



Annual report 2022–23

Rotary District 1420 – Rotary piirkond 1420

Rotarypiiri 1420 ry – Rotarydistrikt 1420 rf

District Governor: Urmas Kaarlep

RI President Jennifer Jones: "Imagine Rotary"

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Rotary feels great/Rotary on tore/Rotary on loistava

I really believe that Rotary is a great organization. We have many things that we can be proud of:

1. **Our members** – we have many members who care about what we are doing, care about others, care about ourselves. Already paying our annual dues is a way how to indirectly contribute to our fantastic projects. Extra proud we can be about members who want to contribute more to make club life more enjoyable and working together towards to make our world better place to be.
2. **Our young members** – Rotaractors. When I asked from Lithuanian governor what is the golden key for the Rotary membership growth, her answer was “Rotaract”. I was lucky to have a positive experience of establishing a new Rotaract club in Tallinn. I wish there will be more willingness among rotarians to make efforts to establish more clubs in our district. However, there will be ongoing challenge to keep Rotaractors involved and develop them to be new rotarians in the future.
3. **Youth exchange** – we had a bit less than 30 young people living with us for a year, learning our culture and making new friends. Youth exchange is one of our flagship programs and contributes to peace and friendship.
4. **District Conference** – we had a fantastic district conference in April in Tallinn. We had superior location, prominent presenters, flawless process management. We had more than 200 participants. We could have had even more if people would have believed more that the conference is fantastic. I wish the next conference in Estonia will have more participants. At least we showed an example of how Rotary conference can be organized.

Two countries, two cultures, four languages, one district.

After the governor year I understand that before the year I understood nothing what is going on in our Finnish area. Now I feel I understand something but very little. I do not feel that I have enough knowledge and insight to come and tell how Finnish clubs should do. Maybe I just can ask questions and say my observations. The same applies in respect of looking Estonia from Finland. It is close to impossible to understand how Rotary operates in Estonia when you apply your experience and beliefs based on Finnish Rotary. I wish in the future in our district 1420 we:

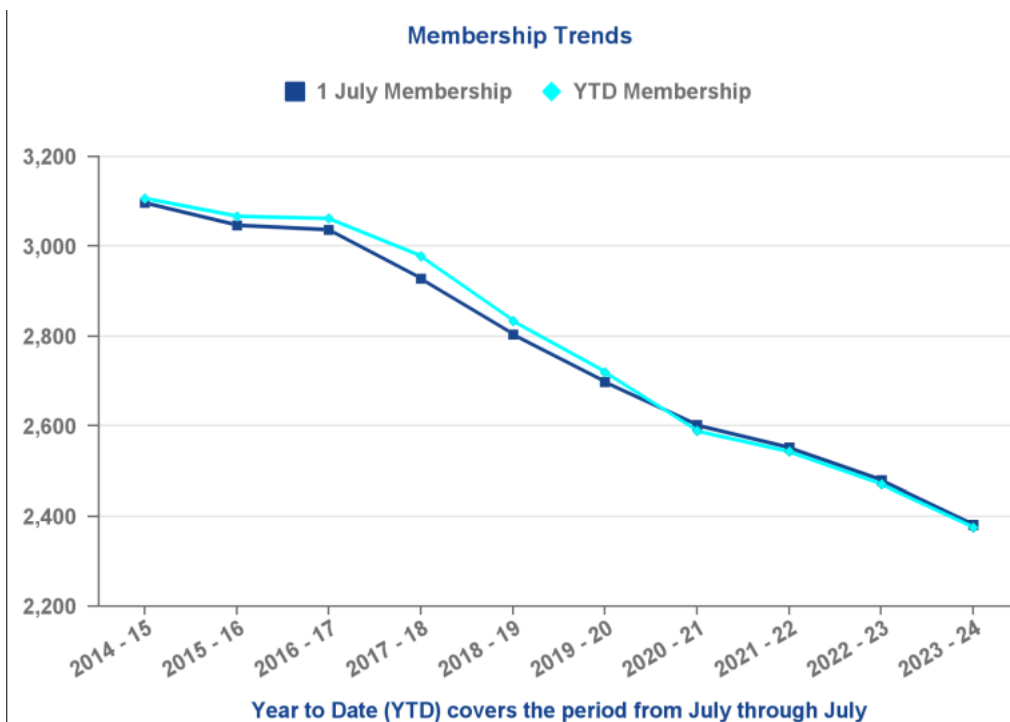
1. Have deep respect to our differences,
2. share openly our experiences,
3. find ways to cooperate, and
4. and support each other.

Financial results of our district

During previous years our results have been with some surplus. While there is no logic to collect more funds from clubs than is necessary, I prepared the budget with negative result 9750EUR. There were funds available to support clubs' activities and make efforts to establish new Rotary and Rotaract clubs. However, I did not let the district funds to be spent just because we have surplus of funds. All spending should be directed to achieving our strategic objectives. When the spending of funds of all of us was requested I asked that the purpose of the request is clear. During the year I got a request for spending funds, and it was explained that it is for increasing our membership. I started to ask who makes action to get new members, how the new members will come? Unfortunately, I got no concrete response. Finally, it turned out that it was not about getting more members but to get district support to a charitable project of some clubs. Even so the project was an excellent project and when the true story was presented to district council, the latter unanimously voted for to support the project.

As a result of tight financial control the final number at the year-end is positive – 19776.39EUR. That means we have funds available to support good project initiated by the clubs.

Some more numbers about our district



10 years ago, we had 3097 members in our district, the latest number is 2377. That means 700 members in 10 years. Last year trend is around 100 members negative.

Do we accept the situation or do we want to do something against the trend? There are developments in our societies which working against our efforts to increase membership: less people are looking for club membership, most of us are busy with everyday life, doing good for people far away from home is not as attractive than to help people around us.

However, I constantly asked the question: what we even can do? In my view the most important question in Rotary is: Is it fun? Does it feel great? If being a member in Rotary is not fun and/or it doesn't feel great, we prefer to do something else.

Role of a district.

When I agreed to be the governor I noticed that our district structure is like a Christmas tree where governor sits on the top of the tree. An element that I did not notice in our organizational chart was our clubs. It might be a reason why many of our clubs see district as a separate creation from our clubs.



I feel that a district without Rotary clubs is not a district. Without the clubs there is no district. That means in my view Rotary organization and district starts from the clubs. The clubs are most important element in our district and the governor is less important. Thus, in my view the Christmas tree should be turned upside down where our clubs are on the top and governor is on the bottom.

I would like to see the district organization consists of people who ASK-LISTEN-LEARN instead of expressing their strong views and beliefs based on their past experiences. I would like to see the district as

- Seamless addition to our Rotary clubs, not separate “animal”,
- a support team that helps and supports clubs in realizing their undertakings,
- a team that inspires Rotarians to implement RI's vision and strategy.
- a team that can understand and adapt to the changes taking place in our world and societies.

It is great to be a district governor.

Being the district governor provides several opportunities to "look in the mirror". Provided, of course, that you want it.

- Pay attention to the fear of not doing everything that is expected of you,
- Notice the frustration when the world doesn't turn the way you expect,
- Pay attention to the fear of what others think of you.

Being the governor is as hard or as easy as you make it, it certainly is not like pulling teeth. Lots of opportunities to travel, meet new people, see how Rotary contributes to society in many different ways.

If we want to live in the kind of society that we want, we will find in ourselves a willingness to participate. If we want to be a part of the kind of Rotary, we want to see Rotary, we find it within ourselves to be involved in building it. Simply criticizing what everyone else could/should do differently does not move us forward, rather it destroys our positive spirit.

Our successful future heavily depends on our desire and will to do things at least a little differently than they have been done so far.



Urmas Kaarlep

District 1420 governor 2022-2023

Appendix—the list of district level events that took place 2022-2023

2022

13.08	Board of Directors meeting, DGE lunch
26.08 – 27.08	Estonian presidents roundtable, Saaremaa
13.09 – 19.09	GETS and GONTS, Rotary Institute, Reikjavik
05.09	Board of Directors, Membership & Communications Committee joint meeting
02.10	„Silakkasoutu“ (Baltic Herring Rowing)
28.10	Board of Directors meeting
29.10	Finnish presidents and Presidents-elects seminar/meeting
29.10	District autumn meeting
11.11 – 12.11	AG training seminar (Tallinna)
12.11	Board of Directors breakfast meeting
28.11	Rotary Foundation seminar (Helsinki)
01.12	Rotary Foundation seminar (Tallinn)

2023

30.01	Governor´s Nomination Committee/Board of Directors meeting
14.02	Pre-PETS 1, zoom
21.02	Pre-PETS 2, zoom
23.02	Pre-PETS 3, zoom
28.02	Pre-PETS Estonia zoom
17.03-18.03	PETS Estonia, Pärnu
25.03	PETS Finland
27.03	Board of Directors meeting
14.03	District spring meeting (Tallinn)
15.03	Board of Directors breakfast meeting
14.03 – 16.03	District Conference, Tallinn
13.05	District Leadership Training seminar (Finland)
08.06	Board of Directors meeting and exchanges of chains