



## Indigenous Mission Project March 2010

The EBF indigenous mission project (IMP) has facilitated until now at least 100 indigenous church planters ministering in 25 different nations.

It is really encouraging that many new churches have emerged over the past years and they have become the spiritual home for a few thousands of new believers. Additionally, many more thousands of people have been exposed to the Gospel message, which would not have been otherwise possible.

### Introduction to Estonia

Estonia is one of the Baltic countries. The country is inhabited by almost 1,5 million people and nearly one third of its population lives in the capital city of Tallinn. The Estonians speak a language similar to Finnish.

The Lutheran Church is a leading denomination, the second comes the Orthodox and then the Baptist Union. There are also Roman Catholics and Pentecostals, as well as other religious minority groups.



Since Estonia regained independence in 1990, after the 50-year long Soviet dominion, people have been taking their opportunities for discovering new freedoms. It applies to sharing the gospel and church planting as well. It is reckoned though that Estonia is the most secularized nation in Eastern Europe.

### Baptist Union

The history of Baptist Union goes back to the Estonian national awakening in 1876, which came from Sweden to West Estonia. The revival spread mainly among the farmers.

In 1884 the first Estonian Baptist church was started in Haapsalu. Since then

Baptist churches were planted and multiplied across the country. The period of the Soviet occupation 1940 – 1990 seriously hampered the growth of Baptist work. Baptist activities were allowed only in church buildings and leaders were regularly interrogated by the state.

Currently the Union of Evangelical Christian and Baptist Churches of Estonia numbers about 6000 members worshipping in 83 local congregations.

### Baptist Church Planting

Several new churches have been started since 1990. The leading initiative in this particular area had two Estonian pastors: Argo and Indrek. Both are energetic

leaders with a pioneering spirit and a desire to break new grounds in ministry. 5 years ago they got a practical opportunity to carry out their vision for planting new churches.

### **Vision for church planting**

Indigenous church planter **Argo**: *"I believe that church planting is most effective way to win people to Christ. There is great need in Tallinn for another Baptist church that communicates God's eternal truth in nowadays way. The Tallinn Kalju Baptist Church, which has 120 years of tradition, agreed to send a team and offered support of prayers and finances."*



Indigenous church planter **Indrek**: *"We need to utilize effective methods of outreach, like: concerts with Gospel message, Jesus-film project (sharing Jesus-film videocassettes with a follow-up program), Alpha and Beta course, family seminars and other activities (sport, music, drama etc) that would relate to contemporary people."*

Baptist Union's mission coordinator **Agnes Böning**: *"Our Union is satisfied with the work of both church planters. We recognize that it is very difficult to plant a new church in Estonia and our own efforts are not sufficient enough so we rely on the work of the Holy Spirit. We are glad that Argo and Indrek have organized church planting teams. The two existing Estonian Baptist churches of Tallinn: Kalju and Viimsi support both teams with a lot of prayer and some finances."*

### **Church Plants after Five Years**

Indigenous church planter **Argo**: *"The congregation in Lasnamäe gathers weekly for a Bible study, fellowship and prayer. In addition to that we had Alpha course in autumn 2009. We started the course with 8 people and 5 graduated but 3 of them are preparing for baptism. Besides services there are other activities, like Kidz Club which meets every Saturday with 9 children participating (at last Christmas event there were 20 children with parents). In 2010 we plan to start youth meetings. We also plan to register our congregation in 2010."*



Indigenous church planter **Indrek**: *"The Living Stone Church consists of 14 active members. The congregation gathers every Sunday and in 2 home groups during the week. In general about 20 people participate in the services. In 2010 we are planning a baptism, celebration of the first anniversary of our church registration and a Gospel festival. Very important for us is to organize some activities for people that are not yet our members."*

Let's pray that new planted churches will continue growing and witnessing for Christ.

In Christ,  
*Daniel Trusiewicz*  
*EBF Mission Coordinator*

To help planting reproducing churches!

**To help growing healthy churches!**

**For the glory of God!**

**PS.** The IMP cooperates with the **Incarnate** – see [www.incarnate-network.eu](http://www.incarnate-network.eu) It is a grass-roots church planting and fresh expressions network throughout the U.K. and into mainland Europe. This organization promotes creation of new churches and is led by a collective of Baptist church planting practitioners. The language is English.

More IMP info - [www.ebf.org](http://www.ebf.org)

Offerings and donations should be sent to:

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