

## 4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people

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### Existence of a National Strategy on social inclusion

There is no single document targeted to deal with social exclusion of young people, but a set of official documents integrating major directions to be followed in the organization of policymaking and implementation in relation to the social inclusion of young people at the national level.

There is a set of documents that support the development of social inclusion targeting specifically or generally also young people. Two main strategies that consider the social exclusion of children and young people are:

- the [Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020](#), approved by the Government in 2011, renewed 24 October 2013;
- the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) (approved by the Government 19. December 2013).

The youth field development plan will have a follow-up for the years 2021-2035.

### Scope and contents

Most importantly two documents set young people and their social inclusion as main objectives:

**[The Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020\)](#)** The general objective of the plan is to establish a coherent and creative society through the development and self-realization possibilities provided for young people. The sub-objectives of the Development Plan are:

1. Young people have more choices to discover their own creative and developmental potential. The planned policy measures under this objective are aimed to increase opportunities for young people to develop their creativity, show initiative and act together.
2. Young people are at lower risk to be excluded. The planned policy measures under this objective are aimed to increase the inclusion of young people and improve their employability.
3. There is more support for the participation of young people in decision-making. The planned policy measures under this objective are aimed to support the active participation of young people in community life and in decision-making.
4. The youth field operates more efficiently. The policy measures aim to ensure the development of high-quality youth policy and youth work.

The plan is aimed at all young people from 7 to 26 years old. The follow-up development plan will be confirmed by the end of 2020. Social inclusion is also brought out in the new development plan draft document ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035 eelnõu](#)).

**[The Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020](#)**. The development plan sets strategic objectives aimed at guaranteeing an improvement in the well-being of children and families and in their quality of living. This plan is the basis for improving the lives of children and families and achieving an increase in population. There are 5 strategic objectives in the plan:

1. The Estonian child and family policy is knowledge-based and uniform and supports the sustainability of society. Under this objective 1 policy measure is planned:
  1. Uniform, sustainable and need-based development of the area of children and families.
2. Estonia is a country that supports positive parenting and offers the necessary support to raising children and being a parent in order to improve the quality of living and the future of children. Under this objective 2 policy measures are planned:
  1. Promotion of attitudes that support parenting and improvement of knowledge;
  2. Development and offer of efficient services to improve parenting skills.
3. The rights of children are guaranteed and a functional child protection system is created in order to value each child and the kind of safe environment that supports the development and welfare of children. Under this objective 3 policy measures are planned:
  1. Promotion of the rights of the child.
  2. Increasing the efficiency of early intervention and the child protection system.
  3. Provision and development of efficient interventions proceeding from the needs of people.
4. Estonia has a system of combined benefits and services that supports the adequate economic coping of families and offers them permanent security. Under this objective 2 policy measures are planned:
  1. Development of a functional social protection system.
  2. Development of services to promote the independent economic coping of families.
5. Men and women have equal opportunities for reconciliation of work, family and private life in order to promote a quality everyday life that meets the needs of each family member. Under this objective 2 policy measures are planned:
  1. Creation of more equal opportunities for women and men for work, family and private life.

## 2. Development of child daycare.

The Development Plan for Children and Families defines the target group as children (i.e. persons up to 18 years old) in general, paying specific attention to disabled children, children in foster care and children as victims.

The development plan ends in 2020, no data is available whether it will have a follow-up or not.

There is a set of other policy plans that are concerned with and vital for social inclusion of young people in particular, but also with the issue of social inclusion and welfare, the needs, obstacles and opportunities for it in Estonia in general: the [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 \(Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023\)](#); the [National Health Plan 2009–2020 \(Rahvatervise arengukava 2009-2020\)](#)/ Population Health Plan 2020-2030 ([Rahvastiku tervise arengukava 2020-2030](#)); the development plan “[Integrating Estonia 2020](#)” (“[Lõimuv Eesti 2020](#)”).

### Responsible authority

The responsibility for the policy documents is defined as the following:

- [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) /Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 - [Ministry of Education and Research](#)
- [Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020](#) – [Ministry of Social Affairs](#)
- [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023](#) – [Ministry of Social Affairs](#)
- [National Health Plan 2009–2020](#) / Population Health Plan 2020-2030 – [Ministry of Social Affairs](#)
- [Integrating Estonia 2020](#) – [Ministry of Culture](#)

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policy-making and implementation. The central position in this mechanism approving the propositions to develop a policy document or to change the existing one, monitoring the implementation through approving the action plans and their reports and also monitoring the cooperation and in case of need initiating the cooperation is put on the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#). The mechanism established to monitor the implementation and the results in different policy areas (see the description in [chapter 4.3.](#)) includes yearly reports of every policy document approved by the [Government](#). The following provides the most recently published information on the results of the implementation of the main policy documents relevant to the social inclusion of young people.

### Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020

The [Ministry of Education and Research](#) has analyzed the objectives set in the development plan in December 2019 and has concluded, that the trend of indicators established to measure the results is positive. Young people are more actively participating in the opportunities offered in youth work. The availability of youth work services in regions has risen significantly. In 2018, the satisfaction of young people with youth work services was studied the first time and on average 85% of young people participating in different youth work services are very satisfied or satisfied with youth work services. The challenge is to achieve the results set in the youth field development plan as the increase of different opportunities for participation has not been fast enough.

### Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020

In the most recent report covering the year 2014, the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) has reported that one of the most important achievements has been the adoption of the new [Child Protection Act](#) in 2014 that was enforced in 1.01.2016. The report states that in 2014, in addition, several important documents were developed to support future policy measures and their implementation (such as for example “[The Concept for Improving the Support System for Children and Youth at Risk](#)”).

”). Important results have been in introducing and launching of the positive parenting program “Incredible Years”. The report states that the implementation of all actions is in the process as planned.

## **Revisions/Updates**

As there is no single document in Estonia addressing the issue of social inclusion of young people but a set of documents covering different areas, scope, and timeframes, the information about revisions and updates is provided about two most relevant documents to social inclusion of young people:

### *Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020*

At the state level, the development of the youth field is being planned for the third time. The “Estonian Youth Work Concept” and the “Estonian Youth Work Development Plan 2001-2004” were drafted in 2001, these were followed by the ‘Youth Work Strategy 2006-2013’ which was approved in 2006. What differentiates the current development plan from the previous documents is its approach to focus on goals and measures that will help to achieve positive change in the most significant challenges – the plan does not describe measures in all areas of youth work and youth policy. Also, the aims and objectives based on and formulated in accordance with youth perspective as opposed to a perspective of the sector or services used in earlier documents – the analyses and the policy objectives were about young people not about the system and services of youth work or youth policy. The development plan will have a follow-up for the years 2021-2035 that will be confirmed by the end of 2020.

### *Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020*

The first strategic plan in the area of children's rights and the protection of these rights was introduced for the period 2004-2008: “The strategy to ensure children's rights”. The area of family policy did not have a specific policy document. The Government initiated the development of a strategic document that targets policy measures directed at supporting families. However, in 2009 the decision was made to merge two policy areas into one holistic approach to children and family policy. Also, the changes were made in the structure of the Ministry of Social Affairs, where a specific Department of Child and Family Policy was created. The need to unite two policy areas was also highlighted in the final report of the “Strategy to ensure children's rights”. Besides the merge of two policy areas the current development plan is more instrumental because of the actual planning of financing the activities (the previous strategy did not have specific linkages to budgeting), more focused on the formulation of implementation activities and more directed to integrating policy measures. There is no information available whether the development plan will have a follow-up or not.