

## XXI INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE ON ECONOMIC POLICY WAS HELD AT JÄNEDA IN 2013

Twenty earlier scientific conferences on economic policy have been held at Värskas, this, the XXI conference took place in the Jäneda Manor from 27–29 June 2013. Several participants had suggested selecting a new location for a change already a few years ago. On the other hand, some other participants, also this year, would still like to have Värskas as the venue for the conference. Jäneda was chosen as the new venue after preliminary work which started already in March 2012. More specifically, the undersigned sent a price inquiry to 10 possible conference organisers (Jäneda, Haapsalu, Nelijärve, Pärnu, Pühajärve, Sagadi, Viljandi, Võru-Kubija, etc.) at that time. Three inquiries remained without answers, some offers received were rejected because they were unsuitable, and due to several factors and conditions, the Jäneda Manor proved to be the most appropriate venue for us from among the offers screened.

The two conference days had a different structure this time compared to earlier years – namely, on the first day (Thursday, 27 June) the main emphasis was on the round table on the subject of the administrative-territorial reform in Estonia,<sup>1</sup> and the traditional presentations and discussions were held only on the second day (Friday).

The conference was opened on Thursday afternoon with an overview of the history, objectives and traditions of scientific conferences on economic policy by the author of this article. It was followed by the introductory presentation by Sulev Mäeltsemees (Tallinn University of Technology) on the subject „Regional and Local Government Policy in Estonia (in the context of the administrative-territorial reform)“. The round table that followed next was chaired by Sulev Mäeltsemees, and the participants who made presentations, took the floor and made comments were the Tapa Rural Municipality Mayor Alari Kirt, Director of the Association of Estonian Cities Jüri Võigemast, and representatives of the Association of Municipalities of Estonia, the Ambla Rural Municipality Mayor Rait Pihelgas and the Koeru Rural Municipality Mayor Triin Põbbul. Also the Chairman of the Association of Municipalities of Harjumaa and Kose Rural Municipality Mayor Vello Jõgisoo, Mayor of Viljandi Loit Kivistik, Halinga Rural Municipality Mayor Ülle Vapper, and Angelika Kallakmaa from the Tallinn City Government participated. At the end of the round table the general conclusions were drawn from the discussions by the Director of Geomedia OÜ Rivo Noorkõiv. Also foreign guests of the conference and other participants from Estonian institutions of higher education participated actively in the discussions. Also the Nõva Rural Municipality Mayor Aldo Tamm was present on the second day of the conference.

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<sup>1</sup> The first day had been dedicated to the subjects related to municipalities also at Värskas in 2007 but then the presentations and discussions were mainly based on examples from the Põlva County (as the Värskas Rural Municipality is in the Põlva County) and the presentations were made by representatives of the above-mentioned county and of the County Government.

The discussions included both positive and negative evaluations of the current development of municipalities. The overall position was that the administrative-territorial reform should be accelerated, the current mergers of municipalities have been mostly justified but on the other hand it is necessary to define the mutual relations between the state and the local governments more decisively and to establish clearly the functions and duties of both parties both in terms of rights on the one hand and responsibilities and liability on the other hand. The persons who took the floor were also somewhat worried about the progress of the process. On the other hand the position was that wider discussions should be held on the subjects of the administrative-territorial reform. Also the idea was expressed that this scientific conference on economic policy could include the issues discussed in its agenda also in the future and keep these issues topical. Peter Friedrich (University of Tartu, Bundeswehr University Munich) emphasised on the basis of the experience of the Federal Republic of Germany the importance of competition among municipalities, which could also be taken into account in Estonia. The round table could essentially be regarded as a success.

The first day ended in a delicious dinner at the Black Stallion Stable, listening at the same time to the concert by the saxophone quartet of the Rakvere Music School, conducted by Jüri Takjas, for about an hour and enjoying the music.

The second day of the conference (Friday) was already directly planned for conference presentations and four sessions were held. The first session was chaired by Frank Ehrhold and Mathias Wiedmer from the University of Greifswald (Federal Republic of Germany). Three presentations were made. The presentation by Stephan Hornig (Kufstein University of Applied Sciences, Austria) was dedicated to the crisis in Europe and compared above all the economic situations of Germany and Greece. The second presentation (Viljar Veebel, Tallinn University of Technology) was on the measures for the solution of the economic and financial crisis in the eurozone and on choices available from the positions of different interest groups. The third presentation of this session was made by Armin Rohde from the University of Greifswald (Federal Republic of Germany) on topical issues of the monetary policy of the euro system.

The second session on Friday was chaired by Mart Sörg from the University of Tartu. The first presentation was made by Margus Randma (Tallinn University of Technology / Saue Rural Municipality Government) who discussed the alternatives for the calculation of the net debt burden of municipalities. The next presentation was from Jüri Ratas (Tallinn University of Technology/ Riigikogu) who pointed out the role of the environment in the enhancement of the competitiveness of cities, based on examples of the European Green Capitals and Tallinn. The third presentation was by Maret Kirsipuu (Estonian Maritime Academy) who provided an overview of differences between family businesses and non-family businesses in Estonia and analysed the role of women in Estonian family businesses.

The third session was chaired by Üllas Ehrlich and Sulev Mäeltseemes (both from the Tallinn University of Technology). The first presentation of the session was

made by Peter Friedrich (University of Tartu, Bundeswehr University Munich, the Federal Republic of Germany) who treated and analysed the relationships between the company seat principle and the public organisation. The second presentation, by Aet Kiisla (Narva College of the University of Tartu) dealt with the fulfilment of the role of serving the society by a university through the development of the curricula of a regional college (based on examples of both the Narva College of the University of Tartu and Kuressaare College of the Tallinn University of Technology).<sup>2</sup> The last presentation of the session was made by Sirje Pädam who analysed the environmental expenditures of the Estonian public sector in 1995–2011.

The last session of the conference was chaired by Janno Reiljan from the University of Tartu. Four presentations had been planned but authors of only two presentations were present. One of these presentations was made by Petr Wawrosz (University of Finance and Administration in Prague, Czech Republic) who analysed the extensive and intensive factors of changes in production operations on different levels of the economy. The second presentation was made by Maksim Mõttus from Estonia (University of Tartu). He had studied the Estonian business support measures and their favourable impact on enterprises.

The conference ended with conclusions and visions of the future presented by Matti Raudjärv (Pärnu College of the University of Tartu). The second day of the conference ended in the sports and health programme around the Jäneda Manor and in the SPA building.

In the morning of the third day the participants became acquainted with the main building of the Jäneda Manor and had a thorough and interesting tour of the museum exhibit rooms. It was followed by a pleasant walk over the Jänijõe River along the hiking path to nearby Lake Kali, listening to local legends and talking about other issues of the local life, led by the guide. After dinner the participants left Jäneda to start preparations for the next, XXII conference. They will meet again at the conference of economic policy at Jäneda at the end of June 2014.

In Tallinn, in July 2013

Matti Raudjärv

Initiator of the series of conferences and

main organiser/coordinator of the XXI conference

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<sup>2</sup> Representative of the Kuressaare College of the Tallinn University of Technology Anne Keerberg as the co-author could not participate in the conference due compassionate reasons.