



**ESTONIAN CHILDREN'S LITERATURE AND ILLUSTRATION TAKE THE SPOTLIGHT  
AS GUEST OF HONOUR AT BOLOGNA 2025**

Estonia is proud to be the Guest of Honour at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Bologna Children's Book Fair (BCBF) from March 31<sup>st</sup> to April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025. This milestone event is a key part of the [Year of the Estonian Book](#), which marks 500 years since the first Estonian-language book was printed. The fair's opening ceremony will be attended by President of the Republic of Estonia Alar Karis and the Minister of Culture Heidy Purga.

Estonia, with relatively small population of 1.3 million people, has a vibrant publishing industry known for high-quality literature, educational materials, and children's books. Each year, over 800 children's books in Estonian are published, including 200 original titles by Estonian authors in 2024. Unlike most countries, Estonia does not have any literary agents and with publishers only handling local rights, the international promotion relies solely on organizations like the Estonian Children's Literature Centre, the Estonian Literature Centre, and the Estonian Publishers' Association, which foster translations and global partnerships. Self-publishing is also thriving, with many authors running their own micro publishing houses.

'Estonian children's literature is dynamic, surprising, and deeply rooted in our storytelling traditions. Our illustrators are internationally recognized for their creativity and technical mastery, and our authors explore themes that resonate globally. Being the Guest of Honour at Bologna is a unique opportunity to showcase our literary heritage and create new collaborations.' – **Triin Soone, Director of the Estonian Children's Literature Centre.**

The Guest of Honour programme presents a vibrant showcase of Estonian children's literature, illustration, and publishing expertise, bringing together authors, illustrators, and industry professionals. The Estonian stand in Bologna (Hall 30, Stand E8/F5) will serve as a hub of creativity and feature nearly **100 Estonian authors and illustrators**. The programme includes:

- **Over 25 events**, including more than **10 panel discussions** on key topics in children's literature with experts from Estonia and around the world.
- **The *Hello! Tere!* exhibition** in the fair's main hall, which showcases **40 Estonian illustrators** ranging from established masters to emerging talents. The exhibition's **official opening** is on **March 31<sup>st</sup> at 5 pm** and will include a speech by the Estonian Minister of Culture Heidy Purga. **Guided exhibition tours** are on from **April 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> at 1 pm**.
- The **Estonian Stand** – a diverse display of Estonian children's literature that features award-winning authors and illustrators.
- **Author and illustrator meet-and-greets** – real chance to meet an author from a small country that has a lot to offer.

Estonia's presence at Bologna's city-wide festival **Boom! Crescere nei libri** includes the **Cittadini Creativi** exhibition at Palazzo d'Accursio (March 29<sup>th</sup>–April 13<sup>th</sup>), curated by Bianka Soe, celebrating Estonian illustration and animation in an immersive cityscape, with guided tours on March 30<sup>th</sup> and April 2<sup>nd</sup>. The programme also features illustration workshops, author readings, and a special screening of *Captain Morten & the Spider Queen* (April 1<sup>st</sup>, Cinema Modernissimo), presented by Cineteca di Bologna.

The Estonian Guest of Honour programme is organized by the [Estonian Publishers' Association](#) and the [Estonian Children's Literature Centre](#) with support from the [Estonian Ministry of Culture](#).

For full programme details, visit [estonia2025bologna.com](http://estonia2025bologna.com).

Press kit materials can be found [here](#).

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