EIGHTH INTERNATIONAL PRANAS STEPULIS CHAMBER FOLK INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC ENSEMBLE COMPETITION

Šiauliai, November 26–27, 2026

REGULATIONS

Objectives

- To commemorate the Year of the Kanklės through this event.
- To honor the memory of Professor Pranas Stepulis – kanklės performer, educator, scholar, and founder of the academic kanklės tradition.
- To explore the culture of folk-instrument ensemble performance characteristic of the Baltic region and neighboring countries, analyzing its essence and place within contemporary European musical culture.
- To introduce Lithuanian audiences to Lithuanian folk instrumental music and its parallels in the Baltic region and neighboring countries.
- To encourage talented folk instrumental music performers, educators, scholars, university students, and school students from Lithuania, the Baltic region, and neighboring countries to engage in productive artistic and academic collaboration.
- To foster creative initiative among school students, university students, and their teachers, and to develop young performers' artistic intellect and enjoyment of ensemble music-making.
- To promote Lithuanian folk instrumental music in Lithuania and abroad.

Organizer

Šiauliai Saulius Sondeckis Gymnasium of Arts

Participants

The competition is open to ensembles from private and public music schools, arts schools, conservatories, colleges, higher education institutions, as well as independently prepared ensembles.

The competition will be held **in person**.

Requirements

1. Categories

According to instrumental composition and participants' age, ensembles are divided into 8 groups.

1.1 Instrument Types

Ensembles are classified into:

- **Group A** – Traditional folk instrument ensembles
- **Group B** – Improved (modernized) folk instrument ensembles
- **Group C** – Mixed instrument ensembles

1.2 Group A Consists of ensembles of 2–6 performers playing traditional folk instruments.

1.3 Group B Consists of ensembles of 2–6 performers playing improved string and/or wind folk instruments.

1.4 Group C Consists of ensembles of 2–6 performers playing traditional and/or improved folk instruments together with non-folk instruments.

1.5 Ensembles in all groups may not accompany a vocalist. This condition does not apply if ensemble members sing themselves.

2. A teacher may accompany an ensemble on a supporting instrument.

3. Groups A, B, and C are divided into four age subgroups:

- **A^1, B^1, C^1** – up to and including 12 years of age
- **A^2, B^2, C^2** – 13–15 years of age
- **A^3, B^3, C^3** – 16–18 years of age
- **A^4, B^4, C^4** – 19 years of age and older

3.1 Ensembles are assigned to an age category according to the average age of participants on the day of the competition (the teacher's age does not affect category assignment).

3.2 The competition will consist of **two rounds**.

4. Programme

Round I. Ensembles perform a programme whose duration does not exceed the time limit established for their respective category.

Ensembles in the fourth age category must perform a **pre-prepared free-form composition of up to 5 minutes** based on one of the compulsory folk melodies.

For other age categories, the free-form composition is optional.

It is desirable that at least one of the remaining works performed by the ensemble be of a national/folk character.

Ensembles are requested not to use prerecorded backing tracks during their performances.

Round II. Ensembles perform one work of their choice from the Round I programme.

Performance Time Limits

Round I

Category	Maximum Duration
A^1, B^1, C^1	Up to 5 minutes

Category	Maximum Duration
A², B², C²	Up to 10 minutes
A³, B³, C³	Up to 15 minutes
A⁴, B⁴, C⁴	Up to 20 minutes

5. The programme may be performed from sheet music.

6. Competition auditions are open to the public.

7. The programme indicated in the application may not be changed.

Evaluation and Awards

1. Ensemble performances will be evaluated by an international jury.
2. The composition of the jury will be announced before the competition.
3. Jury decisions are final and cannot be appealed.
4. Competition laureates and their teachers will receive certificates of appreciation, diplomas, prizes, and monetary awards.
5. Laureates and diploma recipients will participate in the final gala concert.

Participation Conditions

1. Participation Fee

The competition fee is **€ 20 per ensemble participant** (teachers accompanying their own ensemble are exempt from the fee).

The fee must be transferred to the account of Šiauliai Saulius Sondeckis Arts Gymnasium, indicating:

"VIII Pranas Stepulis Competition Participation Fee" and the name of the ensemble.

Bank details:

- Company code: 190968866
- Account No.: LT044040063610001637
- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Lithuania
- SWIFT: MFRLLT22XXX

The participation fee must be paid no later than **October 16, 2026**.

If an ensemble does not attend the competition, the fee is non-refundable.

2. Applications

Participant application forms and ensemble photographs must be submitted electronically via:

www.sondeckis.lt/stepuliokonkursas/

Applications and photographs sent by post, email, or any other means will not be accepted.

Application data and a digital ensemble photograph must be submitted no later than **October 1, 2026**.

For questions regarding applications or competition procedures, please contact:

stepuliokonkursas@sondeckis.lt

3. Required Documents

- Copies of participants' birth certificates, passports, or identity cards (the organizers reserve the right to request copies in case of uncertainty);
- Completed application form (submitted electronically);
- Digital ensemble photograph (attached to the electronic application form).

3.1. Information Required in the Application

The application must accurately indicate:

- Name, address, telephone number, and email address of the educational institution;
- Ensemble composition (competition category);
- Names, surnames, dates of birth, class/year of study, and instruments of each participant;
- Name, surname, and academic/pedagogical qualification of the teacher or ensemble director;
- Full titles of performed works (original title and Lithuanian translation), full names of composers/authors (in the original language), and duration of each work;
- Contact address (email of the ensemble director or, if unavailable, the school).

4. The organizers reserve the right to adjust the number of participants.

5. Competition auditions and concerts may be broadcast on the internet and television without additional compensation to participants.

6. Participation in the competition constitutes acceptance of all the above-mentioned conditions.

Competition regulations, application form, themes for the compulsory improvisation, and other relevant information are available at:

www.sondeckis.lt/stepuliokonkursas/