The history of Psychodrama in Estonia goes back to the 1960's when, at the university city Tartu, intellectual people gathered into "slaongs" to read Moreno and practice directing psychodrama. But, even so, the professional development of psychodrama was not established until the Estonian Psychodrama Association was founded in 1991. During the first independence days in the early 90's several psychodrama trainers, mostly from Finland and Sweden held courses and seminars in Estonia.

In 1995 two training groups started, one in Tartu and one in Tallinn. Up until now, both Tallinn and Tartu Psychodrama Institutes offer training in group-leadership, psychodrama director/certified practitioner CP and trainer TEP level. Both institutes are members of Nordic Board of Examiners in Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group psychotherapy and members of FEPTO. Psychodrama is quite well known in Estonia as an effective method in the educational, social and organizational fields. We have a good working relationship with Tallinn University, teaching group-leadership and action methods to mentors and young teachers.

Pille Isat
Tallinn Psychodrama Institute

Endel Hango
MTÜ Tartu Psühodrama Instituut

Psychodrama methods were brought to Finland in the 1950’s, first introduced at the Helsinki University Hospital psychiatric clinic in teaching and treatment. Later methods were used in A-clinics (for addicts) in Helsinki, and in some public performances in theatres. The first psychodrama courses were offered in the 1970’s, and professionals participated in short trainings in Beacon. The first psychodrama training was organized in 1977.

In the 1970’s and 1980’s psychodrama trainers Zerka Moreno and Marcia Karp were invited to give seminars once or twice each year. In the late 1980’s the first psychodrama training by Finnish trainers started. In the beginning there was one organization (Suomen psykodraamayhdistys – Finnish Psychodrama Association), which organized training. Later in the turn of the 1990’s, it was divided, and the second organization was formed in connection to Ihmissuhdetyö ry (Association of Human relations).

Psychodrama training flourished in the 1980’s and 1990’s. Martti Lindqvist was one of the main figures, and he made psycho- and sociodrama well know in Finland. There were about 5 psychodrama institutes...
offering training in different parts of the country. Today there is one major institute in Helsinki, and one which organizes training in cooperation with Helsinki Psychodrama Institute.

Psychodrama has strong connections with bibliodrama and playback theatre in Finland. In the 1980’s and 1990’s some psychodramatists became interested in these two cousins of psychodrama, and started developing them in Finland. Today, these connections still exist, especially with playback theatre.

Mrs. Riitta Hiillos-Vuorinen, one of the first Finnish psychodrama trainers was active in the 1990’s in founding NBE (Nordic Board of Examiners of Psychodrama, Sociometry and Group Psychotherapy) together with colleagues from other Nordic countries in Sweden and Norway. She and mrs. Pirkko Hurme are also founding members of FEPTO.

The focus in psychodrama training has changed during the years. In the beginning, therapeutic work and self-experience was at the core, today there is a lot of psychodrama training used in work in education and organizations. Connections to universities and research has been enhanced, and there is some academic research on psychodrama, therapy and education.

In Finland, there are:

- about 400 trained group leader (3 years studies) psychodramatists,
- about 200 trained psychodramatists and CPs (5-7 years studies) psychodramatists, and
- 12 Psychodrama trainers TEP (10-11 years of studies).
- Psychodramatist CP and Psychodrama trainer TEP are certified by NBE.

In 1999 psychodrama trainers TEP formed an association MOPSI (Association of Morenian psychodrama trainers in Finland), which is also a member of FEPTO.

Helsinki Psychodrama Institute was founded by mrs. Sirkku Aitolehti in 1992. It has been a member of the Nordic Board of Examiners since 1996 and FEPTO since 2011. Helsinki Psychodrama Institute is actively participating in an international cooperation for developing the theory and practice of psychodrama. It has coordinated international projects like Inspirational pedagogy (2013-2014, funded by Nordic Council of Ministers), and EBTS-Trainings (2017-2019, funded by Erasmus+Adult Education). It is active both in NBE and FEPTO.

In the institute, we train in psycho- and sociodrama, axiodrama and sociometry, and supervision (organizational counseling) and coaching based on these. A new field of application is working with researchers on climate change on different levels: society, communities, groups, individuals and the whole world.