

THE INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES

**SELF-EVALUATION REPORT OF
THE INSTITUTE FOR EUROPEAN STUDIES**

1995-2001

Tallinn 2002

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1. General overview

1.1. Brief history and legal status

1. Research and Development Institution - Institute for European Studies - was established on the 17th of April, 1998. The Institute is registered in the Ministry of Education of Estonia by the Decree of Minister of Education (issued on the 1st of June, 1999).

The Institute for European Studies was established with main purpose to create a centre that integrates academic and applied research and practical experiences in the field of European social studies.

The highest decision-making body of the Institute is the Council of the Institute. Meetings of the Scientific Council are held twice a year, very often electronic communication is used. Members of the Council are:

1. Juhan Sillaste (Ph.D.), Head;
2. Aksel Kirch (Ph.D.), Vice-head;
3. Kait Oole (M.Soc), Scientific Secretary;
4. Rein Ruutsoo (Ph.D.), Professor of Political Science at Tartu University;
5. Heido Vitsur (Ph.D.), Adviser of Cancellery of Riigikogu;
6. Tõnis Seesma, former Member of Riigikogu at Ida-Virumaa county, Deputy-Director of Factory "Silmet" (Sillamäe).

Institute for European Studies (IES) mission is to study social processes in Estonian society in the integration with EU. Integration impact to economic, social and legal circumstances is prognosticated substantial, comparable with restoration of Estonian independence in 1991. The subject of studies will stay acute also after real accession because enlargement will supposedly accelerate EU development. Related to foregoing, IES sees the mission in applied research and development contributing decision-makers with good information bases and sophisticated analysis to achieve homogenous development of the society. At the same time academic research is also highly evaluated and we try to relate academic research with different kind of development projects.

Estonia as a small country must consider more with actual geo-political and macro-economic circumstances and needs elaborated analysis for political decisions. Therefore, there is a need for comparative research in sociology as main research area and related to this economy and political sciences.

Estonian integration into EU makes monitoring of social indicators, comparative studies and required prognosis more important. Estonian social statistics is not fully harmonised with EU statistics standards as yet. IES could contribute analysis of social indicators (in co-operation with Population and Social Statistics Division of Estonian Statistical Office).

Academic research trend was founded in 1997-1998 when most of these people worked in the Centre for Euroresearch at the Institute of International and Social Studies (IASI).

As a result of this period collective monograph *Estonia at the Threshold of the European* was published in April 1998 (edited by Rein Ruutsoo and Aksel Kirch, published by Estonian Academy Publishers).

Due to rearrangements of the Institute of International and Social Studies in 1998 and the fact that Rein Ruutsoo was elected to a position of the professor of Social Faculty of Tartu University, the Centre for Euroresearch at RASI was closed. With purpose to keep the academic potential of researchers concentrated in one common research unit, and carry on the pending projects the Institute for European Studies was founded.

The Government target-financed the project “*Social Dimension of European integration and Perspectives of Estonian Nation-state*” was completed in 2000 and due to outstanding results of this project, researcher Mart Kivimäe defended his Doctors degree at Tallinn Pedagogical University in December 2000.

1.2. Budget income 1998-2001

The Institute for European Studies operates on self-financing base (contracts of science-development work), although in 2000 and 2002 some state financing was obtained from Estonian Science Foundation:

Grant no 4321, 2000: *From closed identity to supplementary identity: The cases of Estonians, Estonian Russians and Poles in the European Union integration process* (grant holder Aksel Kirch),

Grant no 4971, 2002: *Estonia on the Way to the European Union. Identity Changes in 1993-2003* (grant holder Aksel Kirch).

2. Fields of activities of IES in 1998-2001

2.1. Research Activities

Since 1999 the IES' research work has been organised within three-year research programmes. For the years 1999-2001 IES is carrying out a programme on “**European integration in a national and regional context**” which contains three major research areas (subtheme):

2.1.1. Comparative analysis of the Baltic and other CEE countries in their readiness join the EU.

Projects:

2.1.1.1. In 2000 there was a project between Frankfurt Peace Research Institute (Dr. Airat Aklaev) and Estonian (Aksel and Marika Kirch) and Latvian (Dr. Brigita Zepa), Lithuanian (Dr. Vladas Gaidys) Centres “Democratic Consolidation and Ethnic Peace: Institutional Change and Civil Society in new Baltic Democracies”. There are studies on the relations, conflicts and co-operation patterns between the states and majority/minority societies of the region. Also around this theme the central question is, how the whole Baltic Sea region should develop toward a genuine security community.

2.1.1.2. The ESF grant of 2000 year results there are published in peer-reviewed Journal “*Trames*” in December 2001 and in Abstracts of Conference of European Sociological Association in Helsinki (August 2001).

The results of the study are: 1) comparison of Polish and Estonian students' (as specific sensitive groups in society) Euro-attitudes to certain essential features of the European Union integration (empirical data on personal psychological level has been collected); 2) determined basic factors which are influencing Estonian and Polish students' attitudes in the current EU accession phase (year 2000). According to this study we are justified to say that basically in Estonian and Polish students' societies there are spread almost similar attitudes to the accession to the European Union.

2.1.2. Estonia and the EU - pros and cons in the Estonian press.

Appropriate model of civil society for Estonia has been strongly discussed in Estonian media and conception of civil society is a matter of some political consensus (Memorandum of Co-operation Between Estonian Political Parties and Third Sector Umbrella Organisations is signed in December 1999). Although, in everyday life the *co-operation and integration as a model* does not function sufficiently – impact of civic structures in society is still very weak. Administrative development from power-centered structures towards network or purpose-oriented structures is also almost invisible. One can even state that weak development of Estonian social and administrative spheres constrains development of democracy and discussions about EU integration in the nearest future. This working knowledge is used in field of application – mainly in publication of

Aksel Kirch, Marika Kirch and Mait Talts whose analysis and consultations about public opinion changes concerning attitudes towards accession to European Union are important.

2.2.2.1. In this sub-theme important are Marika Kirch conference papers in Budapest (15. May 2001). Marika Kirch. Estonia and the European Union : Change in the Public Opinion on the Accession of Estonia to the European Union. *Paper presented at the conference "Monitoring Preparations of Transition Countries for EU-Accession". Budapest, 17-20 May, 2001* (<http://www.ies.ee>).

2.2.2.2. In period 1998-2001 more than 20 articles in Estonian press (Postimees, Eesti Päevaleht, Äripäev, Luup, Eesti Ekspress, Maaleht) are published. In addition, two large-scale analysis of public opinion on EU matters were published: first of them in the journal "Akadeemia" (two issues in 1998, No 1, 2) and second was presented to the Conference in Tartu 26 Nov. 2001. Publications are available also at the IES homepage: - <http://www.ies.ee>.

2.1.3. National and European Identities in Estonia's EU Enlargement.

In European integration we are more and more following the formation of a common identity. As the previous discussion shows, identity is not just an analytical but also a political concept. Moreover, identity is a political concept that gained unprecedented attention and influence in the 1990s. The very notion of European identity seems to be more widely discussed in the candidate countries than in the EU itself, and most "European" speeches of leaders from candidate countries mention it.

At least two reasons are important for this. Firstly, the rise and the fall of totalitarian rule put the collective identities of the people in the region into doubt, the identities are therefore accompanied with a question mark, inviting a discussion which the EU has not experienced to such an extent. Secondly, the claim to European identity of the candidate countries presents one of the few good arguments for their EU membership, for from an economic and security point of view they do not have much to offer-rather it is the other way around.

Projects:

2.1.3.1. Aksel Kirch and Marika Kirch have worked out and presented paper "National and European Identities in the EU Enlargement: View from Estonia" at the Conference (Dec. 2000 in Prague) of Bertelsmann Foundation, the World Bank and Institute of International Relations Prague.

2.1.3.2. Marika Kirch, Aksel Kirch. Opportunity for Change of National Identity: A Case of Estonia. Paper presented at the Conference on Nationality and Citizenship in Post-Communist Europe. Institut d'Etudes politiques de Paris, 9-10 July, 2001.

2.2. Research methods used in different studies:

quantitative - a) sociological surveys of national samples and elite have been carried out in co-operation with ARIKO MG Consulting, which has a nation-wide network of professional interviewers and

b) on Estonian panel of households - Time Use Survey by Malle Järve in 1996-2001: Project "Estonian Time Use Survey 1999-2000" (a part of the international European Time Use Survey project). Project co-ordinator Statistical Office of Estonia; project manager Urve Kask. .

qualitative - focus group interviews by professional moderators: a) one of the moderators – M. Kirch participated in 1996 in the joint project of Michigan University Centre for Russian and Eastern European Studies one part of which was training of participants for carrying out qualitative studies in sociology;)

b) 1998-2000: Project "Reading and the Other Cultural Activities in Estonia and Finland: Changes during the 80s and 90s". Estonian Science Foundation. Project leader (with collaboration Prof. Katarina Eskola, University of Jyväskylä, Finland).

identity structure analysis - research method for identity exploration, developed by Prof. Peter Weinreich (Ulster University). Aksel and Marika Kirch have used Weinreich's identity structure analysis to study different groups' identity since 1993. Special computer software provided by Weinreich has been used to calculate the indexes with the analysis. See the most recent publication: Kirch, Aksel; Rull, Einar; Tuisk, Tarmo. Group Identity Dynamics of Estonian and Polish Students in the EU Integration Process // *Trames : Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences.*- Vol 5(55/50).- 2001.- No. 4.- P.321-335.

2.3. Teaching and consulting

Academic side of IES activities includes lecture of Aksel Kirch in Tartu University (first term of 1998 "Social problems of Estonia's Integration to European Union" and lectures of Mait Talts in Tartu University Euro-College (2001 November). Researcher Malle Järve has two Courses in the Department of Sociology of Tallinn Pedagogical University on topics "Sociology of Culture" and " Sociology of Leisure" (2001).

In addition Mait Talts participated in 1998-2001 in TEMPUS PHARE project "Training of Estonian Journalists According to EU Standards" Contract No: IB_JEP-13316-98 (2000-2001) in co-operation with Prof. Peeter Vihalemm from Department of Journalism of Tartu University (4 courses for Estonian practising journalists). In the framework of the mentioned project on 1999 and 2001 there were couple of conferences organised (Mait Talts participated).

Mait Talts held a public lecture (6th November 2001 in European College of Tartu University) on theme: "Developments in discussion on European matters in Estonian press and contemporary problems". The lecture will be published in February 2002 as lecture materials of TU European College.

2.4. Visions of multi-disciplinary research

Estonia and the Baltic states in general are a decently studied region from the aspect of European studies. At the same time these associated countries represent clearly several new orientations. Accession states should not obtain the membership in EU only, they should become socially well-developed European countries. What are CEE countries opportunities of fast economic growth and social integration in the Convergence Context?

The question of much socio-political relevance in home affairs is also about whether candidate countries rapid movement towards European Union membership contributes to the cohesion within the society or is an obstacle to its achievement with various side effects. The recent economic modernisation of CEE-countries has been fast which can't be said about its administrative and social capacity. The main focus of research project development process of EUI are review economic and social conditions surrounding candidate countries as they moves toward convergence with the European Union, changes of people's social and psychological well-being the period of rapid change, revealing in the collective ethnic and national identification and thereby forming the preconditions for overall shift in attitudes.

In this aspect three academic sub-themes are important:

- 1. Social indicators in Estonia and EU: analysis of social environment. Development of civil society in pre-accession period.**
- 2. Identity analysis. Aspects of identity change in 1990-ies and in the process of integration with EU. Shift to the European identity.**
- 3. EU as soft security matter.**

The main prospective is comparative study, which deals with processes of economic convergence and social integration including dimension of emerging common identity in the framework of the EU Enlargement to the East. One of the objectives is to outline complex of characteristics of personal well-being as indicators of development during the transition of a society and integration with EU.

The research team of IES has prepared in November 2001- January 2002 a proposal "The Network on Studying of Social Convergence and Changing Common European Identity in EU Enlargement to the East" to European Commission Fifth Framework Programme (Thematic Programme *Improving the Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base*). The main idea of the project is creation of the network for comparative study, which deals with processes of economic convergence and social integration including dimension of emerging common identity in the framework of the EU integration.

By bringing together experiences and research outcomes from 7 countries, the Project will provide a comprehensive overview of how the issues related to European identity have been basic research, the practical issues and benefits will be indirect. Results of the comparative study will lead us to some theoretical outcomes but also will provide practical benefits. A consortium has been formed of sociological, economic, social

statistics studies groups from EU accession countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria) and from Germany. The long-term expertise of the partners is complementary and will be used to benefit the consortium as a whole.

The Partners of IES are the following:

1. Statistical Office of Estonia, Estonia (Dir. Rein Veetõusme, Head of Division Urve Kask),
2. Estonian Institute of Economics at Tallinn Technical University, (Acting Dir., Professor, DSc Ülo Ennuste),
3. Baltic Institute of Social Sciences, Latvia (Dir., PhD. Brigita Zepa),
4. Public Opinion Research Centre "VILMORUS", Lithuania (Dir., PhD. Vladas Gaidys),
5. Research Institute "Labour and Economy" at University of Bremen, Germany (Dr. Jochen Tholen),
6. Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Hungary (Dir. Professor Pal Tamas),
7. Institute of International Relations, Czech Republic (Deputy Dir., Dr. Petr Drulak),
8. Department "Global and Regional Development at the Institute of Sociology Bulgarian Academy of Sciences, (Head of Dep., Professor, Dr. Nikolai Genov).

Empirical basis of the study consists from the combination of economic and social statistics but also results of the *Applicant Countries Eurobarometer 2001* and discourse analysis, which allow to compare general social trends and developments of participating states. Social statistics and data gathered by sociological methods will be analysed within the country-specific context: in relation to the purposes manifested in the integration process of applicant countries. Based on the common database, the final report will offer an additional independent comparison of the candidate countries to the existing general country report, and offer possible generalisations about the changes in attitudes toward EU enlargement and ambiguities in identities.

3. Competence and academic progress potential of researchers – education/training/scientific degrees

3.1. Qualification of researchers

Regular staff of the Institute for European Studies is at the moment 4 full-time researchers: director Aksel Kirch, analysts Einar Rull (September 2000 - June 2002 concluding his post-graduate studies in sociology at Tallinn Pedagogical University), Malle Järve and Kait Oole (from January 2002). In addition three analysts: Juhan Sillaste (PhD), Mait Talts and Tarmo Tuisk have worked on a contract (part-time). In 1998-1999 also Iris Brökling and in 1999-2001 Marika Kirch (PhD) worked in IES on a contractual basis. Since January 2002 professor of Tartu University Rein Ruutsoo (who has no classes in TU first term) has part-time work in IES. Since 1998 IES accountant is Aita Tammik.

All researchers have good educational and academic background. Aksel Kirch defended PhD in 1979 in Moscow Institute of Sociology (Academy of Sciences) on theme of *Influence of Social Background to Social-Professional Orientation*. Malle Järve received degree in Tartu University (1994) and Kait Oole in Warsaw (1999), both have Masters degree in Sociology. As it was mentioned herein before, Einar Rull continues his postgraduate studies in Social Faculty at Tallinn Pedagogical University (stipend financed by ESF). The theme of his master thesis is: *Success Factors of Estonian Integration into EU: Sociological Analysis*.

3.2. Publications

Publication activity of the personnel is not low, but there are few publications in top level journals. The number of publications of different kinds are summarised in Table 1.

The full list of publications in 1995-2001 is given in appendixes 1 (The IES), 2 (Aksel Kirch) and 3 (Malle Järve).

Table 1. The number of publications

Year	Publications in peer-reviewed journals*, incl. CC journals	CC papers**	Other scientific publications	Single issues and monographs		Total	Abstracts
				In Estonia	Abroad		
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1995	2	2	2	1	1	6	0
1996	3	1	3	1	0	7	1
1997	1	0	9	1	0	11	2
1998	0	0	13	1	0	14	0
1999	0	0	9	1	0	16	2
2000	0	0	15	1	0	16	0
2001	1	0	6	0	0	7	4
Total	7	3	57	6	1	71	9

* In journals abstracted in citation indexes: Science Citation Index, Sociological Abstracts

** In journals abstracted in Current Contents

4. International and Estonian co-operation

4.1. International co-operation

A. An academic co-operation program on monitoring EU-accession.

The Institute for European Studies is supported by multidisciplinary team of consultants who combine experience and knowledge of the complicated EU decision making procedures. The IES relies on a network of experts in EU states Germany (Research Institute "Labour and Economy" at University of Bremen – Director Dr. Jochen Tholen), Austria, Finland) as well as in Poland (Warsaw University – Prof. Mirosława Marody and Dr. Pawel Ladykowski, Cracow University of Economics - Prof. Jerzy Hausner), Hungary (Hungarian Academy of Sciences – Prof. Pal Tamas and Andras Inotai),

Bulgaria (Institute of Sociology, Bulgarian Academy of Sciences – Professor Nikolai Genov), Czech Republic (Institute of International Relations – Deputy Director Dr. Petr Drulak), Latvia (Baltic Institute of Social Sciences – Director Dr. Brigita Zepa) and Lithuania (Public Opinion Research Centre "VILMORUS", Director – Dr. Vladas Gaidys). This continuously extending network provides highly valued advice on international level, in addition to the local expertise.

Co-operation projects in 1999-2003:

4.1.1. An academic co-operation program to monitoring EU-accession in applicant-countries exists last 4 years, which was formed in 1999 in collaboration of social and economic scientists of Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovenia and Estonia. The programme is led by Prof. Jerzy Hausner from Cracow University of Economics. The initial conference for this co-operation network was held in Cracow in March 1999 with participation of five first-wave accession states. Estonian participants were Aksel Kirch, Marika Kirch, Juhan Sillaste and Tarmo Tuisk. Second conference in Prague (2000) and final conference in Budapest (2001). In June 2000 Conference Estonian participants were Aksel Kirch, Marika Kirch and Juhan Sillaste, in May 2001 Conference in Budapest was Marika Kirch.

4.1.2. The IES (Aksel Kirch) is in Scientific Co-operation Plan between The Estonian Academy of Sciences and the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Agreement on Scientific Co-operation, Pos. No13). Theme: Hungarian and Estonian communication strategy about the European Union. (Institute of Sociology, Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Dr. Pal Tamas) and Institute of European Studies (Aksel Kirch).

In May 2001 on Conference "Monitoring Preparations of Transition Countries for EU-Accession". Budapest, 17-20 May, 2001 was Marika Kirch, with paper "*Estonia and the European Union: Change in the Public Opinion on the Accession of Estonia to the European Union*".

Aksel Kirch will visit Hungarian Partner in May 2002.

B. European Commission Framework Programme Co-operation projects

4.1.3. The IES has submitted as a co-ordinator a proposal to European Commission Fifth Framework Programme (Thematic Programme *Improving the Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base*) "The Network on Studying of Social Convergence and Changing Common European Identity in EU Enlargement to the East - CONVERGENCE". European Commission - Proposal No SETN-2002-00022, from EC ORBN-8, 15.01. 2002.

A consortium has been formed of sociological, economic, social statistics studies groups from EU accession countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Czech Republic, Bulgaria) and from Germany. The long-term expertise of the partners is complementary and will be used to benefit the consortium as a whole. The evaluation will take place in July.

4.1.4. The IES is a partner within a RTD proposal with 10 participants to European Commission Fifth Framework Programme (Thematic Programme *Improving the Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base* to be co-ordinated by the Interdisciplinary Centre for Comparative Research in the Social Sciences (IFS-ICCR-CIR, Vienna, Austria) "This Building Institutional Capacity Through Twinings - Lessons to Learn for Institutional Development in the Context of Enlargement" proposal was submitted on 15th January 2002, the reference number of the proposal is SERD-2002-00044. The evaluation will take place in March/April.

4.1.5. The IES is a partner within a RTD proposal to European Commission Fifth Framework Programme (Thematic Programme *Improving the Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base*) to be co-ordinated by Institut für experimentelle Qualifikations- und Arbeitsmarktforschung (IQuA, Graz, Austria) "The Interaction Patterns between Educational System and Labour Market. A comparative perspective on the Czech Republic, Estonia, Poland and Austria" proposal was submitted on 15. January 2002, the reference number of the proposal is SERD-2002-000279.

4.2. Co-operation with Estonian Regional Development and EU-integration institutions

4.2.1. Projects supporting the Regional Development of Ida-Virumaa in 1998-2000.

A. Regional Development Project "The different scenarios for the development of the sectors linked with Estonian oil-shale (1998-1999).

B. Regional Development Project "Elaboration of employment agreements in Ida-Virumaa (Employment Pact for North East region of Estonia, restructuring area of Estonian oil-shale mining) and application of this agreement" (1999).

C. Research Project " Ida-Virumaa elite groups with purpose to develop local co-operation and administrative capacity" (2000).

4.2.2. Since the beginning of IES co-operation with Bureau of European Integration and Information Department (ELIS) – both subordinated to the State Chancellery - has been one of line of IES practical activities. Projects fulfilled with these institutions have been the following:

A. 1998-1999 Mait Talts and Tarmo Tuisk. Survey and analysis of EU training/studies and identification of EU experts/lecturers in Estonia. Phare project Technical Assistance to the Office of European Integration in Estonia (ES 96.01, 1999). Publication: Eurokoolitus Eestis: lektorid ja haridusprogrammide EU Education in Estonia: Lecturers and Institutions. Tallinn 1999. 100 p.

B. 2000. Aksel Kirch has prepared a book "Eesti ja Euroopa Liit/ Estonia and European Union: contact-catalogue" with Phare EU-Integration Project and EU Information Department (ELIS) Tallinn 2000, 96 p., 3000 copies

5. Development Plan for 2002-2006

5.1. General framework

5.1.1. Mission

The future development of the IES can be briefly summarised as following:

- * To monitoring and analyse social and economic convergence processes in Estonia as EU-accession country;

- * to take care complex of characteristics of personal well-being as indicators of development during the transition of a society and integration with EU;

- * to activate work with young people (graduate students from Tallinn and Tartu) to contribute to formation of generation of researchers in *European social studies* as new field of sociology in Estonia.

5.1.2. Vision

The academic and practical development of the IES will go alongside with the Institute's strategic directions established from Academic Council during the last four years. Special attention will paid to activating work with young researches.

The following strengths and weaknesses of IES might be outlined.

Strengths:

- * a good experience of European studies and EU-information service analyses;

- * a long-lasting experience of international co-operation with social scientist from both - West- and Central Europe and Eastern Europe (Baltic countries) we were very optimistic in attracting foreign research money from European Commission (Proposal No SETN-2002-00022, from EC ORBN-8, 15.01.2002) and from US Institute for Peace in March of 2002 (Application Reference Number: USIP-224-01F, from 17.10. 2001).

Weaknesses:

- * because of very limited material resource we were not able - especially in 1998 -2001 - to attract as many young researcher as we would like

- * because of limited human resource of the IES we were not able to deal with putting our major finding into shape enough to submit in English to peer reviewed journals; main way to introduce our conclusions to foreign colleagues was to present them on the IES' homepage (in work from 1998) and at different conferences (in Paris, Berlin, Prague, Budapest, Cracow, Helsinki, Leuven, Amsterdam, Frankfurt/Main and Riga).

5.1.3. Staff

Taking account underfinancing of social science in Estonia, the permanent staff of the IES probably can not be bigger.

5.1.4. Premises and equipment

Compared to the beginning of reported period, when the IES had two rooms, the situation has improved. By now the IES has three rooms (ca 53 m). The personal of the IES has 3 PCs, but the equipment needs renovation.

5.2. *Conclusions*

Summarising the development of European studies at the IES during the first five years, the following two periods can be distinguished:

The first period (1998-2001) can be regarded as a period of formation. During this period major emphasis has been put on development in practical European Studies in Estonia, to conceptualisation of the modern ideas and trends in European and Estonia's accession into EU research in the context of dramatic changes of social and economic environment in Estonia.

According to our assessment, the IES is at the moment stepping into the second period of its development – the period of full-fledged research institution in sociology of European studies constituting the core of its mission.

The IES is planning to continue its publication series and we are planning to start IES' academic publication series in April 2002.

The development strategy of the IES places continuous importance on intensive international and national co-operation. For the coming half of decade, participation in international (European Commission) projects will be one of the Institute's priorities. It is to planned to continue co-operation with Estonian Statistical Office and Estonian Institute of Economics at Tallinn Technical University to achieve the goals of project "The Network on Studying of Social Convergence and Changing Common European Identity in EU Enlargement to the East", proposed in January 2002 to European Commission Fifth Framework Programme (Thematic Programme *Improving the Human Research Potential and the Socio-Economic Knowledge Base*) (if project will be financed from EC).