

Financing system of Estonian theatre

Kirsten Simmo, Estonian Theatre Agency

Riga, 2019

Estonian Theatre Agency

Private foundation, founded in 1994

2 founders - Theatre Union and Association of Performing Arts Institutions

Main objectives: dramaturgy, copyrights, info, statistics, international relations, showcase draamamaa.weekend

Estonian cultural budget 2019

State budget € 11,2 billion

Budget of the Ministry of Culture € 251.3 million

For theatre € 32 million / 12,7%

In 2018: € 235,4 mil / € 38 mil / 16%

In 2017: € 217 mil / € 51 mil / 23,5%

Estonian theatre

1,16 million theatre visits per year (2017)

50 professional companies

559 productions / 204 new productions / 6713 performances

Theatres in 7 cities: Tallinn, Tartu, Pärnu, Viljandi, Rakvere,
Kuressaare, Narva

+ 500 amateur theatre groups

Theatre system

National Opera – Public Institution – National Opera Act

8 foundations (founded by state)

1 municipal theatre - Tallinn City Theatre (local government support + Ministry of Culture support)

Private performing arts institutions (various forms of activity)

Statistics

	2011	2017
Theatres	34	47
Performances	5012	6713
Premiers	190	204
Theatre visits	1 mil	1,2 mil
Ticket cost (no VAT)	8 EUR	11 EUR
Ticket revenue	8,6 mil	11,7 mil

Financing

Ministry of Culture base support (1 a year, application round – budget, repertory plans) - 23 performing arts institutions

Cultural Endowment support (4 times a year)

Local government support (minimum)

Council of Gambling Tax (4 times a year, small sums, children-youth, cultural diversity)

EU funds, co-productions, project support from the ministry

Priorities

Variety

Various target groups

Theatre for young audiences

Regional accessibility (Theatre into the Countryside)

Internationalisation (Estonian Culture Abroad)

Estonian dramaturgy (Estonian Theatre Agency)

Financing in numbers

	2011	2017
Ministry of Culture	18 /23 mil	26 /51 mil
Cultural endowment	0,5 mil	0,4 mil
Local government	1,12 mil	2,2 mil

Investments in 4 state theatres (full renovations 20 million euros)

Examples (2017)

	state	municipality	tickets, rents etc
Tallinn City Theatre	892 619	1,8 mil	1,14 mil
Estonian Drama Theatre	1,94 mil	0	1,31 mil
Tartu New Theatre	152 683	193 683	140 897

Principles for financing

Funding committee + Minister

budget / repertory plans/ audience numbers / influentiality / artistic level / innovation / regionality

Foundations receive additional funding based on raise for minimum wages for cultural workers + full coverage of communal and investment costs

Subject to change – amendments to law

Criteria for financing

Artistic level (three last years)

Cultural importance

Regional coverage

Influentiality (theatre language, style etc)

Programme and budget (how realistic?)

Prognosis (audience numbers)

Additional programmes (youth, international co-productions, workshops etc)

Cultural Endowment

8 endowments: literature, art, drama, architecture, film, sports, music, folk culture

15 county expert groups

Budget of the Dramatic Art Endowment:

2018, 2019: 1,8 million (around 14% from total budget of CE)

Dramatic Art Endowment supports:

- experimental creative projects and productions;
- Estonian Theatre Union publishing and social activity, professional associations;
- awarding of Estonian Theatre Annual Prizes;
- professional development, including visiting theatres, participating in projects or productions and travel related to research work;
- participation of Estonian theatres in festivals abroad;
- festivals, including primarily drama festivals Draama, Baltoscandal, Treff, Talveöö unenägu and SAAL Biennaal;
- organisation of master classes, residency, conferences etc. in Estonia;

- studies abroad – master`s studies of the best Estonian theatre and dance specialties` students;
- co-financing of inviting visiting producers, artists, choreographers;
- development of Estonian drama literature and financing playwriting competitions;
- literary activity related to the introduction of Estonian theatre;
- creative people that have proved themselves in Estonian theatre;
- projects that promote performing art, productions that combine various types of art etc.;
- recording and preservation of dramatic art.

Problems

Estonian Conservative People's Party EKRE is in government

Amendment of the Performing Arts Institution Act

Funding of private institutions

Artistic level - how to be objective?

Lack of money - difficult choices (house of NO99, etc)

Thank you!