaboration with EUSTORY have also had a very positive effect on Estonian schools in general. In fact, studying through doing research has now become part of everyday schoolwork. Since students use a lot of different sources in their research, such as source materials in archives and in publications, oral and written memories of people, their research papers become a valuable source of Estonian history for other researchers.

Already for the second year our President Mr. Arnold Rüütel and Mrs. Ingrid Rüütel have asked the winners of the competition, the tutors and the coordinators to a reception to the Palace of Kadriorg . This year it took place on June 13 2005.

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