

PRESS RELEASE

Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom

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Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom welcomes you home!



Photo by Anu Vahtra

Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom welcomes all the Estonians living abroad who are visiting their homeland this summer to the new permanent exhibition 'Freedom Without Borders'.

For this occasion, Vabamu offers tours about Estonians in exile, talking about their lives across the border. The exhibition speaks of the path from occupations to freedom and consists of five parts: crimes against humanity, Estonians in the free world, life in Soviet Estonia, the restoration of independence, and freedom. Exile highlights the history of Estonians abroad by telling the story of Estonians fleeing the foreign powers. The main exhibits are the boat that was used while fleeing to Sweden in the Autumn of 1944 and the original film shown in public for the first time that recorded the journey of motor sailboat Triina.

The tours take place on 2nd and 3rd of July in both Estonian and English at Vabamu museum (Toompea 8, Tallinn). It is possible to hear stories about resilience, and survival, hope, and faith in freedom.

After the tours, the museum offers cake and coffee and invites the participants to think about thought-provoking moments of our recent history. The museum is also interested in the

visitor's own stories of exile and hopes to include those stories to our collection. Every donated story or a photograph/item is relevant to the museum's aim to preserve memories.

One-tenth of Estonians today live abroad. "It is important for us as a nation to remember the stories of those whose lives have led them to live in other countries," told Vabamu's Executive Director Keiu Telve. "This summer we invite all Estonians around the world to visit Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom to think together with us how to tell the story of Estonia through our museum. We want to give a home to each Estonian abroad inside this museum, which could become a place to meet, to commemorate and to remember," added Telve.

On the 2nd and 3rd of July, throughout both of the days (from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m.) the team of Estonian Institute of Historical Memory's oral history portal Kogu Me Lugu (translates into Collect Our Story, We're Collecting The Story, also Our Entire Story) is present at Vabamu to screen video interviews they have conducted with Estonians abroad and to create new contacts. Kogu Me Lugu's (kogumelugu.ee) mission is to collect and preserve memories of people who were repressed by the Soviet or Nazi regimes, people who escaped Estonia during the occupations of said regimes or arrived in Estonia as a result of the occupations.

Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom is the largest museum in Estonia founded on private initiative. The task of the museum is to collect, preserve, research, and introduce the recent history of Estonian. The museum was founded with the help of donations from Mrs. Olga Kistler-Ritso and opened its doors on the 1st of July 2003.

To celebrate the Jubilee Year of Estonian Song and Dance Festival and The XII Global Estonian Cultural Festival, ESTO, Vabamu Museum of Occupations and Freedom is opened longer than usual - from 30th of June until 4th of July, and from 6th of July until 7th of July the museum is opened from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. On 5th of July, the museum is exceptionally closed.

Registration to the tours is opened [HERE](#) until 30th of June.

Additional information:

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