

ONE COUNTRY
ONE SYSTEM
MANY STORIES



European Union
Regional Development Fund



Investing in your future



“ OUR BONES ARE FROM THE EAST
AND OUR FLESH FROM THE WEST,

but this is as difficult to describe as the splitting of a personality
after the separation of the two hemispheres of the brain.

There were no people in Central Sweden when we landed on
these shores to fish and set traps. We spoke our own language,
of which we have retained about a thousand words, and these
are still understood along the banks of the Volga and Pechora
and beyond the Ural Mountains. A thousand words is not much
in terms of a modern vocabulary, but during the Stone Age?
As you can see, it was enough for us... ”

Lennart Meri
“Silver White”

POSITIVELY SURPRISING

Estonia is home to a small nationality and a slightly larger nation. On the world map it is an almost imperceptible slice of Nordic sea, forest and land.

This small nation and small country are particularly valuable. Without David, there would be no Goliath, and without Estonia the world would not be what it is today.

Estonia is full of surprising contradictions and exciting things to share and show to others, and continually re-discover on one's own. As important as it is to bring foreigners here and show them what life is like here, it is equally important to go abroad and talk about Estonia to as many people as possible and as unambiguously as possible.

“ Introduce Estonia ”

is an attempt to harmonise the manner and style of what we say about our home in the world. It is not propaganda or rocket science. Instead, it is a document in which ideas and proposals have been gathered and systematised. In order to go beyond words, it has been supplemented with illustrations, colours and graphics. Thus it can be adapted as necessary, for presentations, advertising, publications or any visual form of communication.

Estonia is small in terms of area, but it has a large soul. We have a lot to give the world. The discovery of the extraordinary contrasts exhibited by this resourceful people, small country and ancient culture offers both us and our guests and friends from all over the world positive surprises every step of the way.

HISTORY AND ESSENCE OF THE ESTONIAN BRAND

What was once only a burgeoning idea to introduce Estonia to the world has now grown into a tree that is ever more vigorously spreading its shoots to various markets. Although the tips of the branches touch different target groups and peoples, they emanate from one and the same trunk. This is how the brand's platform works.

In this book, you will find the following system: the cornerstones, positioning and individuality of the Estonian values that are the basis of the stories we tell about our country.





TODAY

Collective memory is short-lived. Spheres of influence change rapidly. Whole countries appear and disappear. The world has a new appearance every day.

Today virtually the entire world is talking about the need for change. Everyone would like to be positively transforming. The need for change has become an everyday phrase. At the same time, Estonia wishes to have its rightful share in the transforming world.

At first we looked to the West – how can it be so slow, apathetic and reactionary? Now it is us who may seem slow as we are older, smarter and ... more similar to the West than ever before.

Larger creatures do not necessarily eat smaller ones. But the fact is that faster ones beat slower ones. Here we can do a great deal ourselves by communicating a clear message.



At first, we were the bringers of change; a fresh breeze in conservative Europe. We came from a system that had long confined us behind the iron curtain. We were bursting with the need to change everything and change ourselves. There was a great rift between us and the West that we eagerly rushed to cross. We wanted to be faster, more famous, more stylish and better – we were “positively transforming”.

Where the West saw obstacles, we saw opportunities. Where others spent billions, we managed with a few million and a great deal of willpower. We were able to do many things in a short time. Today no-one thinks it would have been pointless or unnecessary to introduce Estonia to the world.

We won our first battle.

YESTERDAY

FIRST AND FAST

modern, inventive and adaptable

FULL OF CONTRASTS

plentiful, diverse, positively contradictory

CLEAN, NORDIC

clear, high-quality, rough, environmentally friendly

OUR CHARACTER

ACCESSIBLE

compact, close, warm, dream-fulfilling

ROMANTIC

natural, heroic, exotic, deep



OUR STORIES ARE ALWAYS POSITIVELY

TRANSFORMING





ESTONIAN INDIVIDUALITY

People have always been attracted to strong individuality. It is a feeling rather than a picture. This is why most people find it considerably easier to describe a good friend than to draw their picture.

Estonia has an ancient Nordic heart and a warm and ageless soul. Whenever one speaks of Estonia, one must take both into account.

HEART

Our home is a Nordic country. This makes us strong, considerate of our surroundings and others, but also reserved and calculating. We are not braggarts, but we know our worth. We are not vain, but stylish in our clarity. We are definitely not too fast, but are the more thorough on that account. We keep both feet on the ground.

The blood in our veins is ancient and sincere. We cannot offer impressive stories of foreign conquests and kings, but we do have one of the oldest stories in the world about the conquering of seas and the cultivation and preservation of land. We know the price of independence and the importance of roots.





One can feign friendliness, but never hospitality – the latter is openness and a sincere belief that a stranger is just a friend one has not met before. Our doors are always open. Our table is laid and our parties are the best.

Regardless of our deep roots, our country's soul is young. We are used to adapting to new situations and challenges. We are similar to a cat that always lands on its feet. As an old country that has been discovered anew, we are by nature vibrant, exciting and progressive.

SOUL

We are a small but proud country that combines old and new, lasting and fast, cold and warm.

We are, in a good way, a country of contradictions that is

FULL OF SURPRISES



CORNERSTONES OF THE ESTONIAN CHARACTER

We do not know where we are going and we will never know when we arrive. For this reason, we need a strong foundation in order to be successful.

The grounds for the formation of the character of a people are forces majeure, i.e. underpinnings that are more powerful than human actions. They make countries and people into what they are. Estonia has four cornerstones.



THE NORDIC INFLUENCE

We live in a Nordic country. That means unspoilt nature, mercilessly harsh weather, white nights and dark days. It also means the strict discipline required from us by our climate; clear shapes, quality in both thinking and actions, as well as introversion and anxiety caused by the agonisingly long winter and short summer, as well as Sustainable development and concern for the future.

THE NORDIC INFLUENCE IS EXPRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

Cleanliness, Nordic, purity, ruggedness, quality, strength, clarity, naturalness, elegance, straightforwardness

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF THE NORDIC INFLUENCE:

Estonian nature, ecology, design, architecture, fine arts, sports, sustainability, music, healthcare, Estonian national cuisine, the national flag and anthem, birds and animals, new experiences



ROOTEDNESS

We have inhabited this land for thousands of years. This is phenomenal in the whole of Europe and rare in the world. We have been daunted by various catastrophes, foreign domination, wars and climate, but we are still here. This provides us with a historical background that is unique in the world. There is heroic romance in our rootedness; it gives us our distinctive language and traditions, but it also makes us calculating and introverted.

ROOTEDNESS IS EXPRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

History, language, traditional culture, naturalness, heroism, romance, traditions, heritage, civilisation

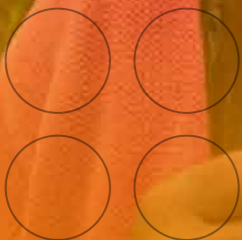
IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF ROOTEDNESS:

People and culture, folklore, folk music, handicraft, national epic, traditional religion, religion in a wider sense, the history and historical persons of Estonia and Livonia, the Estonian language, settlement structure, old towns, agriculture, maritime culture, forestry, hunting, the military, the Constitution, tourism farms

ROOTEDNESS

THE EASTERN
INFLUENCE

PROGRESS



THE EASTERN INFLUENCE

THE EASTERN INFLUENCE IS EXPRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

Accessibility, the abundance of interesting experiences, exotic people and places, surprising, hospitable, multicultural, tempting

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF THE EASTERN INFLUENCE:

Trade, service, entertainment, education, spas, Russian heritage, urban tourism, connections with the rest of the world

We ourselves have come from the East, and many people have come here from the East since then. It would be naïve to think that we have no relation with the [land of the] rising sun. Beside and within this ancient and closed world there is a world that is full of experiences and surprises and is a bit exotic. We have inherited our generally quite hospitable nature from the east. Our present educational background has discernible eastern elements. In any case, we understand the civilised east better than anyone else. The eastern influence can also be interpreted as internationalism or multiculturalism.

THE EASTERN INFLUENCE

PROGRESS

THE NORDIC INFLUENCE



ROOTEDNESS



PROGRESS

PROGRESS IS EXPRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

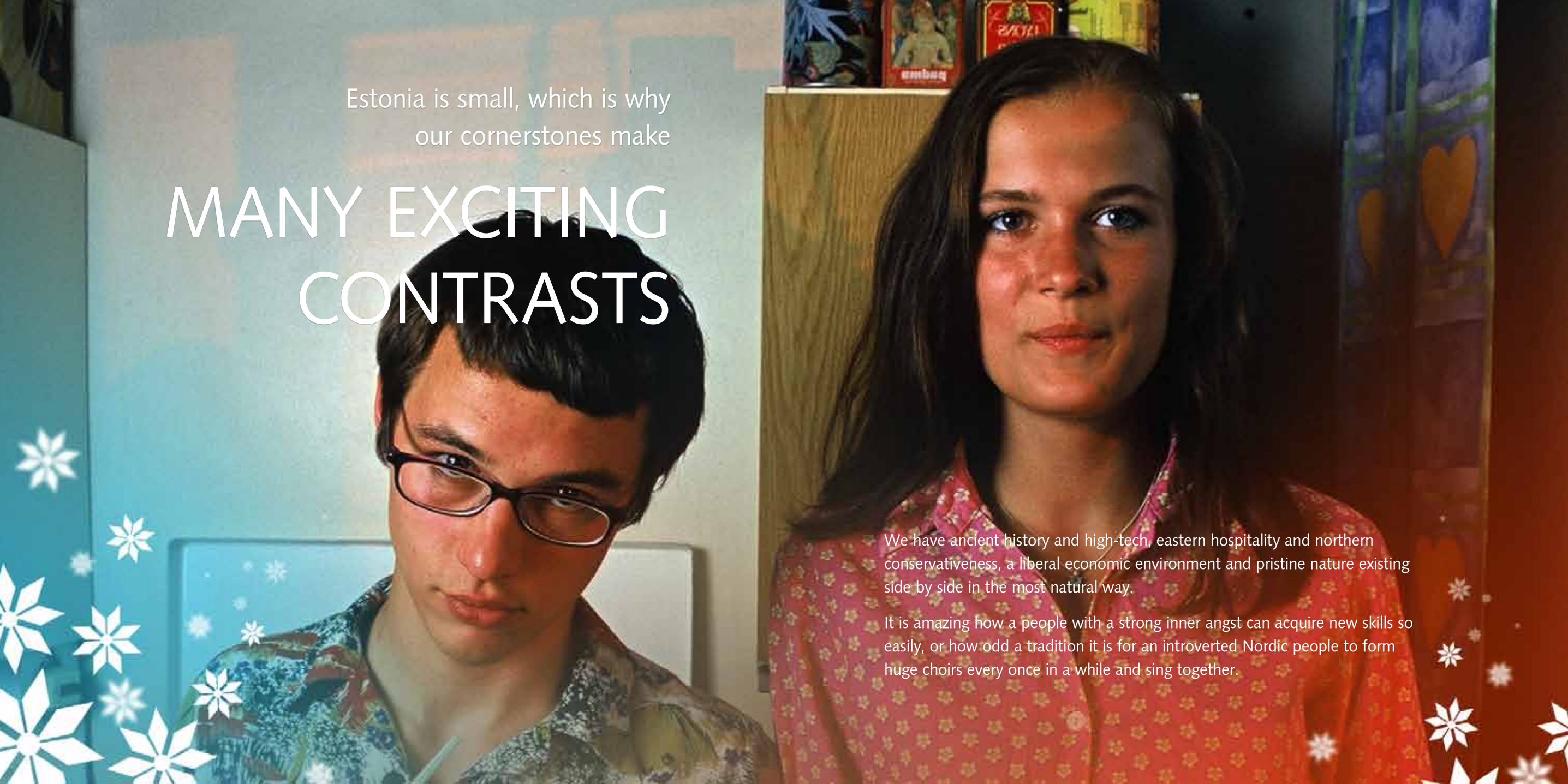
First, fast, infrastructure, business environment, adaptability, resourcefulness, modernity, cleverness

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF PROGRESS:

Science, the economic environment, technological applications, telecommunications, the Internet, e- and m-solutions, added value creation, fast implementation, innovation, "smart" industry, openness towards the new, infrastructure

Logistically, we are located in a complex place. We straddle the sea, land, forest and various cultures. Throughout our existence, we have had to adapt to different influences and restrictions. We have become adapters. Maybe we are not as energetic creators as southern peoples, but we implement innovative technologies resourcefully and quickly. Today our e- and m-thinking is a good example of our adaptability. We are pioneers who apply efficient means (from slash and burn agriculture to gene technology) and do so quickly. Many things that are customary for us are still unknown in the rest of the world.



A young man with dark hair and glasses, wearing a patterned shirt, is looking down. To his right, a young woman with long dark hair and a pink floral shirt is looking forward. They are in a room with a wooden cabinet in the background. The cabinet has several colorful items on top, including what looks like a small figurine and some boxes. The background wall is light blue. There are white snowflake graphics scattered across the image, particularly on the left and bottom edges.

Estonia is small, which is why
our cornerstones make

MANY EXCITING CONTRASTS

We have ancient history and high-tech, eastern hospitality and northern conservativeness, a liberal economic environment and pristine nature existing side by side in the most natural way.

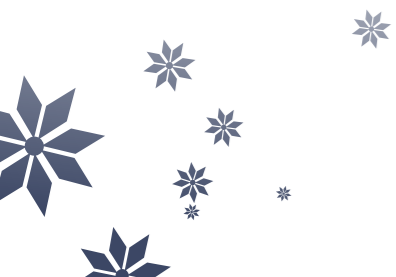
It is amazing how a people with a strong inner angst can acquire new skills so easily, or how odd a tradition it is for an introverted Nordic people to form huge choirs every once in a while and sing together.

ESTONIA IS:

“ POSITIVELY SURPRISING ”

A small country must make a significantly greater effort to be recognised internationally. First of all, its communication must be clearly defined and distinct. We believe that the main basis of our distinctiveness is the strong contrasts in Estonia, which are caused by the interaction of the cornerstones.

These opposing influences provide endless surprises.



LET'S TALK ABOUT ESTONIA

A memory, experience or impression is a story that can be shared with others. The prerequisite for a good story is a surprise or a twist – in our context, a contrast.

All stories that can be told about Estonia always rely on two intersecting cornerstones: our success stories unite progress and northern energy; our war stories tell of the conflict between rootedness and the influence of the east or the north; our success stories are a combination of our origin and the progressive ability to adapt quickly to new situations.



SOUL

HEART

THE NORDIC INFLUENCE

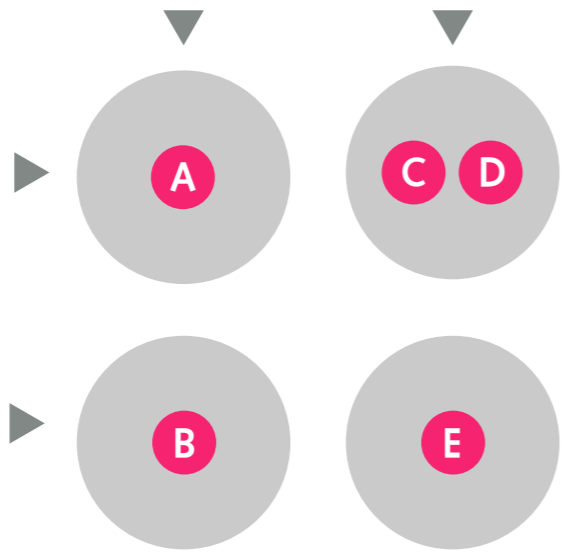
Cleanliness, Nordic, pristine, ruggedness, quality, strength, clarity, naturalness, elegance, simplicity

THE EASTERN INFLUENCE

Accessibility, the abundance of interesting experiences, exotic people and places, surprising, hospitable, multicultural, tempting

PROGRESS

First, fast, infrastructure, business environment, adaptability, resourcefulness, modernity, cleverness



ROOTEDNESS

History, language, traditional culture, naturalness, heroism, romance, traditions, heritage, civilisation

The stories we tell about Estonia proceed from our individuality and always describe us through the interaction of contrasts or cornerstones.

- A** There is no point in us merely telling tourists about Estonia's pristine nature (*Naturalness >> Effect of the north*), as this can be also found elsewhere. Estonian nature is made unique by its proximity to civilisation (*Availability >> The Eastern influence*), which in conclusion is a remarkable argument for nature-loving tourists (*Holidays in nature*).
- B** The Old Town of Tallinn (*History >> Rootedness*) becomes significantly more interesting through its interaction with the city's innumerable entertainment establishments (*The abundance of interesting experiences >> The Eastern influence*). This is a surprising and intelligent argument for people looking for a city break (*Holiday in the city*).
- C** As regards our highly developed information technology (*Modernity >> Progress*), Estonia is unique in the fact that the Internet is also available in the middle of a bog (*Naturalness >> The Nordic influence*). This fact could catch the attention of quite a few major conference organisers who are tired of international conference centres (*Business tourism*).
- D** We can talk about Skype endlessly (*Resourcefulness >> Progress*), but so can the Danes or Swedes, since they financed the project. What makes Skype interesting from the Estonian perspective is the fact that the idea for the programme came from regular Estonian boys (*Civilisation >> Rootedness*) who, among other things, also created the extremely popular Kazaa programme. This is a good example of how a small idea brought in billions of Euros in a short period of time (*Investments*).
- E** The Estonian people have always been interested in different ancient places in Estonia (*Ancient culture >> Rootedness*). What makes these places accessible, however, is their thorough promotion on the Internet and a good infrastructure on the spot (*Infrastructure >> Progress*). This interaction may provide a good argument for exchanging a trip to a southern country with a comfortable Estonian experience (*Domestic tourism*).

We want the world to discover us. This is only possible when we can positively surprise them with our communication, offering new points of view on ordinary things.



TOURISTS

AREA: TOURISM

They come here to experience something new, and if we can positively surprise them, they will tell many others about it. This will bring Estonia fame and a good reputation.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO TELL TOURISTS

Axis 1

We can offer tourists decadent **Eastern-style** relaxation at various spas, a great night-life, carefree and safe relaxation, as well as a distant hint of the Post-Soviet, the proximity of mystical Russia, multiculturalism and extravagance. All of this is provided in a hospitable and accessible manner.

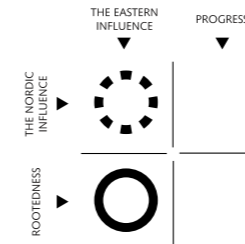
Axis 2

On the other hand, **rootedness** allows tourists to experience the rich history, unique official language and culture of Estonia, not to mention its beautiful people and romantic mediaeval Old Town.

Extension

Via the **Nordic influence**, those tourists who are more interested in Estonia can experience our crisp Nordic nature, minimalistic architecture and timeless art as an added value.

POSITION IN THE VALUE MATRIX



PRIMARY CONTRAST

THE EASTERN INFLUENCE IS EXPRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

Accessibility, the abundance of interesting experiences, exotic people and places, surprising, hospitable, multicultural, tempting

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF THE EASTERN INFLUENCE:

Trade, service, entertainment, education, spas, Russian heritage, urban tourism, connections with the rest of the world

ROOTEDNESS IS EXPRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

History, language, traditional culture, naturalness, heroism, romance, traditions, heritage, civilisation

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF ROOTEDNESS:

People and culture, folklore, folk music, handicraft, national epic, traditional religion, religion in a wider sense, the history and historical persons of Estonia and Livonia, the Estonian language, settlement structure, old towns, agriculture, maritime culture, forestry, hunting, the military, the Constitution, tourism farms

OPPORTUNITY FOR EXTENSION

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BUSINESSMEN

AREA: BUSINESS

These are people – mainly entrepreneurs who are foreign investors or importers – who directly or indirectly help create job positions here and thereby increase our country's wealth. This category also includes international conference organisers, travel agents and other 'mediators' who help many people with business interests visit our country (business tourism).

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO TELL BUSINESSMEN

Axis 1

Via **progress** we can offer a progressive business environment with an efficient and compatible infrastructure. Our e-services, mobile communications and Internet applications are among the most progressive in the world. Estonians are adaptable towards new technologies, and use them willingly.

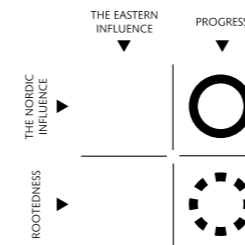
Axis 2

At the same time, the **Nordic influence** gives investors a transparent, clearly defined, sincere and honest partner who is considerate, rational and not overly talkative. The Estonian approach is functional and one that creates timeless value. Our natural resources are powerful and accessible.

Extension

As added value, **rootedness** is like a guarantee that Estonians do not give up and would rather break their arm than a promise they have given. Perseverance and culture are a good basis for long-term plans in any area of business.

POSITION IN THE VALUE MATRIX



PRIMARY CONTRAST

PROGRESS IS EXPRESSED IN THE FOLLOWING VALUES:

First, fast, infrastructure, business environment, adaptability, resourcefulness, modernity, cleverness

IMPORTANT SYMBOLS OF PROGRESS:

Science, the economic environment, technological applications, telecommunications, the Internet, e- and m-solutions, added value creation, fast implementation, innovation, "smart" industry, openness towards the new, infrastructure

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TEMPORARY RESIDENTS AND

AREA: IMMIGRATION

These are people who may decide to come here from their homeland to study for an extended period, live here or take up a job that creates added value. They enrich us and are enriched themselves, and will become the best advertising agents for Estonia when they return home. In a way, they are similar to tourists, but because they stay here longer, they partake in our life and environment significantly more than tourists.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO TELL TEMPORARY RESIDENTS ARRIVING HERE

Axis 1

Due to the **Nordic influence**, Estonia is a perfect place for contemplation and the acquisition of a new quality. It is as if Estonia's pristine and rugged nature was designed to refresh those who come from an over-civilised environment. There is nothing coincidental or pre-planned here. There is, however, something wild and inescapable about Estonia. Our country is well balanced and surprisingly spacious despite its small dimensions.

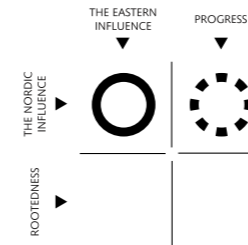
Axis 2

The **Eastern influence** offers a contrast to the Nordic influence and guarantees that we are not a boring and monotonous typically Nordic society, but a multicultural and hospitable people. There is much to discover and enjoy here. In addition, our educational system is different from the European and American models, and the working culture is more creative and spontaneous than in Scandinavia.

Extension

Progress makes life here simple and fast by offering many rational solutions on an everyday level, from the submission of income tax declarations through the Internet, to the highest number of free WiFi hot spots in the world in Tallinn. To say nothing of the ubiquitous mobile parking system and the world's most comprehensive Internet banking solutions.

POSITION IN THE VALUE MATRIX



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LOCAL PEOPLE

AREA: DOMESTIC TOURISM

Estonians are proud of their country. At the same time, it is surprising how little we actually know about our small country, how little we travel within our country and how little we communicate with our compatriots. This makes local people a very serious target group in the tourism sector. The better we know our country, the better we are able to tell the world about it.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO TELL LOCAL PEOPLE

Axis 1

Rootedness means history, traditions, habits, folklore and other interesting things that most people of Estonia do not remember much about or have never heard of. Hundreds of tourism farms, thousands of monuments and dozens of hiking trails help us learn and understand all of that.

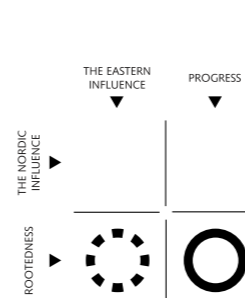
Axis 2

Progress is a natural environment that surrounds us every day. We only talk about it when it disappears for a moment – our cell phone has poor coverage or we cannot access the Internet for five minutes or a tourism farm does not have a very good website. For local people, progress is not in itself a consideration, but instead a way of doing things (a channel, as it were).

Extension

Due to the **Eastern influence**, we feel good when travelling around Estonia. The people are kind and helpful – regardless of their nationality. There are a lot of exotic places and people all around us that we know very little about, and experiencing this in reality is generally surprising. There is a lot to discover in Estonia – both in town and in the countryside.

POSITION IN THE VALUE MATRIX



PRIMARY CONTRAST

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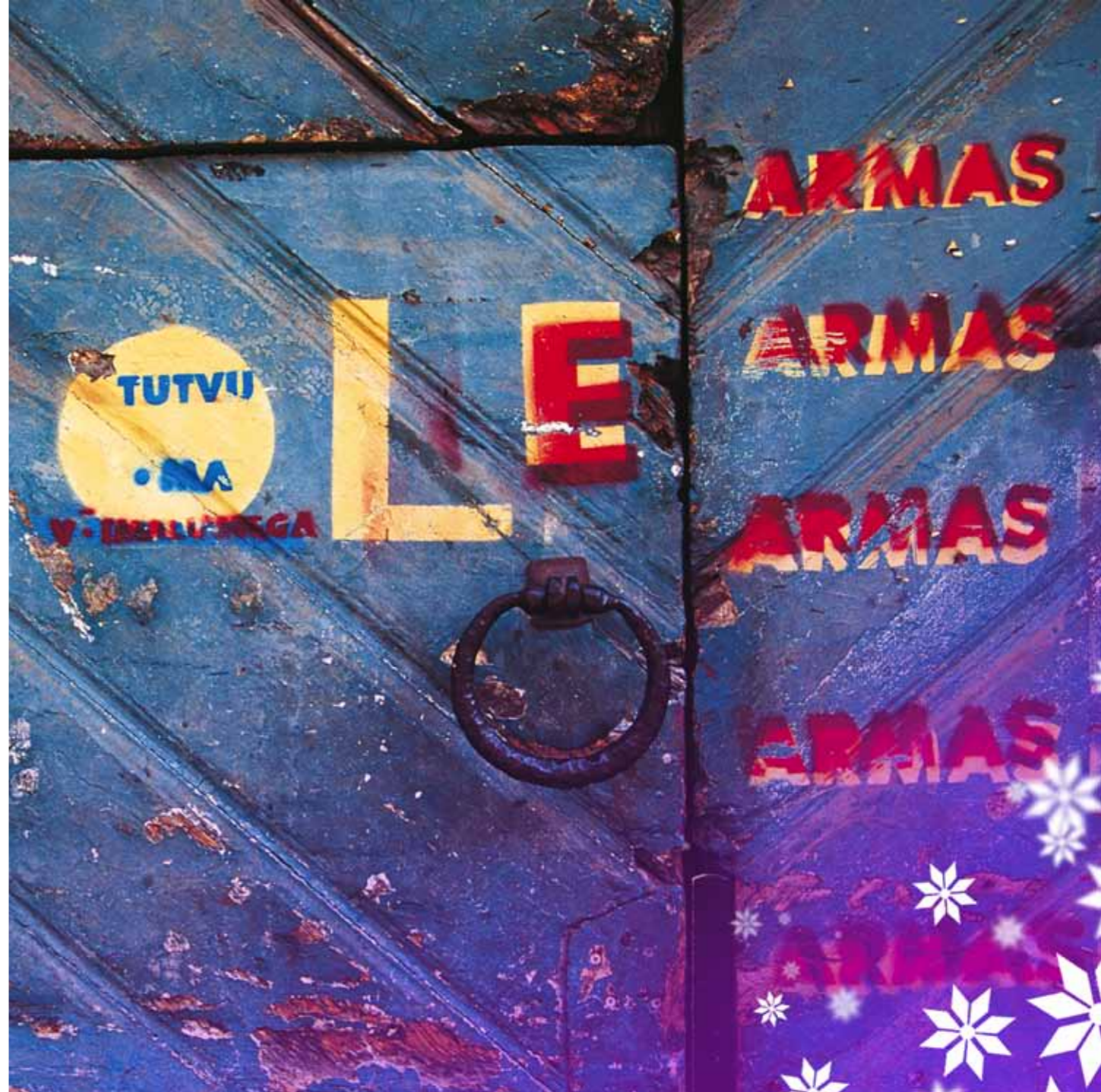
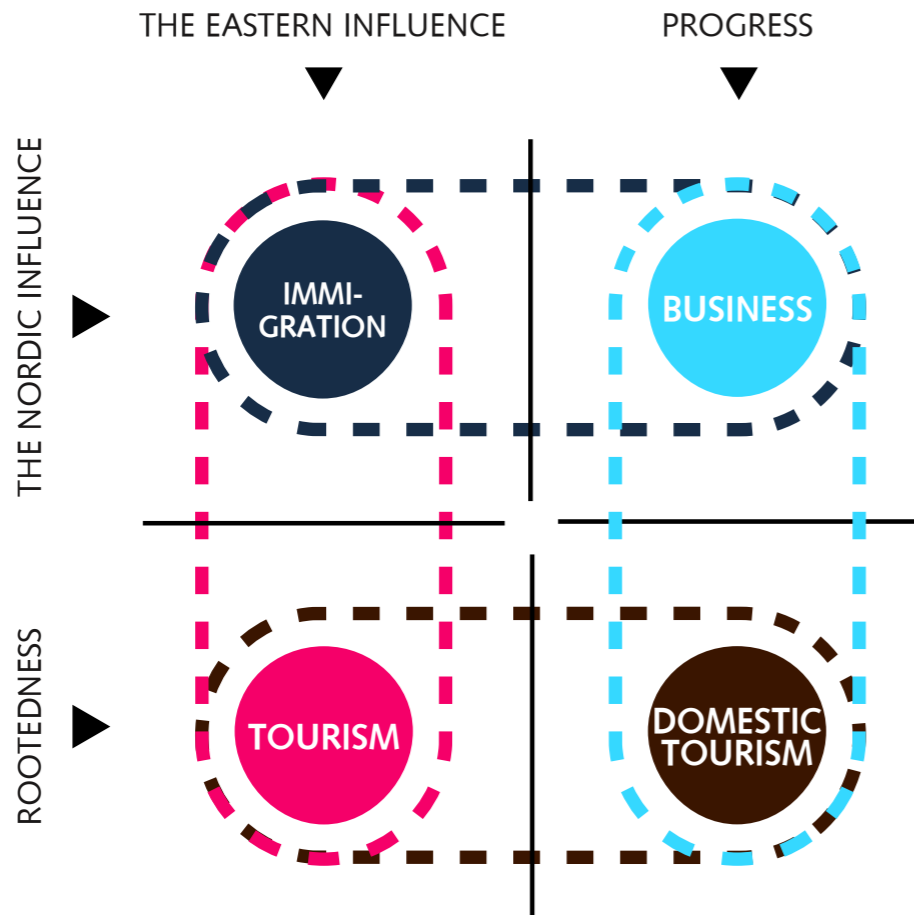
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INSPIRATION

Here we offer you four real stories about Estonia as inspiration. As these are real experiences of life in Estonia, they are very metaphorical examples of our contrasting nature.

SMALL BUT INFORMATIVE

AREA: BUSINESS

Triggering contrast:

A new experience: The Nordic influence | E- and m-solutions: Progress



Sebastian (48, France):

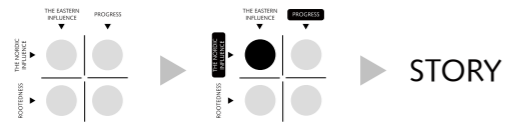
“ We recently opened a franchise of our company in Estonia. We hadn't heard much about this country. I had lived in Ukraine for a couple of years, and I thought Estonia would probably be similar, a raw post-Soviet country. Things did not start off well – on the first day working in the Tallinn city centre I managed to park my car in the wrong place and got a ticket. I asked my secretary to help me pay it. She did and showed me, among other things, how to pay for a parking space using a mobile phone. Another couple of months and new surprises kept coming – you can submit your income tax declaration on the Internet without leaving your office! It took one day to establish a company through a notary. This is something that no-one in the Francophone world can even imagine. I thought I would be coming here to bring experiences and teach people, but instead I found myself in the learner's role. ”

UNEXPECTED EXPERIENCES

AREA: IMMIGRATION

Triggering contrast:

The Nordic outlook: Rootedness | The abundance of new experiences: the Eastern influence



Gerhard (52, Germany):

“ Last year, I came to Estonia as a visiting professor at a university. There was a working group here that was focussing on a topic of great interest to me, so I could not miss out on the opportunity to join them. I must say, I did not fit in right away. My colleagues were extremely polite but reserved. Then, half a year later, the whole department went on a trip to a colleague's country house. It was so cold! A shot or two of the stronger stuff helps – as I found out. As the evening wore on, I found myself covered with honey in a hot sauna, with the head of the department whisking me with dried birch branches (a local tradition, they say!) and finally, I was pushed into the snow, naked. I was screaming and rolling around, while the others were laughing – but it was fun! That night, I learned more about Estonians than from all the books I had read during the winter. ”

WE TALK LITTLE BUT KNOW A LOT

AREA: BUSINESS

Triggering contrast:

The Nordic outlook: rootedness | Modernity: Progress



Martin (26, Estonia):

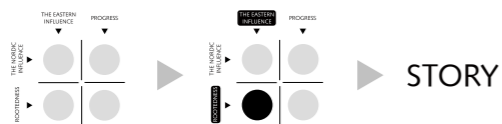
“ We were driving to the Depeche Mode concert in Tartu in a rented bus. There were all kinds of people on board – a couple of good friends and acquaintances and also a couple of people we did not know at all. It was a two-hour drive, of which for the first hour and a half, everybody was quiet. In the final half hour, two guys in the front row started arguing about which is better, PC or Mac. And this remained the only topic until the end of the drive. What can I say – very Estonian! ”

AN EXTREMELY LOVELY COUNTRY

AREA: TOURISM

Triggering contrast:

Romance: Rootedness | Hospitality: the Eastern influence



Fernanda (25, Spain):

“ A couple of summers ago we were on a longer tour of Europe. The further north we went, the more interesting it got. Estonia left an unforgettable impression on us – we arrived in Tallinn by bus and, to be honest, were a bit disappointed at first – it appeared to be a large and bustling city just like many in Spain. We expected something far less civilised! We quickly rented a car and went to discover the distant corners of the countryside. It was there that the real face of Estonia opened up – clean, lush nature, uninhabited beaches, modest and even shy people. When we were driving through villages, people walking on the road often stopped and looked at the car, with obvious interest – who is this driving here? But we will never forget the kind woman who allowed us to put up our tents in her yard on the island of Hiiumaa, made us pancakes for breakfast, and when we offered her money as we were leaving, blushed, waved her hands and ran into the house. She smiled and waved to us through the window. ”

THESE SINCERE IMPRESSIONS
OF OUR COUNTRY ARE THE
GREATEST INSPIRATION

Every copywriter, director or person visiting Estonia obtains material from such stories to point out positively surprising contrasts in any form. Only two fields have been mentioned as examples, but there is an abundance of similar positively surprising stories – we know of such stories, as do all of our friends and acquaintances. Let us listen to our inner voice and encourage them – in an interesting, gripping and ... surprising way.

ONE COUNTRY, ONE SYSTEM

Take two hydrogen atoms and combine them with one oxygen atom and you get water – a prerequisite for life on Earth. The same applies to introducing Estonia.

The image of Estonia is a collection of connections that are tied to our cornerstones through different values. Some connections are self-evident, like the fact that Estonia is a Nordic country or that we are located on the eastern border of the European Union. Other connections are somewhat more complicated, such as our ancient culture or our ability to adapt to constantly changing situations. None of these connections alone can depict Estonia expressively enough. It is only through the contrast between old and new, cold and hot or any other matrix that we can give a clear picture of ourselves that differs from all others. One can think of this system as a whole that helps us understand ourselves and thereby introduce ourselves to others. It is a framework that can constantly be improved. It has been created with room to develop, and only the general boundaries but not the limits of the contrasts have been defined.

If it is possible to express things in words, it is also possible to express them using colours and pictures. In order to understand the complexity of the entire system, it is important that in addition to this document, every communication professional also learn the principles of the visual identity of “Introduce Estonia”.

ESTONIA – POSITIVELY SURPRISING

