



INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY OF THE ESTONIAN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2014–2017

1. INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Theology of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (hereinafter referred to as “the Institute”) is an establishment of higher professional education, being founded in 1946 by the students and teaching staff of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Tartu as ordered by the Consistory of the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church (EELC).

According to the EELC Development Program 2008–2017, the EELC plays an important role in preserving the cultural heritage and in shaping the spirituality of people. Since its foundation the Institute – as an ecclesiastical establishment of higher education and a centre of education – has had an important task to accomplish: to ensure the future generation of pastors and other ecclesiastical staff as well as the continuity of theological higher education and research. The Institute has had a remarkable role in preserving and developing the Estonian theological thought. The Institute has also been open to the society and focused on both single theological questions and specialities that touch the questions of theology, therefore contributing in introducing Christian values and message to the Estonian society.

According to the Statutes the main activities of the Institute are:

- 1) organisation of the studies of higher professional education according to the curricula for higher professional education and master’s study programs in the Theology curriculum group;
- 2) organisation of specialty training and continuing education;
- 3) fostering study and research in the field of Theology and in Theology-related specialities;
- 4) carrying out target-financed research, outsourced research and development activities;
- 5) development of publishing activities and publishing study literature and other books;
- 6) development of library, particularly with regard to needs of the students, professors and researchers working for the Institute; it also serves other readers;
- 7) development of external relations, cooperation and conclusion of agreements with other research and educational institutions and organisations both in Estonia and abroad.

The objectives of the Institute are supported by the following structural units: Faculty of Theology, Pastoral Seminary, Departments of Continuing Education and Church Music. The Faculty of Theology provides degree study programs, being responsible for professional training and continuing education.

The development program is accompanied by an action program – a list of activities in order to meet the objectives and their precise time limits, expectable results and planned sources of funding. The action program is reviewed annually.

2. MISSION

The mission of the Institution in cooperation with the EELC Consistory is to ensure the preparation of clerics for the EELC and continuity of the academic education based on the Lutheran theology. Considering the ecumenical and social context provide the professional and continuing education of the church staff, and foster education and research work in theology and in theology-related fields in cooperation with the partners.

3. VISION

The Institute is recognized by the Church nationally as well as internationally as a Christian teaching and training centre, which has a positive impact on the development of church and society.

4. VALUES AND PRINCIPLES

1. Mission Awareness and Motivation – the Institute puts in value the tradition of Lutheran theology and teaching of clerics, contributing, therefore, to their professional development.
2. Readiness for Cooperation and Openness – the Institute is an ecclesiastical educational centre, which cooperates with various partners and target groups, and is open to ecumenical cooperation.
3. Individual Approach and Care – the study environment of the Institute is characterized by student centeredness and from human to human education.
4. Professionalism – the staff of the Institute are church oriented top specialists.
5. Estonian Language and Internationalism – the Institute develops the Estonian theological thought and the written word, and participates actively in international cooperation network.

5. STRATEGICAL OBJECTIVES

1. The Institute is recognised within the Church and ecumenically.
2. The Institute is a nationally recognised centre of education, professional training and development.
3. The Institute is known in the church and in society by its flexible and up-to-date learning environment.
4. The Institute supports and implements the development of the idea of lifelong learning both in the church and society.
5. The Institute implements effectively international networking opportunities for the development and teaching.
6. The Institute is functioning as a sustainable educational institution.

6. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND COURSES OF ACTION

6.1. Fields of Activities

6.1.1 Degree studies and research

The Faculty of Theology of the Institute offers courses for degree studies of higher professional education level and master's level in the Theology curriculum group. The contact hours are organised as 3–5 day study sessions in order to enable the acquisition of higher education also for those learners who work and/or start a second career.

The Institute promotes research in theology and its related fields, manages and participates in research projects, organizes scientific conferences, publishes educational specialty literature, publishes a series of journal of the Institution, which has an international editorial board, and introduces the Christian heritage and religious training opportunities to the society.

Objectives:

1. After the re-assessment the Faculty of Theology shall have the right to organise studies in the Theology curriculum group at the level of higher professional and master's studies.
2. The principles of degree studies curricula development and guidelines for ensuring the quality shall have been improved.
3. The practice model for degree studies curricula shall have been elaborated and shall work in cooperation with the Pastoral Seminary and contractual practice places.
4. Curricula are supporting ecumenical cooperation, student's spiritual growth and option to choose church service as a future work in order to serve the society better according to the needs of the labour market.
5. The Institute in cooperation with the international partners shall have tried to find possibilities to open the master studies program in English.
6. The priority research areas of the Church shall be developed.
7. More different methods (e.g. e-studies) shall have been implemented.
8. Students shall participate actively in the International Mobility action.
9. The series of the Institute Proceedings and publishing of educational literature shall be developed.
10. The structure of the curriculum is taking into account the needs of the target group and extra activities support the students' professional development.
11. The Faculty of Theology shall have an effective research development strategy.

6.1.2 Vocational Studies

The Institute organizes in the Pastoral Seminary professional training to those candidates for the priesthood in the Estonian Lutheran church, who already possess a diploma of higher theological education and have passed a required examination called *pro venia concionandi* in front of the Consistory. A professional training program includes church practices, individual learning, orientation and reflection, the central focus being laid on spiritual growth. The study period is one year.

Pastoral Seminary organizes also diakonia studies for the future deacons who have been appointed to these studies by the EELC Consistory.

Objectives:

1. More priests and deacons shall be prepared according to the church needs.
2. The places for practice shall be guaranteed in cooperation with the EELC Consistory.
3. The professional coaching and mentoring of the future priests and deacons shall be practical and more efficient.
4. The professional studies for the clerics shall be guaranteed and they are sustainable.

The Church Music Department of the Institute organizes professional training for church musicians. The professional training program includes two two-year courses for church musicians to apply for D and C categories.

Objectives:

1. The training of the church musicians shall be provided continuously.
2. The content of training of the church musicians shall meet better the needs of the church.
3. In cooperation with the churches practice places shall be guaranteed to all students who are trained to become church musicians.
4. Lifelong learning in the field of church music shall be flexible and accessible to different

target groups.

6.1.3 Lifelong Learning

The tasks of the Institute include organizing continuing learning courses to the EELC clergy, church musicians, and other people working for the church as well as for those who work for other fields in the society. **The Department of Continuing Education** organizes a systematic and coordinated continuing training, and puts in value and promotes the principles of lifelong learning to the people in the EELC and in the society in general. Organization of the courses by the Department of Continuing Education takes place in cooperation with other departments of the Institute, other institutions of the EELC and other societal partners.

Objectives:

1. EELC shall possess an effective and field-based comprehensive training system for the clergy, church workers and volunteers, coordinated by the Institute.
2. In performing lifelong education there shall be a close cooperation between the sectors of degree studies, professional education and continuing education.
3. The number of the topics in the adult education and continuing education as well as the target group in the society shall have been expanded.
4. The Department of Lifelong Learning shall offer the service of supervision to the clergy, church workers and pastoral care givers and counsellors.
5. In adult education different methods and flexible forms of learning shall be applied in order to make the courses accessible to the widest possible audiences.
6. Adult-oriented Bible study shall take place in cooperation with the Mission Centre of the EELC.
7. Regular training for preachers shall be carried out.

6.2 Partnership Cooperation

The Institute cooperates with different partners home and abroad in order to expand its competence to train workers for church, to learn, and contribute to the development of the theological, cultural, diakonia and pastoral care and counselling-related studies and research work. The Institute also co-operates with representatives of the various stakeholders, such as employers, congregations, alumni, donors, religious organizations, etc., to detect the training needs and for better planning of the content of the training.

Strategic Partners

Partner	Field of Cooperation
EELC organisations	Field-based development of professional training and continuing education.
Bases for practice (churches, schools)	Practice of degree studies and professional training, and mentoring.
Non-Profit Organisation Tartu Academy of Theology	Funding and development. Maintenance and development of the co-operation network with the United States.
University of Tartu	Development of the joint research and sharing the academic resources in order to prepare personnel for the church.
Orthodox Church of Estonia and the Saint Platon's Seminary	Development and elaboration of the specialization on Orthodoxy and funding of these studies.
Estonian Business School	Mutual sharing of the academic resource and opening possibilities for students' Mobility.
Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre	Mutual sharing of the academic resource and opening possibilities for students' Mobility.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Northern Germany and Kurhessen-Waldeck Church in Germany, Lutheran Church in Finland	Development projects related to studies in the field of church and social work.
European Network of Healthcare Chaplaincy	Professional collaboration in developing specialization on pastoral care and counselling and in teaching, as well as participation in work of all-European professional organization.
European Council for Pastoral Care and Counselling	Professional collaboration in developing specialization on pastoral care and counselling and in teaching, as well as participation in work of all-European professional organization.
Nordic Network for the Study of the Religious Roots of Europe	Participation in the Nordic Network, which deals with the investigation of the religious heritage in Europe.
British New Testament Society	Participation in an international network, which deals with the New Testament studies
Suomen Eksegeettinen Seura	Participation in the research of the Finnish Exegetical Society.
Lutheran World Federation	Scholarships for students, teaching staff and researchers. International training projects.
For Master's studies in English possible cooperation with the Lutheran minority Churches in the Baltic States and Russia and Lutheran World Federation	Due to the decreasing population and declining resources as well as regarding the need to expand the target group of training activities the Institute has expanded the list of specialties (Studies in Christian Culture, Diakonia, Pastoral care and Counselling). In addition there is a need to map out the possibilities for expanding international learning in English, and to cooperation with churches in the Baltic region.
Academic and Research network for Diakonia	The development of the field of Diakonia takes place in cooperation with the following academic institutions: the University of Heidelberg, Charles University in Pragues, Uppsala University, Diakonhjemmet University College in Oslo, Diakonia University of Applied Sciences in Finland.
Latvian Christian Academy	Development of the fields of Diakonia and studies in Christian Culture.
Estonian Council of Churches	Continuing education and development projects in the field of Ecumenism.
Estonian Rector's Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences	Participation in the Estonian network of the Universities of Applied Sciences and in the design of Estonian educational policies.
Estonian Bible Society	Cooperation in the translation of the Bible and in the practical use of it.
The public sector (ministries and other administrations)	Development of degree studies and lifelong learning, and competence centre for Theology and Social Sciences for professionals from different fields (chaplains, pastoral care givers and counsellors, teachers, social sector professionals).
Ecclesiastical training centres and organizations abroad	Field-based development of professional and continuing education.

Objectives:

1. The Faculty of Theology shall participate more effectively in international cooperation networks for the development of teaching and research.
2. Contracts with the practice places shall have been concluded and Mentoring shall have been systematically developed.
3. There shall be an efficient cooperation with other theological institutions for developing the higher education curricula for Estonian Institutions of Higher Professional Education and for planning and conducting the continuing training of the clergy and church workers.
4. The Institute shall have started cooperating with international ecclesiastical universities and training centres.
5. The Institute shall have joined the Council of Rectors of the Institutions of Higher Professional Education; therefore the declarations and agreements of the organization concern also the Institute.
6. The Institute shall possess an effective network of strategic partners for developing its main activities.

6.3 Organisation and Management

The structure of the Institute as a Professional Higher Education Institution and ecclesiastical training centre reflects a variety of tasks of the EELC and meets its needs. The Institute consists of the Faculty of Theology which provides degree studies together with the Tartu Academy of Theology of the Institute of Theology of the EELC (hereinafter referred to as TATIT) and of the structural units providing the professional and continuing training: the Pastoral Seminary, Departments of Church Music and Continuous Education, and a library.

The Institute is a private institution of higher education owned by EELC and run by the Consistory of the EELC. Beside the Consistory there is also another important decision-making body: the Council of the Institute, which consists of the representatives of the consistory as well as the representatives of the academic units of the Institute and of the academic staff and students.

Objectives:

1. The structure of the Institute shall be flexible and supports the development of the organisation.
2. Extension of the activities of the Institute in Tartu with the help of TATIT.
3. The Institute shall have implemented the internal quality assurance guidelines.
4. The Institute shall have obtained the institutional accreditation in 2016.

6.4 Resources

The Institute, founded in 1946, has established its position in the Estonian theological higher education landscape via its activities, being one of the few centres of the Lutheran theological degree studies and research in the Eastern Europe to provide professional education for the clergy throughout the Soviet period. The competitive advantages of the EELC Theological Institute are its centres in Tallinn and Tartu, its stability and reliability, putting in value ecclesiastical academic education, its well-established network of practice for students, flexible learning environment and personal approach to student. The primary task of the Institute is to ensure the future generation of the church workers, especially the clergy for the EELC, the development of Estonian theological thinking and promotion of the Christian spirit in our society as a bases of our culture and social organization.

6.4.1 Human Resources

The human assets of the institute consist of highly-qualified teaching and support staff.

Objectives:

1. The staff of the Institute is to be church-oriented, highly qualified and motivated, and the future generation shall be guaranteed.
2. Academic positions shall have been completed on the basis of the needs and the academic staff shall be elected in regular elections.

6.4.2 Material Resources

In the Old Town of Tallinn the Institute possesses a school building, which is in good condition and covers largely the needs of the organisation. In the same building there is also a library of the EELC and of the Institute and a hostel for student accommodation. The learning environment is updated continually, and the detailed plan of the juxtaposed building has been approved. The TATIT also rents rooms in Tartu with updated equipment and though suitable for studies, they are in need of renovation. The teaching and research work are significantly supported by a library, which is the centre of the theology-related information.

Objectives:

1. The learning environment in the Institute shall be student-centred and modern.
2. The Institute is developing the library in cooperation with the EELC Consistory, particularly with regard to the needs of the students, professors and researchers of the Institute but also serving other readers.
3. The library of the Institute shall be the regional centre of counselling, where also theology-related information is to be provided.
4. New rooms shall have been found in Tartu for TATIT to continue its activities.

6.4.3 Financial Resources

The financial resources of the Institute consist of the owners' – the non-profit organization Tartu Academy of Theology – and its contract partners' annual financial support, tuition fees, revenue earned by the Institute, and various target financed (cooperation) projects.

Objectives:

1. The support of the EELC as the owner of the Institute shall have increased in developing the training activities.
2. Support for the non-profit organisation Tartu Academy of Theology shall be stable and increases from year to year.
3. The Institute shall have an effective strategy for student recruitment.
4. The rent revenues of the school building shall have increased and offer additional economic value.
5. The Institute shall have an effective circle of supporters.
6. Project work performance shall have increased in order to get additional support from various funds and sources for the development of core activities.
7. The Institute shall have an organizational business plan for various activities, accompanied by market research and marketing plan.
8. There shall be created a fund for the development of the Institute and its resources shall be used for important projects as the Institute's own contribution.