

Curriculum

For the the full study programme of Subject:	Teacher of History and Civics
Country/University	Estonia, University of Tartu
In force since	22.08.2002
Short description	summary in English

Estonian national curriculum

Estonian national curricula have been academically oriented and subject centered core curricula with a humanistic orientation. An orientation to a standards-based approach appears in the 1996 curriculum, which is even further emphasized in the 2002 curriculum.

The national curricula in Estonia, introduced at the 1992 retained many features of the Soviet curriculum traditions. The major change in the renewed curriculum was the introduction of a general explanatory part that reflected ideas pertaining to all subject syllabi. The renewed curriculum was considered by many Estonian educators as not radical enough and not in line with the educational ideologies and policies in the democratic countries.

In result, a principally new concept of the Estonian National Curriculum for basic and secondary education was developed at 1996. The main innovations were the methodology for integrating instruction, the concept of general competences, and guidelines for designing school curricula. The methodology for promoting integration of subject instruction includes thematic focusing, and the introduction of cross-curricular themes like environment, traffic education, and selection of profession, and information and communication technologies. Also, an attempt was made to formalize general outcomes of education resulting from subject instruction and from out-of-class and -school activities. In all, three categories of competences were introduced: communication, value-related (attitudes), and activity competences (or general skills, including learning skills).

The general part of the next Estonian national curriculum (it is 2002, today used curricula) represents a further elaboration of the ideology adopted for the 1996 curriculum. It states in a similar way general aims for basic education and gymnasia without discriminating between these two levels of education. The curriculum's biggest innovation was its three-level system of competences introducing categories of general, subject and subject domain competences. In all, competences for seven domains are listed – competence in natural sciences, social competence, reflection and interaction competence, communication, technological, cultural and mathematics competence. The paragraphs of competences are followed by foundations for integration, which are quite similar to the approach used in the 1996 curriculum, along with four cross-curricular themes.

Today, the new national curriculum 2010 is coming into force. This development process started at 2000, when the center of curriculum development was established at University of

Tartu. In last development process, our center of curriculum development was involved to implement cross curricular component. It means, that major work in development process was connected with those themes, which we call cross-curricular themes. We prepared workgroups with specialists from Tartu and Tallinn universities. The teamwork started with conceptualizing about each theme.

There is more focus to the students learning outcomes in 2010 curriculum. The starting idea about curriculum developing was about to decrease the knowledge based study and to bring more competences based focus also in subject syllabuses.

In subject History education focus to everyday life and cultural history; emphasize of local history and countristudy; teaching environment is not only classroom but also museum, archive and historical place or object. In Gymnasium, the course systems changed: there are 6 compulsory courses. World History; History of Estonia I and History of Estonia II, Contemporary History I, Contemporary History II and Contemporary History III (thematic approach - culture, crimes against humanity, economy etc). There are also two optional courses developed to study history.

In the Civic Education the traditional structure of subject was changed. Before the society was in the center of study. New curriculum put student into the center of studies and therefore the practical covering is more important (for example how people can contact with regional government etc.) National Curriculum moved the starting point from 4th grade to 6th grade.