



Youth Wiki national description

Youth policies in Estonia

2021

The Youth Wiki is Europe's online encyclopaedia in the area of national youth policies. The platform is a comprehensive database of national structures, policies and actions supporting young people. For the updated version of this national description, please visit <https://national-policies.eacea.ec.europa.eu/youthwiki>

Estonia	6
1. Youth Policy Governance.....	7
1.1 Target population of youth policy	7
1.2 National youth law	8
1.3 National youth strategy.....	10
1.4 Youth policy decision-making.....	14
1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries	17
1.6 Evidence-based youth policy	20
1.7 Funding youth policy	23
1.8 Cross-border cooperation	25
1.9 Current debates and reforms	26
2. Voluntary Activities	26
2.1 General context	27
2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering	28
2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering	29
2.4 Youth volunteering at national level	30
2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes	31
2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities	33
2.7 Skills recognition.....	33
2.8 Current debates and reforms	34
3. Employment & Entrepreneurship	34
3.1 General context	35
3.2 Administration and governance	37
3.4 Career guidance and counselling	40
3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships.....	43
3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market.....	46
3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities	48
3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence	49
3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs.....	52
3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture.....	53
3.11 Current debates and reforms	55
4. Social Inclusion	55
4.1 General context	55
4.2 Administration and governance	58
4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people	59
4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people.....	61

4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness	63
4.6 Access to quality services	64
4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion	68
4.8 Current debates and reforms	71
5. Participation	71
5.1 General context	72
5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy	73
5.3 Youth representation bodies.....	75
5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making	78
5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation	81
5.6 Supporting youth organisations	84
5.7 “Learning to participate” through formal, non-formal and informal learning.....	85
5.8 Raising political awareness among young people.....	88
5.9 E-participation	90
5.10 Current debates and reforms	90
6. Education and Training.....	90
6.1 General context	91
6.2 Administration and governance	93
6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)	94
6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning	97
6.5 Cross-border learning mobility.....	98
6.6 Social inclusion through education and training.....	101
6.7 Skills for innovation	104
6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media.....	105
6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work.....	108
6.10 Current debates and reforms	109
7. Health and Well-Being.....	109
7.1 General context	109
7.2 Administration and governance	110
7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity.....	113
7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition	116
7.5 Mental health	121
7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks.....	122
7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly	125
7.8 Current debates and reforms	125
8. Creativity and Culture.....	126

8.1 General context	126
8.2 Administration and governance	130
8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people	132
8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation.....	134
8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences	137
8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture	143
8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies	145
8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture.....	147
8.10 Current debates and reforms	150
9. Youth and the World	151
9.1 General context	151
9.2 Administration and governance	152
9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues	153
9.4 Raising awareness about global issues.....	154
9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption.....	157
9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation	158
9.7 Current debates and reforms	158
10. Youth Work.....	158
10.1 General context	159
10.2 Administration and governance of youth work	160
10.3 Support to youth work	162
10.4 Quality and innovation in youth work.....	165
10.5 Youth workers	168
10.6 Recognition and validation of skills acquired through youth work.....	170
10.7 Raising awareness about youth work	171
10.8 Current debates and reforms	173
Glossary	174
References.....	175
Archive.....	192

Estonia

Youth Policy in Estonia

General Information

The youth field (youth policy and youth work) in Estonia is defined by many legal acts. According to the Youth Work Act a young person is a natural person between the ages of 7 and 26. The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 outlines the strategic goals in the field of youth. See more in Chapters [1.1.](#) and [1.3.](#)

Level of Policy-Making for Youth Policy

The institution in charge of youth is the Ministry of Education and Research and to be exact, the Department of Youth and Talent Policy (before 2020 - Youth Affairs Department). The main goals of the department are connected with developing legislation, ensuring purposefulness and consistency, planning of resources, ensuring cohesiveness, and holding a public dialogue with partners regarding the implementation of youth policy. Since 1st of August 2020, the national agency responsible for the implementation of education and youth policy, is the [Education and Youth Board](#). The institution was established on the basis of the services of [Innove Foundation](#), [Archimedes Foundation](#), [Information Technology Foundation for Education](#), and incorporated [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#).

According to the Local Government Organisation Act, the local governments have a key role in organizing the topics related to local life, including youth work. Most of the financing of youth work comes also from the budget and own income of the local municipalities. [See more in Chapter 1.4.](#)

Status of youth policy in the general policy-making

The youth policy in Estonia is well established and has been a special policy field almost since the adoption of the Youth Work Act in 1999. The term youth policy was first used in the Estonian Youth Work Concept, which was adopted in 2001.

Statistics of the target group (01.01.2021)

The age group of young people	Total	Young Men	Young Women
7-14 years	119,757	61,386	58,371
15-19 years	64,309	32,899	31,410
20-24 years	62,518	32,250	30,268
25-26 years	27,043	13,920	13,123
TOTAL	273,627	140,455	133,172

The total population of Estonia is 1 330 068 (data from 01.01.2021), the young people make up 20,57% of the whole population.

1. YOUTH POLICY GOVERNANCE

The [Youth Work Act](#) states that a young person is a natural person between 7 and 26 years of age. The [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), adopted 12.08.2021, outlines four strategic goals in the field of youth:

Strategic goal no. 1: MOMENTUM – Young people are the creative momentum driving the society onwards – the drivers and leaders in the fields of education, culture, economy, the environment and so on.

Strategic goal no. 2: PARTICIPATION – the protection of youth rights in the state is consistent and active youth participation is supported.

Strategic goal no. 3: INDEPENDENCE – quality youth work (including hobby education for young people) is available across Estonia and provides all young people with opportunities for versatile self-development, experiencing success, acquiring experience, and gaining independence.

Strategic goal no. 4: SECURITY – The exclusion and detachment of young people is noticed and prevented through a safety net that increases a sense of security.

The Ministry in charge of youth is the [Estonian Ministry of Education and Research](#). Department responsible for youth is the Department of [Youth and Talent Policy](#). Department deals with areas of youth work, hobby education, and talent policy. [Education and Youth Board](#) formed in 2020 is responsible for education and youth field operational implementation, established on the basis of the services of four former state-level institutions like [Innove Foundation](#), [Archimedes Foundation](#), [Information Technology Foundation for Education](#), and incorporated [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#).

According to the [Local Government Organisation Act](#), the local governments have a key role in organizing the local life, including youth work services. Most of the financing of youth work comes also from the budget and own income of the local municipalities. See more in [Chapter 1.4](#). According to the Youth Sector Development Plan, the state funding to youth policy and youth work for the years 2021-2035 **is 356.29 million euros**.

1.1 Target population of youth policy

Defining the target population of different public policy measures targeted to youth is based on the legislation of the Republic of Estonia. Legislative acts constitute a framework that determines and regulates the activities, programmes, services and benefits targeting young people. The youth field (youth policy and youth work) in Estonia is defined by many legal acts, but as a key legal act the [Youth Work Act](#) is considered.

The act states that a young person is a natural person between 7 and 26 years of age. The [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) considers the same age group as its target population, with some specific focuses and indicators concerning the age group 18-26. Other official documents define some more narrow age groups according to the particular field of youth policy, e.g. child welfare for minors up to the age of 18, labor market considering 15-26 years olds for (un-)employment and 18-26 years old for entrepreneurship etc.).

The list of different acts that mention young people gives an idea of what aspects of the young people's lives are regulated by:

1. [Constitution of the Republic of Estonia](#)
2. [General Part of the Civil Code Act](#)
3. [Basic Schools and Upper Secondary School Act](#)
4. [Vocational Educational Institutions Act](#)
5. [Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act](#)

6. [Universities Act](#)
7. [Private Schools Act](#)
8. [Hobby Schools Act](#)
9. [Study Allowances and Study Loans Act](#)
10. [Family Law Act](#)
11. [State Family Benefits Act](#)
12. [Commercial Code](#)
13. [Non-profit Associations Act](#)
14. [Child Protection Act](#)
15. [Military Service Act](#)
16. [Penal Code](#)
17. [Code of Criminal Procedure](#)
18. [Code of Civil Procedure](#)
19. [Imprisonment Act](#)
20. [Traffic Act](#)
21. [Employment Contracts Act](#)
22. [Labor Market Services and Benefits Act](#)
23. [Weapons Act](#)
24. [Alcohol Act](#)
25. [Tobacco Act](#)
26. [Health Insurance Act](#)
27. [Social Welfare Act](#)
28. [Local Government Organisation Act](#)
29. [Sport Act](#)

Based on the review of the acts, one could conclude that they make a difference between the following age groups:

- children from age 0 until approximately 10 years of age;
- children and young people from age 10 until mid-teens;
- children and young people from mid-teens until the age of 18;
- young adults / emerging adulthood, from age 18 until early and mid-twenties;
- young adults / emerging adulthood, onward from mid-twenties.
- Determining specific age ranges within the overall youth population (which in the case of Estonia is rather uniquely diverse, from 7 up to 26 years) might be useful for establishing stronger links between youth and other public policies but also for design of specific services.

1.2 National youth law

Existence of a National Youth Law

There are two most important acts:

- the renewed [Child Protection Act](#), which defines the principles of ensuring the rights and well-being of children in the age group of 0-18;
- the [Youth Work Act](#), which defines the age range for young people from 7-26 and the obligations of different authorities in the youth field.

As described in the previous section of the chapter, there are many different laws, which carry more or less direct relevance for young people as they define the obligations and rights of municipalities and central government towards the young people as well as entitlements, rights, duties and limitations of young people.

Therefore, in the following paragraph the main focus is on the [Youth Work Act](#) that was approved in 1999 by the Parliament and it was re-adopted in 2010.

Scope and contents

[Youth Work Act](#) provides the legal basis for the organization and financing of youth work. The Act defines the main terms used in the youth field, main institutions, organizations and forms of youth work, the principles of youth work, financing of youth work, etc. The Act provides the responsibilities regarding youth work of the Ministry of Education and Research, county governors, and local municipality. The Act defines municipal and local youth councils.

There is no description of the rights and obligations of young people in the act.

The key policy domains relevant for the youth field identified in the [Youth Work Act](#) are written in the 2nd and 3rd chapter of the act.

Revisions/updates

Youth Work Act has been adopted two times:

- Adoption in [01.04.1999](#)
- Adoption in [01.09.2010](#)

Since the last adoption the act has been revised 8 times:

- 01.01.2011 - revision on the paragraphs regarding youth camp injunctions, charges in violation of the limitation on working with youth and children (regarding the transition to new currency - euro);
- 23.12.2013 - revision on the paragraphs regarding limitation on working with youth and children;
- 01.07.2014 - revision on the paragraphs regarding youth camps' organization, tasks of the Ministry of Education and Science, tasks of the county governors, permits of youth camps and requirements to the keeper of a youth camp, qualifications of youth camp counsellors and directors, governmental supervision over youth camps;
- 01.01.2015 - revision on the paragraphs regarding the limitations on working with youth and children;
- 18.01.2016 - revision on the paragraphs regarding the permits of youth camps and project camps, recognition of the professional qualifications of a foreign country.
- 26.06.2016 - revision on the activity licences for youth project camps.
- 01.07.2017 - revision on the conditions for youth project camps and report requirement to give information regarding the number of young people in the camp through Estonian Education Information System. Also, information regarding additional financial support for hobby education and recreational education to rural municipalities and cities.
- 01.01.2018 - revision on the functions of county governments (regarding their liquidation), supervision of youth camps (done by the Ministry of Education and Research).
- 01.08.2020 - revision of the institution handling foreign qualifications (instead of Estonian Youth Work Centre there now is the [Education and Youth Board](#)).

Young people have been consulted. During the development of amendments in 2010 Estonian National Youth Council was active partner in designing the new regulations. There is a systematic approach to involving representatives of young people when amendments of the Youth Work Act are planned and discussed by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

1.3 National youth strategy

Existence of a National Youth Strategy

Estonia has a strong tradition of systematic organising the youth field based on national youth strategies already since early 2000-ies, with its Youth Work Concept followed by Youth Work Development Plan 2001-2004, Youth Work Strategy 2006-2013 and Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020.

The latest, the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) has been adopted 12.08.2021 and represents one of the specific field policy strategies under the overarching national strategy „[Estonia 2035](#)” Strategy (Strateegia „Eesti 2035”).

The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 outlines the main strategic goals in the field of youth. The main goal introduced in the development plan is to provide young people with a wide variety of development opportunities so that a sense of security and strong support for young people creates an Estonian state that the youth wishes to further.

As highlighted in the national youth strategy, the major changes in the latest national youth strategy are:

- Added description of basic principles and development framework youth field development relied and relies upon
- Call for wider and better use of public space for youth development
- Stronger call for smart youth work
- An even stronger effort to youth participation including new ambitious forms
- Development of a youth talent policy
- Systematic implementation of a youth sector monitoring and analysis system
- Stronger call for local authorities for action
- Introducing the transfer to compulsory professional qualification and call for dealing with youth worker profession using modern practices and ensuring work happiness
- Strengthening youth-oriented solutions (including support and safety networks).

In the development plan, youth work is seen as key in helping to implement activities aimed to achieve policy goals in the field of youth.

Scope and contents

The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 outlines the main strategic goals in the field of youth. The main goal introduced in the development plan is to provide young people with a wide variety of development opportunities so that a sense of security and strong support for young people creates an Estonian state that the youth wishes to further.

Furthermore, there are four strategic goals defined in the field of youth:

Strategic goal no. 1: MOMENTUM – Young people are the creative momentum driving the society onwards – the drivers and leaders in the fields of education, culture, economy, the environment and so on.

Strategic goal no. 2: PARTICIPATION – the protection of youth rights in the state is consistent and active youth participation is supported.

Strategic goal no. 3: INDEPENDENCE – quality youth work (including hobby education for young people) is available across Estonia and provides all young people with opportunities for versatile self-development, experiencing success, acquiring experience and gaining independence.

Strategic goal no. 4: SECURITY – The exclusion and detachment of young people is noticed and prevented through a safety network that increases a sense of security.

As highlighted in the national youth strategy, the major changes in the latest national youth strategy are:

- Added description of basic principles and development framework youth field development relied and relies upon
- Call for wider and better use of public space for youth development
- Stronger call for smart youth work
- An even stronger effort to youth participation including new ambitious forms
- Development of a youth talent policy
- Systematic implementation of a youth sector monitoring and analysis system
- Stronger call for local authorities for action
- Introducing the transfer to compulsory professional qualification and call for dealing with youth worker profession using modern practices and ensuring work happiness
- Strengthening youth-oriented solutions (including support and safety networks).

One of the important focuses of the national youth strategy has always been the youth participation – being defined as one of the strategic goals. When developing the latest Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035, consultations with young people and their representatives were an important part, incl. online consultations, working groups, and written consultations during the whole process. Furthermore, the strategy aims at further advancing the participation opportunities for youth by diversifying the participation formats and introducing two new measures at the highest level, like creating an advisory group at the Prime Minister's office and a youth roundtable at the President's office to give young people increased opportunities to express their opinion.

The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 also defines the underlying principles for services and policy approaches concerning youth:

- **Awareness that young people have specific needs.** Young people experience weighty transitions on their journey to independence and social maturity. They need attention and support to reduce the risk of social vulnerability and to make up for age-related limitations in political participation and representation. Young people are a consistently decreasing group in an aging society. The less there are young people, the more significant understanding, inclusion and empowerment becomes.
- **To be informed about and to understand young people.** Young people cannot be treated as a homogenous group – one must consider their age, different challenges and needs. A knowledge-based approach allows to understand the real interests, wishes and needs of young people and consider these when planning youth policies as well as for as early detection of individual cases as possible and for supporting each and every young person. The impact of each measure on young people must be consistently analysed during policymaking.
- **To ensure the autonomy of young people and the protection of their rights.** The youth sector sees the life and developmental needs of young people as an integral whole – this ensures support for young people without any prior categorisation (student, unemployed, offender, etc.). The protection of youth rights is the prerequisite of their awareness of the limitations of their rights and of their obligations.
- **To consider young people as equal partners.** Communication with young people must be based on ethical considerations and empathy. Free will and participation of young people are key factors here, as are their opportunities for communication and co-creation with peers as such activities facilitate self-discovery as well as the discovery of other people and the surrounding life.

- **To ensure meaningful active inclusion and participation of young people in weighing options, making decisions and implementing them.** Young people must have the ability to make choices, show initiative and create solutions regarding important challenges by receiving enough information, support and feedback. Young people must also have their say in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of services intended for them. This is one way to empower young people in their development into active and caring citizens.
- **To value the development and self-realisation of young people.** The approaches intended for young people facilitate development and are based on the principles of non-formal education, such as transparency, confidentiality, voluntary nature, active inclusion of participants and other democratic values. When supporting development, it is equally important to shape the future and ensure a copious development environment here and now; this includes an awareness about the direct impact of family and the environment on the development of young people. The self-development process of young people must include versatile opportunities to challenge oneself in new situations, safely experiment, make mistakes and learn from one's experience while being understood and supported on their journey.
- **To value each young person.** In relationships with young people, their human dignity and right of self-determination is respected and their special needs and requests are considered. A respectful and empowering attitude towards young people facilitates their integration and the cohesion of the society as a whole.

As for the planned period until 2035, the National Youth Strategy states that the focus should be targeted at following:

- **An integrated functioning of the youth sector.** A coordinated and purposeful activity in different areas of life that is based on the needs and challenges of young people must be systematic and consistent. Not every activity that targets and includes young people can be automatically considered as youth work and not every service intended for young people can be regarded as a youth work service. The youth sector only includes services that are youth-centred, developed and organised for young people, carry the values of the youth sector and are based on achieving synergy with other areas of activity. Achieving synergy is purposeful only when the services of the area of activity are not transformed due to cooperation and young people are not deprived of the specific impact of youth work services. Service providers have a key role in ensuring the development of youth work services. Even though all measures described in the development plan are mainly targeted for young people by the definition provided in Youth Work Act – natural persons between 7 to 26 years of age – the development plan might also include measures or activities targeted for younger or older persons, in order to prevent negative effects from transitioning as well allow more equal access to various services.
- **Quality youth work.** Quality youth work (including hobby education for young people) is a collection of public services with the purpose of providing young people with opportunities outside formal education, work and home for voluntary self-discovery and development and collective and individual action. Youth work as an area of activity that interacts with young people in diverse ways works as a bridge between different walks of life and where necessary, between young people and other public services meant for them, considering the interests and needs of young people. The quality is based on a systematic and conscious planning of activities as experiences of belonging, informal and non-formal learning and participation for the young person, from the initial introduction to indepth education. The quality is based on qualified youth workers who possess professional competences, capability to initiate and lead, professional work practices and engagement in continuous self-education via tertiary education, training courses etc.
- **International cooperation.** International cooperation supports the comprehensive development of youth work (including hobby education for young people) and youth

policy. It allows using international expertise to consistently grow the competences and retention of youth workers, to empower youth sector actors and to develop quality youth work services. Estonia's best practices in turn inspire international cooperation in the youth sector and support a mutually enriching dialogue and intercultural learning. International cooperation in the youth sector is based on the Estonian membership of the European Union, Council of Europe and on other international cooperation platforms, including bilateral and multilateral cooperation agreements.

- **Broad-based knowledge.** Knowledge in the youth sector is based on the outcomes of analyses and scientific research, practical knowhow acquired in daily work and the input and contribution of young people as the experts of their lives. A synthesis of all the above mentioned provides the necessary knowledge base to measure performance, develop policies of the subject field and achieve progress. Coordinated action is required in the areas of systematic data collection from participants of the sector, monitoring of the situation, organisation of surveys and analyses and cooperation (including with scientists) for a comprehensive monitoring and analysis system that offers information about the lives of young people and the status of provided youth services necessary for decision-making and analysis of meaningful connections for youth policy. The development of youth policy measures and services must be based on monitoring the situation of young people and analysing their needs. Decisions must be based on the best, most relevant and contemporary knowledge. Youth services must be subject to consistent collection of information, their implementation must be monitored and outcomes must be evaluated. Comprehensive and reliable knowledge must form the basis of decision-making on all levels and in all areas of the youth sector.

Responsible authority for the implementation of the Youth Strategy

The development plan is approved by the [Government of the Republic](#) after discussing the document at the [Riigikogu](#). The implementation of the development plan is coordinated by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) with all relevant ministries contributing within their scope.

The implementation of the development plan is based on inclusive management and organisation of youth policy. It is ensured that youth policy has a multidisciplinary approach and is based on understanding the real circumstances and needs of young people and the inclusion of young people. The management of the area is based on a youth sector monitoring and analysing system which ensures the efficiency, impact analysis and development monitoring of youth sector services. A consistent evaluation of a youth-centered policy development is organised in cooperation with the [Estonian National Youth Council](#).

The implementation of the development plan and relevant reporting is supported by a steering committee. In 2022 MoER decided to run joint steering committee for management of youth field development plan and education strategy. The members of the committee are: the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Environment, the Ministry of Rural Affairs, Ministry of the Interior, the Government Office, National Youth Council, Estonian Language Advisory Committee, Estonian Chamber of Disabled People, The Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities, Estonian Employers' Confederation, The Estonian Chamber of Commerce, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, Estonian Trade Union Confederation and up to 7 experts. Extra to that subcommittee on Youth Policy will be established including members from Estonian School Student Councils' Union, Federation of Estonian Student Unions, Youth associations of Estonian Defence League, The Estonian Youth Mental Health Movement, VeniVidiVici, Estonian 4H, Association of Estonian Open Youth Centers, The Estonian Association of Youth Workers, Estonian Social Enterprise Network, Statistics Estonia, Hobby education Council. The committee supports the coordinated implementation of education and youth policies, advises the minister, supports the

consideration of the connections and impact between different areas when implementing the development plan, analyses reports and evaluates progress towards the development plan's goals. The steering committee gives recommendations for the introduction, amendment and conclusion of programmes on the basis of related progress reports and provides an evaluation regarding the amendment and conclusion of the development plan. The work of the steering committee is based on the monitoring of youth sector, this including the national youth report commissioned by the Ministry of Education and Research monitoring the situation with young people and the development of the field.

Following the adoption of the national youth strategy, operational programmes are developed, with key responsibility shared between the [Estonian Ministry of Education and Research](#), Department of [Youth and Talent Policy and](#) the [Education and Youth Board](#).

Revisions/updates

The latest Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 presents the long-term vision for the strategic development of youth field and compared to previous approaches, highlights the following major changes:

- Added description of basic principles and development framework youth field development relied and relies upon
- Call for wider and better use of public space for youth development
- Stronger call for smart youth work
- An even stronger effort to youth participation including new ambitious forms
- Development of a youth talent policy
- Systematic implementation of a youth sector monitoring and analysis system
- Stronger call for local authorities for action
- Introducing the transfer to compulsory professional qualification and call for dealing with youth worker profession using modern practices and ensuring work happiness
- Strengthening youth-oriented solutions (including support and safety networks).

Further indicators and operational programmes will be developed in order to support the implementation of the National Youth Strategy.

1.4 Youth policy decision-making

Structure of Decision-making

Governmental Level

The ministry in charge of youth is the [Ministry of Education and Research](#). The department in the ministry responsible for youth is the Department of Youth and Talent Policy. Department acting in three areas: youth work, hobby education and talent policy.

Main goals of the department are as following:

- Developing legislation to ensure the appropriate legislative environment for implementing youth policy.
- Ensuring purposefulness and consistency in the implementation of youth policy.
- Planning of resources necessary for the implementation of youth policy.
- Ensuring cohesiveness of youth policy.
- Holding a public dialogue with partners to come to a social agreement on questions pertaining to youth policy.

The main tasks of the [Department of Youth and Talent Policy](#) are to ensure the design and organization of the implementation of the national youth, talent, hobby and non-formal education policy and the planning and organization of the implementation of youth work.

To succeed in achieving the goals listed above, the department carries out a range of tasks. The main task of the department is to arrange activities pertaining to youth policy and youth at the Ministry of Education and Research and to consult the Minister and other ministerial officials in youth policy and youth work-related themes.

Since 1st of August 2020, the national agency responsible for the implementation of education and youth policy, is the [Education and Youth Board](#). The institution was established on the basis of the services of [InnoVe Foundation](#), [Archimedes Foundation](#), [Information Technology Foundation for Education](#) and incorporated [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#). Starting from 01.01.2021, the [Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency](#) was joint with the [Education and Youth Board](#), and it became the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (NA for the [Erasmus+ programme](#) - cooperation regarding the financial support to youth projects from Erasmus+ programme; increasing the possibilities of international cooperation and the usage of its results; increasing the professionalization of youth workers, including through the development of level education and trainings and monitoring the competences; supporting the activities and sustainable development of the NA).

The [Ministry of Education and Research](#) implements a [strategic partnership](#) plan for policy development and implementation. Ministry sets up a call for partners in a particular policy field for implementation of strategic measures once in three years.

Local level

According to the [Local Government Organisation Act](#), the local governments have a key role in organizing the topics related to local life, including youth work. Most of the financing of youth work comes also from the budget and own income of the local municipalities.

Cooperation with other organizations

The main partners in the overall implementation of the youth policy are as following:

- the [Ministry of Culture](#) and the [Ministry of Finance](#) - cooperation regarding the new support scheme to increase the participation of young people in youth work, including hobby education and activities;
- the [Association Estonian Open Youth Centres](#) - cooperation regarding the support to open youth work centres on local level and services for NEET-youth; cooperation regarding the creation of the opportunities for youth workers to get consulting and support; cooperation regarding the support for the development of the youth information system;
- the [Ministry of Interior](#) - cooperation regarding the prevention policy and the development of civil society;
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) (labor market policy sector) and [Töötukassa](#) (Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund) - cooperation regarding labor market policy for young people, including information and early working experience, as well as work with hard-to-reach youth;
- the [Ministry of Justice](#) and the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) - cooperation regarding the development of methods to prevent, intervene and rehabilitate youth risk behaviour. See also the programme "[Children and Youth at Risk](#)";
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) (child and family policy sector) - cooperation regarding child participation, ensuring the well-being of the children, and the juvenile committees;

- the [Eesti Noorsootöötajate Kogu](#) (Association of Estonian Youth Workers) - cooperation regarding the creation of the opportunity for youth workers to get consulting and support;
- the [Estonian National Youth Council](#) - cooperation regarding the support for the sustainable development of traditional forms of youth participation in decision-making, and the development of the funding system of annual support for youth organizations;
- the [Estonian National Youth Council](#) and the [Association Estonian Open Youth Centres](#) - cooperation regarding the development and support for new possibilities for the young people's participation;
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#), the [Ministry of Interior](#), and the [Ministry of Justice](#) - cooperation regarding ensuring the compliance with the principles of the development plan in the implementation of measures in policy fields the ministries are responsible for;
- the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#) - cooperation regarding the development of e-services for youth and youth entrepreneurial spirit.

Main themes

The main themes in the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) are creativity and entrepreneurship development, social inclusion, active participation in the society and decision-making, safety of youth, quality youth policy and development of youth work. The choice of themes was based on the particular situation of the youth, youth field and the challenges in the society. All fields of priorities as defined at the EU level youth policies, are covered by the National Youth Strategy on the level of principles, horizontal topics or particular measures. Many topics are also covered by other strategies, for example, the the Vision of the Civil Society Programme 2030, the Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023, Education Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 (under adoption) etc.

The main target group for the Youth Field Development plan is according to the [Youth Work Act](#) young people aged 7-26.

The National Agency for Youth

The National Agency for Youth Policy and Youth Work is a government agency, the [Education and Youth Board](#), formed 01.08.2020, under the administration of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#). The institution was established on the basis of the services of [Innove Foundation](#), [Archimedes Foundation](#), [Information Technology Foundation for Education](#) and incorporated [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) (former National Agency for Youth Policy and Youth Work).

The [Education and Youth Board](#) has a wide range of tasks for the implementation of education and youth policy. Other tasks of the authority are as following:

- participates in the legislation process, organizes the implementation and advice within its competence and gives instructions of the obligations and rights based on the legislation;
- provides and develops study counselling services;
- creates and develops national curricula for basic, general, and vocational education, advises educational institutions on the implementation of the national curriculum and updating the curricula of educational institutions;
- organizes the preparation and distribution of study materials;
- organizes the external evaluation of the studies quality and educational institutions;
- carries out external assessments of study results, organizes international foreign language examinations, and, within the limitations of authority, issues certificates and orders and distributes forms of graduation certificates and assessment sheets;

- prepares and organizes examinations of knowledge of the Estonian Constitution and the Citizenship Act, and proficiency tests in the Estonian language;
- organizes, develops, monitors, and analyzes the services of youth field and youth work;
- advises youth work organizers on planning and organizing youth work;
- performs tasks related to the fields of hobby education and hobby activities, including analyzes the usage of the financial support and achievement of goals;
- assesses foreign qualifications enabling access to higher education and certifying higher education;
- implements the European Union Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps programs;
- acts as an innovation and competence center in the fields of education and youth;
- promotes Estonian education and youth work;
- manages and develops the information systems and technological solutions of the authority's main acting fields, creates and tests educational technological developments, and supports their usage;
- provides international data communication services to educational and research institutions;
- provides and mediates scholarships, grants, awards, and recognitions in the fields of education and youth;
- performs the functions of the chief or authorized processor of the database in the case provided by law or on the basis thereof;
- participates in the preparation of national and European level education and youth programs;
- represents the authority in court within the limits of its competence;
- performs other functions arising from legislation.

1.5 Cross-sectoral approach with other ministries

Mechanisms and actors

Mechanisms

Cross-sectoral cooperation in youth policy is subject to the overall system of policy planning and delivery in Estonia.

At the structural level the drafting and adopting of sectoral development plans and strategies, as well as implementation of them, is framed by the [State Budget Act](#).

Paragraph 19 in the [State Budget Act](#) defines the **strategic development documents** and its aspects. The strategic development documents include the **general principles of policy** (a development document which determines the vision, national objective and priorities for one or several interrelated policy areas), **sectoral development plan** (a development document which comprehensively determines the general objective and sub-objectives for one or several policy areas and the indicators providing an opportunity to measure these, and the policy instruments through which it is planned to achieve the established objectives), **development plan of the area of government** (a development document which records the contributions by a ministry and the authorities in its area of government to the achievement of the general objectives of the performance areas) and **programme** (a development document which determines the measures, indicators, activities and financing scheme targeted at the achievement of a sub-objective of a policy area). It also states that the strategic development documents shall be mutually consistent

and the constitutional institutions are not required to prepare the strategic development documents.

Paragraph 20 in the [State Budget Act](#) describes the preparation and implementation of strategic development documents and amendments thereto. All of the **general principles of policy-making** have to be approved by the Estonian parliament [Riigikogu](#) and that can happen either on its own initiative or on the proposal from the [Government](#) of the Republic. The **development plan** has to be prepared for the budget strategy period and approved by the minister. The **programme** has to be prepared in compliance with the budget strategy period and approved by the minister.

As development plans and policy programmes make claims to the state budget, all development plans are reviewed by the Ministry of Finance, which has the final word in deciding exact costs of a development plan or a programme.

The [State Budget Act](#) creates an organizational environment that implies collaboration between ministries and ministerial departments. The need to collaborate in the process of developing a sectoral development plan is stipulated also in the by-law ["Types of strategic development plans. The order of drafting, updating, implementing, evaluation and reporting on development plans"](#). The by-law clarifies the strategic documents which need to be taken into account when drafting a development plan - national development plans aimed at increasing competitiveness of Estonia and the action plan of the Government of the Republic. These documents must be taken into account in the development plans and policy programmes targeting young people.

Consistent with the [State Budget Act](#), the collaboration between ministries occurs in two contexts:

- drafting development plans and strategies;
- implementing the development plans, divided into two strands:
 - implementing policy programmes;
 - carrying out other activities.

For drafting a development plan or a strategy, the ministry responsible for a particular plan sets up a working group which has the task to lead the whole drafting process. In practical terms, this includes the exchange of information between departments and ministries using generally recognized practices of organizational work, including:

- exchange of official correspondence between ministries and offices;
- participation in working group meetings;
- expression of opinions and feedback on the draft of a development plan;
- informal exchanges of ideas.

In addition to inter-ministerial working groups, other working groups may be set up to involve other partners outside ministries.

All development plans and strategies contain a section, which explains the drafting process and gives the names and institutions that were involved in the process. Each development plan or strategy refers to a range of other strategic documents which influenced its goals and contents and to a number of representatives of other organizations who participated in drafting the document.

Extra to the mechanism stated in the [State Budget Act](#), there are many other practices of co-operation, e.g. steering committees for strategy implementation, joint programmes implementation (including operational programmes funded by EEA, Norway, and EU grants), non-formal groups and communications.

Actors

Activities for achieving goals and objectives outlined in the development plans and strategies as well as responsible institutions are described in the implementation plans (called programme) where concrete activities are linked to implementing agencies and budget.

The leading role in all implementation plans is carried by the ministry responsible for a concrete development plan, but a considerable number of activities are carried out by other ministries or by several ministries or organizations jointly. Implementation plans indicate a considerable amount of inter-ministerial collaboration.

For example, for the [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#) the cross-sectorial management approach is described in [chapter 1.3](#).

Below is a list of some activities and programmes that are implemented in collaboration between two or more ministries.

- The programme “[Youth Guarantee](#)” is a programme tackling youth unemployment which ensures that all young people under 25 – whether registered with employment services or not – get a good-quality, concrete offer within 4 months of them leaving formal education or becoming unemployed. The programme was initiated by the [European Commission](#) and in Estonia, it is implemented in the collaboration of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#). (Ministry of Social Affairs, 2016)
- Development of cross-sectoral policymaking in the youth field, in cooperation of the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#), the [Ministry of Interior](#), the [Ministry of Justice](#), and [Education and Youth Board](#) (governmental organization under the administration of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#)).
- Support to learning Estonian, cultural integration, and provision of opportunities for youth participation, social activism and also labor market services to young people in cooperation of the [Ministry of Culture](#) and the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).
- Prevention of school bullying is carried out in the collaboration of the [Ministry of Justice](#), the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), and the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#).
- Activities aimed to decrease close relationship violence are carried out in cooperation with the [Ministry of Justice](#) and the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#).
- Activities aimed to increase the internet security of children is carried out in the collaboration of the [Ministry of Justice](#), the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#), and the [Ministry of Interior](#).
- Projects supporting the development of integration among young people with different background are carried out in cooperation with the [Ministry of Culture](#).
- In 2019, the [Programme agreement of Local Development Programme with Estonia](#) was signed until 2024. The programme is operated by the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) in close cooperation with the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and [Ministry of Justice](#).

For carrying out sectoral programmes and activities, the ministries rely on organizations within their area of administrative power. For instance, inside and outside the youth field, the ministries are in close cooperation with (some examples):

- [Ministry of Interior](#):
 - [Police and Border Guard Board](#),
 - [Rescue Service Board](#).
- [Ministry of Social Affairs](#):
 - [National Institute for Health Development](#),

- [National Social Insurance Board](#).
- [Ministry of Education and Research](#):
 - [Education and Youth Board](#).
- [Ministry of Culture](#):
 - [Integration Foundation](#).

1.6 Evidence-based youth policy

Political Commitment to Evidence-Based Youth Policy

In general, the entire public administration system in Estonia uses the same framework of evidence-based policymaking. There is also a framework for evidence-based youth policy. Identification of needs for drafting and planning, implementation and evaluation of public policy measures targeting young people follows the same rules as other sectors.

Assuring the quality of legislation in Estonia is the responsibility of the [Ministry of Justice](#). The ministry has developed regulations and recommendations to support evidence-based policymaking. The evaluation of the expected impact of a legislative act constitutes the backbone of evidence-based policy processes, though this is not the only aspect that needs to be taken into account. The following documents have been adopted to support evaluation and evidence-based policymaking in general:

- [Rules for Good Legislative Practice and Legislative Drafting](#),
- a form to initiate a discussion on drafting a legislative act,
- guidelines for impact evaluation.

In the youth field, in Estonia, evidence and knowledge-based approach were implemented since the beginning. Already first [Youth Work Act](#) from 1999 declared the importance of youth research and ensured state financing for youth research. On an operational level, Estonian Youth Work Concept 2011 and the first Youth Field Development Plan 2001-2004 stressed the importance of knowledge and initiated concrete measures for development in this area in the youth field. Modern policy planning has been supported by the national youth monitoring system [Noorteseire](#) initiated in 2010. The youth monitor helps to map the situation of the young people in related policy areas to create a holistic picture of the youth. Starting from 2019, an innovative data tool called [Juhtimislauad](#) has been launched in cooperation between the [Education and Youth Board](#) (successor of the former Estonian Youth Work Centre) and the [Statistics Estonia](#) which is a governmental agency under the administration of the Ministry of Finance. The main task of the Statistics Estonia is to provide public institutions, business and research circles, international organizations and individuals with reliable and objective information on the economic, demographic, social and environmental situation and trends in Estonia. In producing statistics, the Statistics Estonia is guided by the [Official Statistics Act](#). The new youth monitoring platform [Juhtimislauad](#) provides up-to-date data on various issues and target groups related to youth work and youth policy, like youth (un-)employment, entrepreneurship, education attendance, participation etc.

The National Youth Strategy, the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035](#), highlights broad-based knowledge as one of the principles for the organisation of youth policy and youth work.

It states that knowledge in the youth sector is based on the outcomes of analyses and scientific research, practical know-how acquired in daily work, and the input and contribution of young people as the experts of their lives. A synthesis of all the above mentioned provides the necessary knowledge base to measure performance, develop policies of the subject field and achieve progress. Coordinated action is required in the areas of systematic data collection from participants of the sector, monitoring of the

situation, organisation of surveys and analyses, and cooperation (including with scientists) for a comprehensive monitoring and analysis system that offers information about the lives of young people and the status of provided youth services necessary for decision-making and analysis of meaningful connections for youth policy.

The development of youth policy measures and services must be based on monitoring the situation of young people and analysing their needs. Decisions must be based on the best, most relevant and contemporary knowledge. Youth services must be subject to consistent collection of information, their implementation must be monitored and outcomes must be evaluated. Comprehensive and reliable knowledge must form the basis of decision-making on all levels and in all areas of the youth sector.

Parts of the youth monitoring and analysis system:

- data management of the sector, i.e. data creation and collection, data availability and analysis of the status of young people and the services provided to them;
- monitoring the execution of youth services and activities; analysis of quality, outcomes and impact;
- youth sector research and development activity for the development of youth-oriented services and policies.

Cooperation between policy-making and research

Each policy field in Estonia works in its own way for the connection between policy and research in general. (e.g. institutes, studies, analysis, department of the ministry). In the context of policymaking, every ministry is responsible for carrying out research in its area of responsibility to assure that policymaking is evidence-based. In the youth field, the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and [Education and Youth Board](#) manage the youth monitoring system [Noorteseire](#) and the research-practice-decision co-operation triangle. Starting from 2019, an innovative data tool called [Juhtimislauad](#) has been launched in cooperation between the [Education and Youth Board](#) and [Statistics Estonia](#). Considering the importance of the knowledge-based approach and new ambitions in the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035](#), in this regard, management and development of the national monitoring system were moved to the Youth and Talent Policy department of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

[Education and Youth Board](#) has contracts with [Tartu University](#) and [Tallinn University](#) in order to develop new models for organizing better youth work, including the fields of participation and exclusion, and organizing youth work on the local level.

National Statistics and available data sources

National Statistics

[Education and Youth Board](#) runs a website [Noorteseire](#) (Youth Monitor). This website gives an overview of studies related to youth, and some basic demographics, health, criminal behavior, education and labor market, youth work participation, social activism and leisure time spending preferences data on young people. Most of the data presented there come from Statistics Estonia and some from other sources. The data was collected mostly annually, except for some researches that are conducted every 2 or 4 years. Since 2019, there is a new initiative called [Juhtimislauad](#), that gives an overview of the situation of young people and illustrates the data.

As a part of the youth monitoring system [Noorteseire](#), a yearbook has been annually published starting from 2009. The yearbook contains two sections:

- a statistical overview of the youth population in the country;
- an in-depth analysis or research of a specific theme.

Throughout the years the focal themes of the yearbook have been the following:

- 2009 – [Youth Monitor](#);

- 2010 – [Youth and labor market](#);
- 2011 – [Youth and youth work](#);
- 2012 – [Youth and social inclusion](#);
- 2013 – [Evaluation of the impact of youth work](#);
- 2014/2015 – [Young people with special needs and youth work](#);
- 2016 – [Non-formal and informal learning](#);
- 2018 – [Participation of young people in decision making](#);
- 2019/2020 – [The unrevealed parts of young people's lives](#).

There are plenty of data sources available under the Youth Monitor, e.g. [database of youth-related research](#), [youth work situation database](#), Youth Monitor blog, etc.

Youth reports

There are regular EU youth reports submitted to the European Commission. The Statistics Estonia issues from time to time a general overview of the situation of children and young people at the national level. There are annual reports of the [Youth Monitor](#) and [Youth Field Programme](#) which are compiled by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) in cooperation with the [Education and Youth Board](#). All reports are compiled in the first quarter of the year and published on the website of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

Other data regarding the youth population

During the last decade, the importance of the registers containing data concerning population, incl. youth, has increased significantly because the latest national population and housing census taking place in 2020/2021 being conducted entirely register-based.

Some examples of the registers and databases that contain information on young people that is relevant for assessing the situation of youth in society and for policymaking:

- Estonian Education Information System EEIS ([Eesti Hariduse Infosüsteem EHIS](#)) - a state database holding data about the education system. It covers preschool, general, vocational, higher, hobby, and adult education for students, pedagogical staff, institutions, curricula, school education certificates, and juvenile committees. The register is maintained by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#). There is another database [HaridusSilm](#) ("Eye of Education") which visualizes the information contained in EEIS.
- Social Services and Benefits Register STAR ([Sotsiaalteenuste ja -toetuste andmeregister STAR](#)) - a state database, which is used for carrying out case-based social work at the municipal level. The register is maintained by the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#).
- [Register of Employment](#) (Töötamise register) - a database of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund ([Eesti Töötukassa](#)) which contains personalized information on the employment status of every person.
- Population Register ([Rahvastikuregister](#)) - a database that unites the main personal data on Estonian citizens, citizens of the European Union who are registered residents in Estonia, and aliens who have been granted with a residence permit or right of residence in Estonia. The register is maintained and developed by the [Ministry of Interior](#).

An overview of academic research on young people can be obtained from the [Estonian Research Portal](#) and the [Youth Monitor Portal](#).

Budgetary Allocations supporting research in the youth field

There are specific budgetary allocations for research in the youth field each year (youth monitor, studies and research, development). Since the adoption of the Youth Sector

Development Plan 2021-2035 on 12.08.2021, more operational perspectives, incl. youth research and monitoring, are still to be developed (tbc).

1.7 Funding youth policy

How Youth policy is funded

There is a specific budget for youth policy and youth work development. Different policy areas and measures are funded from different sources and responsible ministries, which include:

- national budget;
- municipal budgets (municipalities are responsible for youth work, social work, formal education system, local transport, hobby education);
- private initiatives (e.g. [Kids and Youth Creativity Accelerator VIVITA](#));
- European funds (e.g. European Social Fund);
- other foreign funds (e.g. EEA Grants and Norway Grants);
- other funds.

What is funded?

The [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#) states that the funding for the youth sector for the overall implementation period, ie for the years 2021-2035 is 356, 29 million euros. The funding is aimed at covering the achievement of strategic goals as defined in the strategy, to be further specified at operational programme level (tbc). In very general terms, it could be said that the funding covers the capacity building of service providers in youth work, including training; implementing of specific measures and provision of the youth work services, analysis, and monitoring.

Since 2019 a new approach to funding of youth organisations was introduced on the state level, through so-called [strategic partnerships between organisations and the Ministry of Education and Research](#), for the period of 3 years. Strategic partnership is targeting the organisations that:

- have operated at least 3 years (or less in justified cases) and contributes to policy, legislation and strategic development (incl. participation in state level thematic working groups) of the work areas of the Ministry of Education and Research;
- or is an umbrella organisation uniting field organisations in the area of work of the Ministry of Education and Research and contributes to strategic aims of the field;
- or is an organisation that is actively working on implementation of strategic goals of education, youth, language policy and research policy areas.

Before the new period is about to be launched since 2022, evaluation of the pilot initiative has taken place to identify the needs for further changes in such partnership practice.

Financial accountability

The financial accountability for public spending is the responsibility of the Ministry responsible for the policy area. Private legal entities like youth NGOs receive public funding based on contracts and the contract includes an obligation to report both spending and results. Generally, the contracts do not include policy level indicators, however, this trend is increasing. Evaluation of the reports is mostly done in comparison to the agreements in the contract and plans usually defined in the application.

Funding from specific sources can have specific demand in terms of reporting (e.g. EU structural assistance, EEA Grants, etc. have detailed schemes of reporting and accountability).

In general, all recipients of public funding have financial accountability. Not all reporting activities have formal regulations.

According to the [Youth Work Act](#), the general state or administrative supervision of the state funding in the field of youth is the task of the Ministry of Education and Research. As the main funding of organizing youth work comes from the local municipalities, the recipients of their funding (youth associations, youth programmes, and youth projects) have to report of the usage of the funds to the municipalities by the legislation set by the municipalities themselves.

[The funding of state programmes, youth research, and youth work organizations](#) is set by the Minister of Education and Research. Each recipient of the funding will have a contract and will have to present a report (including a financial report) by the date set in the contract.

Use of EU Funds

Previously the EU and EEA funds have been used in order to support the implementation of the national youth strategy, for example for the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#), for increasing the availability of youth work services and involving young people at risk; increasing the exposure of young people to the working life; supporting services for NEETs (Young People Not in Education, Employment or Training); assessment of the quality and impact of the activities, organising trainings for people working in youth field etc.

The operational programmes for the recent Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 are under development (tbc), also there are some programmes implemented from foreign funds already before the adoption of the national youth strategy took place. For example, in 2019, the [Programme agreement of Local Development Programme with Estonia](#) was signed until 2024. The programme is operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The programme funding (excluding co-financing) amounts to €21 million and is funded through the EEA Grants (€10.6 million) and Norway Grants (€7.4 million).

The local development programme addresses challenges in Estonia related to the wellbeing of children and youth, gender-based violence, the health care system and revitalization of cultural heritage. The programme will address early school leaving, limited services and support available for vulnerable children and youth e.g. in the justice and education systems and shortage of extrajudicial alternatives to sanctions such as social and educational programmes that could hinder reoffending.

Related to the welfare of children and youth, two pre-defined projects will be supported which will establish a mediation system and develop a specialised juvenile justice approach to support the wellbeing of vulnerable children and youth. Two open calls will support projects developing models for integrated services at local level and to pilot measures to support transition of disadvantaged children and youth across school levels from education to the labour market, including smart solutions in youth work. Finally, two small grants schemes will implement and raise awareness of restorative justice measures for youth and develop and pilot career orientation programmes.

Also, the EU youth programmes, like Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps are valued as important contribution to enlarging the opportunities to youth as well as supporting the youth work capacity development and youth policy development on international scale. [Centre of Youth Programmes of Estonian Agency for Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps](#) is part of the [Education and Youth Board](#).

1.8 Cross-border cooperation

Cooperation with European countries

The [Ministry of Education and Research](#) has [cooperation agreements](#) in the youth field with the [Flemish Community in Belgium](#) (including multilateral cooperation with Latvia and Lithuania), Finland, and Ukraine. All agreements are primarily targeted at the exchange of experience between youth policymakers, youth workers, youth work organizations, and youth.

In addition, bilateral agreements in the areas of education and culture include notions that support cooperation in the youth field (e.g. with [Georgia, Moldova, Czech Republic, Canada](#) etc.).

Estonia is a member of different networks, for example, the European Youth Information and Counselling Agency - [ERYICA](#).

Estonia takes part in several youth field activities of the [Council of Europe](#). Estonia is participating in the “No Hate Speech” campaign, and the youth centers’ quality management and quality sign programme. Estonia also participates in other [Council of Europe](#) activities that the [European Steering Committee for Youth \(CDEJ\)](#) foresees to be carried out. Estonia annually contributes its share to the [European Youth Foundation](#).

Starting from 01.01.2021, the [Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency](#) was joint with the [Education and Youth Board](#), and it became the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (NA for the [Erasmus+ programme](#) - cooperation regarding the financial support to youth projects from Erasmus+ programme; increasing the possibilities of international cooperation and the usage of its results; increasing the professionalization of youth workers, including through the development of level education and trainings and monitoring the competences; supporting the activities and sustainable development of the NA). Estonia hosts a [SALTO Resource Center for Youth Participation and Information](#).

International cooperation

At the stage of implementation, an important mechanism of cross-border cooperation is the implementation of the policy programmes which have proved successful in other countries and have passed the test of being evidence-based. The list of such programmes includes:

- [„Local Development Programme“](#) (EEA and Norway);
- programme [“Veel parem mina”](#) (VEPA - *short version in Estonian*) / “Even better me” (North-America);
- programme [“Kiusamisest vaba”](#) (KIVA - *short version in Estonian*) / “KiVa Anti-Bullying Program” (Finland);
- programme [Multidimensional Family Therapy](#) (US);
- programme [SPIN](#) (UK);

In addition, Estonia is actively cooperating with many countries on specific programmes, projects and/or cooperation agreements with Germany, Georgia, Japan, Moldova and other countries.

In order to advance international cooperation, exchange of best practices and knowledge transfer, Estonian Government has launched an innovative initiative – [Education Nation](#) - to share its digital education solutions, services and best practices worldwide. In the area of non-formal education and youth examples include edtech solutions but also the youth work quality assessment model, practices of school youth work and hobby education etc.

1.9 Current debates and reforms

Estonia has implemented some major changes in relation to youth work and youth policy in recent years, primarily:

- Diverse and long-term process with debates and developments of the national youth strategy for the period 2021-2035 in synergy with the national umbrella strategy „Estonia 2035“. As result, the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) was adopted 12.08.2021.
- Forming the state level operational institution, as of 01.08.2020 the [Education and Youth Board](#). In 2019, the Ministry of Education and Research commissioned [a study](#) on the administrative agencies under the ministry, services offered and finding solutions to reorganize the services and functions. As there were numerous institutions implementing the same or similar policies, it was proposed that the institutions would be merged into one large joint agency, on the basis of the services of former [Innove Foundation](#), [Archimedes Foundation](#), [Information Technology Foundation for Education](#) and [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#).
- New initiatives were taken in the field of recognition of non-formal learning happening in youth work in the field of education. The Ministry of Education and Research initiated the project for policy reform funded through the EU Structural Reform Support Programme (SRSP). The project is called "[Supporting young people to succeed – building capacities to better integrate non-formal and formal learning in Estonia](#)". The expected outcomes of the project are as following: • the Estonian authorities are aware of policy options to achieve better integration of non-formal and formal learning, including legislation, funding schemes and modes of governance; • the authorities have co-created and validated guidelines for the integration of formal and non-formal learning together with relevant stakeholders from formal and non-formal education and local governments; • the authorities have a plan for the effective implementation of the reform.
- Talent support concept and action plan has been initiated.

As next steps, operational programmes are to be developed as follow-up of the national youth strategy (tbc), also some further developments are under attention related to public sector priorities in Estonia, such as innovation initiatives to further develop the client-centered design of services, e-services etc.

2. VOLUNTARY ACTIVITIES

Volunteering as an activity has a long history in Estonia. However, only since the turn of the millennium, has volunteering been approached in an organized way. The first national strategy on volunteering – Estonian National Development Plan for Volunteering 2007-2010 – was adopted in 2006. Since the very beginning, the [Ministry of Interior](#) has played an important role in the process of institutionalization of volunteering and civil society, as a partner to voluntary organizations and civil society. In Estonia, there is no legal definition of volunteering in general. See more in [Chapter 2.1](#).

In Estonia, no distinct governance system exists for youth volunteering. There is no legislation on youth volunteering as such, but the volunteering has been described in the fields of rescue services. The [European Solidarity Corps](#) (previous [European Voluntary Service](#)) is organized by the [Education and Youth Board](#) Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps. See more in [Chapter 2.2](#).

In 2018, a research was conducted that showed that 19% of all volunteers are young people aged 15-24 and 69% of all young people are volunteers. See more in [Chapter 2.4](#).

2.1 General context

Historical developments

Volunteering as an activity has a long history in Estonia. However, only since the turn of the millennium, has volunteering been approached in an organized way.

In Estonia, the first steps towards obtaining an evidence-based overview of volunteering were based on studies of individuals volunteering in the context of NGOs and civil society. The First National Forum of Volunteers gathered on April 25, 2003, to discuss the problems of communication between individual volunteers and organizations. It was organized by the [Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation](#), an NGO established in 1993, Tartu Volunteering Center, an NGO established in 2000 and [Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations](#), NENO, established in 1991.

The first and last national strategy on volunteering – Estonian National Development Plan for Volunteering 2007-2010 ([Eesti vabatahtliku tegevuse arengukava aastateks 2007-2010](#)) – was adopted in 2006. It followed the [Concept of Development of Civil Society in Estonia](#) which was adopted in 2002 by Estonian Parliament [Riigikogu](#).

Since the very beginning, the [Ministry of Interior](#) has played an important role in the process of institutionalization of volunteering and civil society, as a partner to voluntary organizations and civil society.

Main concepts

In Estonia, there is no legal definition of volunteering in general.

At the moment, the highest administrative level definition appears to be the one which is used in the [National Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#). The volunteering has been described on the level of laws also, for example in the rescue services. A new program for the years 2021-2024 was also approved in summer 2020, but volunteering is being addressed there in general, not specifically towards youth (although youth volunteering is also mentioned).

Volunteering is defined as the commitment of time, energy or skills, out of one's free will and without getting paid. Volunteers help others or undertake activities mainly for the public benefit and the benefit of society. Helping one's family members is not considered to be a voluntary activity.

A similar definition of voluntary activity in Estonia is provided in [ILO report](#): "activity voluntarily is undertaken without pay to help someone other than members of your household or relatives". It can be any kind of help to individuals directly or through organizations or associations, also self-initiative joint action for improving the environment of your neighborhood or community or activity for the benefit of society. The same definition, used at the end of the 1990s, is also valid today and is used in the [National Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#).

The [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#), which is the national strategic document in the field of youth, does not contain a definition of youth volunteering. However, volunteering is mentioned in three contexts:

- Youth volunteering as a way of taking part in youth work activities, which have the potential to contribute to the development of skills and personal features (p.5, 6);
- Youth volunteering as preparation for work-life, as an opportunity to obtain work experience which is especially relevant for specific youth groups (p.9);
- Youth volunteering as a way of participation in local community life and strengthening local democracy (p.9).

The new development plan for the years 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) brings out volunteering much more:

- youth volunteering is a way to encourage youth entrepreneurship, creativity and ideas;
- youth volunteering is a way to empower young people to be active citizens, to participate and contribute meaningfully to the community;
- the share of young people participating in voluntary activities is one indicator for the development plan's strategic goal no 2 (the starting and goal levels are to be defined yet);
- creating youth volunteering possibilities is a way to ensure quality youth work that is available equally in different regions.

2.2 Administration and governance of youth volunteering

Governance

In Estonia, no distinct governance system exists for youth volunteering. There is no legislation on youth volunteering as such, but the volunteering has been described in the fields of rescue services. The [European Solidarity Corps](#) (previous [European Voluntary Service](#)) is organized by the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (until 31.12.2020 the Youth in Action National Agency [Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency](#)).

Instead, two other structures are being used for this purpose. On the one hand, youth volunteering takes place within the legislative and administrative framework for volunteering in general. This aspect of youth volunteering is structured by general civil society regulations and organizational practices. On the other hand, youth volunteering takes place within youth work settings (e.g. youth organizations, youth centers, youth projects, etc.). This aspect of youth volunteering is regulated by youth work regulations and organizational practices.

Supporting and organizing youth work is the responsibility of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), more concretely the Department of Youth and Talent Policy.

Supporting and organizing the development of volunteering, in general, is the responsibility of the [Ministry of Interior](#). At the ministerial level, themes and issues related to volunteering are addressed in the [Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#). In the development plan, volunteering is seen to be an integral part of civil society and the NGO movement in the country. The new Civil Society program 2021-2024 ([Kodanikuühiskonna programm 2021-2024](#)) was approved on 10.07.2020 and it is the follow-up for the currently valid [Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#). Youth volunteering is mentioned in that document, but is not set as a specific goal, volunteering is being addressed in general.

For the period 2014-2018, the Ministry of Interior set up a collaboration agreement in the field of volunteering development with [Kodukant](#), the Estonian Village Movement. Neither this collaboration agreement nor action plan for 2016 mention anything on youth volunteering specifically. However, the list of organizations in Volunteering Network, which is comprised of 30 organizations, includes also youth or youth work organizations ([Youth in Action National Agency](#), [The Foundation Domus Dorpatensis](#), [Association of Open Youth Centres in Estonia](#), [Estonian National Youth Council](#)). Young people volunteer through these organizations as well as through other organizations, for example, [Estonian Food Bank](#), [Estonian Fund for Nature](#), [Estonian Society for the Protection of Animals](#), village movement [Kodukant](#) and others.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

As no distinct governance system for specifically youth volunteering exists, volunteering is a topic in the civil society strategic planning that is being coordinated by the [Ministry of](#)

[Interior](#). The main cross-sectoral cooperation in the field of youth volunteering is being done between the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and [Ministry of Interior](#).

The new youth field development plan for the years 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) brings the attention to youth volunteering with different activities and one youth specific indicator regarding youth volunteering.

The Civil Society Development Plan addresses mainly the cooperation between the public sector and citizens' associations. The new Civil Society programme for 2021-2024 ([Kodanikuühiskonna programm 2021-2024](#)) that is a follow-up for the currently valid development plan that ends in 2020, brings out important results that also contain youth field as an important partner. There are 3 results that are concretely connected to the Youth field program 2020-2023 (not specifically to youth volunteering, but connecting to that) are as following:

- the activities of youth work, NGOs, schools and universities are connected with civic society;
- the Community Practice program is distributed in schools all over Estonia;
- the youth participation is being developed on local level.

One more result that mentions young people:

- there are development programs for social entrepreneurship targeted to young people.

2.3 National strategy on youth volunteering

Existence of a National Strategy

There is no single strategy in Estonia on youth volunteering. Youth volunteering is addressed in the [Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#), important policy in relation to the volunteering is also defined in the area of youth work in the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) and in the new youth field development plan for the years 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)).

Scope and contents

In the [Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#), volunteering is seen as a method that supports the development of youth social-political activism and participation in society. According to the development plan, a challenge that needs to be addressed is that though young people have a good understanding of the principles of participation, it does not always translate into actual behavior. This situation has been identified as a call for ministerial action to support the development of civic activism among young people. The new youth field development plan for the years 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) brings the attention to youth volunteering with different activities and one youth specific indicator regarding youth volunteering.

Responsible authority

There is no one and only responsible authority for youth volunteering. In the field of youth, the responsibility of general development is on the [Ministry of Education and Research](#). The support for the development of civil society is the responsibility of the [Ministry of Interior](#).

Revisions/ Updates

The draft document of the youth field development plan for 2021-2035 has been sent to the Government Office for approval. The new Civil Society program 2021-2024 ([Kodanikuühiskonna programm 2021-2024](#)) was approved on 10.07.2020 and it is the follow-up for the currently valid [Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#). Youth volunteering is mentioned in that document, but is not set as a specific goal, volunteering is being addressed in general.

2.4 Youth volunteering at national level

National Programme for Youth Volunteering

There is no national programme for Youth Volunteering. The topic is mentioned the most in the new youth field development plan for the years 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)). The document brings out youth volunteering in four contexts:

- youth volunteering is a way to encourage youth entrepreneurship, creativity and ideas;
- youth volunteering is a way to empower young people to be active citizens, to participate and contribute meaningfully to the community;
- the share of young people participating in voluntary activities is one indicator for the development plan's strategic goal no 2 (the starting and goal levels are to be defined yet);
- creating youth volunteering possibilities is a way to ensure quality youth work that is available equally in different regions.

Funding

As there is no national programme for Youth Volunteering, there is also no funding description available.

Characteristics of youth volunteering

A statistical overview of volunteering in general and youth volunteering, in particular, is poor as young people constitute only a part of all volunteers. As the new development plan for youth field will dedicate one indicator to the youth volunteering, there is hope that the data will be more accurate in the future.

Compared to the previous [nationwide representative survey](#) conducted in October 2013, the share of young volunteers aged 15-24 has decreased from 22% to 19% of all volunteers in the country ([based on the survey conducted in 2018](#)). In 2018, 69% of the young people were volunteers. Young people are motivated to volunteer in order to get new knowledge, experience, and skills, and to spend their time pleasantly with friends and family. The reasons of not participating in voluntary activities are connected to the missing information regarding existing possibilities. This means that the full potential of youth volunteering is currently not being used.

Age group/year	Volunteer, aware of volunteering		Volunteer, but not aware of volunteering		Not a volunteer	
	2013	2018	2013	2018	2013	2018
15-24 years old	32%	38%	10%	32%	58%	31%
25-34 years old	22%	32%	5%	21%	73%	47%
35-49 years old	28%	29%	7%	21%	65%	50%
50-64 years old	19%	26%	4%	18%	77%	56%
65-74 years old	20%	15%	8%	16%	72%	68%

The overall awareness level of volunteering is the highest amongst young people aged 15-24. Unfortunately, the same can be said about people who volunteer, but are not aware of them being volunteers. The amount of young people aged 15-24 not being volunteers

has decreased from 58% in 2013 to 31% in 2018, which is the lowest percentage compared to other age groups.

Volunteering in youth work and volunteering with/for children ranking in the overall list of popularity of volunteering areas has decreased over years. In 2009, the percentage was 29%, in 2013 it was 23%, and in 2018 it was 19%. From the most recent volunteering experience fields, youth work has become more popular increasing from 9% in 2013 to 12% in 2018.

Support to young volunteers

The Network of Estonian Non-profit Organizations in cooperation with Estonian Youth Work Centre and the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) launched a programme “[Kogukonnapraktika](#)” (Eng. *Community practice*) in 2015. Supported by ESF and state budget the programme aimed to introduce a practical community work as part of the curricula of civic education for upper secondary level. The cooperation programme provided students with the opportunity to experience a short-term practical voluntary work period. The programme ended in 2020.

Quality Assurance (QA)

There is no single system of quality assurance/quality guidelines specific to youth volunteering. There is support for youth work quality initiated by Estonian Youth Work Centre (current [Education and Youth Board](#)) and there is a mechanism to monitor policy implementation, however, the quality of voluntary activities of young people in youth work are not specifically covered.

Target groups

As there are no regulations on youth volunteering, the target group for it is also not regulated or set. In the youth field, the target group is young people aged 7-26.

2.5 Cross-border mobility programmes

EU programmes

Several organizations are involved in cross-border volunteering networks and provide Estonian young people opportunities to volunteer abroad and foreign young people to volunteer in Estonia.

[Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps](#) implements the [European Solidarity Corps](#) (previous [European Voluntary Service](#) or EVS). Different Erasmus+ voluntary activities are also implemented by NGOs, for example:

- [Continuous Action](#) (voluntary work, international youth exchanges and training activities, etc.);
- [EstYES](#) (youth exchanges, training activities, European Solidarity Corps, and other voluntary activities, including volunteering in Estonia).

Other Programmes

Global Education Network of Young Europeans ([GLEN](#)) sends young volunteers to some African, Asian or Eastern-European countries for a three-month-long period. The programme has been running since 2003 and during this time, more than 50 volunteers have been supported. The programme is financed by the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#).

NGO [Mondo](#) has been involved in sending Estonian volunteers to different countries (most actions are supported by the Estonian state, European Commission and/or private donators), for example:

- Kenia - starting from 2018 the volunteers are being sent through the EU AID Volunteers programme;

- Ghana;
- Uganda - starting from 2018 the volunteers are being sent through the EU AID Volunteers programme;
- Afganistan;
- Burma;
- Ukraine.

According to [their report](#), in 2018, 19, and [in 2019](#), 35 humanitarian aid volunteers were on different missions in these countries. In [2020](#), 8 volunteers were on different missions despite of the spread of Covid-19.

Legal framework applying to foreign volunteers

There is a specific regulation covering conditions to enter Estonia and apply for the temporary residence permit in Estonia for youth volunteering. In general, volunteering is recognized as studies and therefore conditions that allow temporary residence permits for studying also apply in case of youth volunteering.

The [Aliens Act](#) defines specific regulations to volunteers coming to Estonia. There is an opportunity to get a residence permit on conditions similar to studies when a person is applying for the permit and has come to Estonia as a volunteer. The Act defines that a temporary residence permit for study or volunteering may be issued to an alien "for voluntary service within the framework of a youth project or program recognised by the Ministry of Education and Research". Specific requirements in the Act for voluntary service define, that a temporary residence permit for study may be granted for voluntary service under the following conditions:

- the activity of an alien in the framework of a youth project or program shall not be employed for the purposes of this Act, including that an alien shall not get remuneration for the activity;
- an institution or organisation within the framework of whose youth project or program an alien is applying for residence permit for voluntary service activities shall bear the subsistence costs of an alien during his or her residence in Estonia;
- an institution or organisation within the framework of whose youth project or program an alien is applying for residence permit for voluntary service activities has entered into an insurance contract which would cover all medical costs caused by illness or injuries of an alien and;
- a contract of voluntary service has been concluded between an alien and the institution or organisation within the framework of whose youth project or program an alien is applying for residence permit for voluntary service activities.

The contract of voluntary service entered into between an alien and the youth association for voluntary service in the framework of whose youth project or program an alien is applying for a residence permit, has to describe:

- the duties of an alien;
- the tutoring conditions related to the performance of the duties;
- working time of an alien;
- means for covering travelling, subsistence and accommodation costs and for allowances during the whole stay in Estonia and;
- the training provided to an alien for better performance of voluntary service if necessary.

2.6 Raising awareness about youth volunteering opportunities

Information providers

[Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps \(until 31.12.2020 the Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency\)](#) has been the most prominent promoter of voluntarism among young people through promoting European Voluntary Service (since 2017 the [Solidarity Corps](#)) for years covering different information channels and forms.

Information about youth volunteering opportunities is distributed via specific information channels accessed by young people interested in volunteering or other similar activities.

There is a specific portal to advertise voluntary work opportunities called [Vabatahtlike Värav](#). The portal is supported by the European Social Fund and is coordinated by Village Movement Kodukant.

Youth information website [Teeviit](#) also mediates some voluntary work opportunities and creates some itself - Teeviit has a team of volunteers, who create content for Teeviit's social media, webpage, etc. Teeviit is coordinated by the [Education and Youth Board](#).

Voluntary placements are also a part of a private portal providing information about available jobs (for example, [CV-Online](#) and [CV Keskus](#)).

Key initiatives

- National volunteer recognition event "[Notice the volunteer](#)" since 2005 and takes place usually on the International Volunteering Day and is organized by Village Movement Kodukant. The aim of the event is to recognize the people who have voluntarily contributed to the development of Estonian society and supported voluntary activities. The patron of recognition is the president of Estonia.
- [Good practices for volunteering](#) compiled by Village Movement Kodukant and it gives guidelines for good volunteering.
- The [Volunteer Friend Label](#) is a badge of quality that shows good calibre and professionalism of volunteer recruitment in organisations operating in Estonia. The labels are awarded by the Village Movement Kodukant in conjunction with the Ministry of the Interior.

2.7 Skills recognition

Policy Framework

There is no existing policy framework for skills recognition specially for volunteering activities. However, the recognition and validation of the learning and work experience, including in non-formal and informal learning environments, is been long actual in education and youth policies. There is a legal framework allowing prior learning and work experience to be recognized and validated in the formal education system. Also, for example, youth workers can obtain a qualification through a procedure of validating prior learning and work experience, including voluntary work.

Starting from 2021, there is a new Youth Field Development Plan up to 2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) that brings out ensuring that the competencies acquired in youth work are interpreted, valued, awarded, and recognised in formal education.

Existing arrangements

There are different tools for skills recognition in youth volunteering. Below are listed a few of the existing arrangements:

- **The Volunteer Pass** is a document that presents skills acquired through volunteering activities. The Pass has been developed after the examples of Youthpass and Europass. It uses the lifelong learning 8 key competences framework for presenting and analyzing competences acquired in voluntary activities. In general, the list of skills is written up by the volunteer him- or herself; it is a self-assessment exercise. The Pass is primarily used as a tool, which aids the volunteer to analyze and understand what competences he or she has acquired during a volunteering activity. Also, educational institutions, firms, and NGOs may take the information presented in a person's pass into account when selecting students or recruiting employees. However, taking the information presented in the pass is up to the organizations. There is no official system of recognition of the pass which would define the status and value of the information presented there.
- **The youth information site Teeviit** (previously called Launchpad or Stardiplats) is a tool for young people to describe their experiences obtained from formal, non-formal and informal learning. It helps the young people to compile a CV containing all relevant experiences for applying for a job.

2.8 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

Through the European Structural Funds an action "Testing of voluntary cooperation model in the welfare system and compiling cooperation model applicable all over Estonia" ("Vabatahtlike rakendamise koostöömudeli testimine hoolekandesüsteemis ja üleeestiliselt rakendatava koostöömudeli väljatöötamine") was being developed during 2018-2020. The project supported altogether 678 people and 273 volunteers contributed 21 600 hours of their time during that project. The project was commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs, funded by the European Social Fund, and implemented by the Village Movement Kodukant. The [final report](#) published in 2020 brings out suggestions of continuing this project as well in the future as it showed to be effective in many ways. The report proposed that 560 000 euros per year would be sufficient to continue the project in the future. In October 2020, it is unclear whether the project will be continued or not.

The new Civil Society program 2021-2024 ([Kodanikuühiskonna programm 2021-2024](#)) was approved on 10.07.2020 and it is the follow-up for the currently valid [Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020](#). Youth volunteering is mentioned in that document, but is not set as a specific goal, volunteering is being addressed in general.

The new youth field development plan for the years 2021-2035 ([noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) brings the attention to youth volunteering with different activities and one youth specific indicator regarding youth volunteering.

Ongoing debates

The debate of recognizing the voluntary work done by young people in the context of youth work as a valuable experience by employers and also formal education is continuously going on in Estonia.

3. EMPLOYMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

There is no single body responsible for youth employment and entrepreneurship as the domain covers several policy areas – most importantly education, youth, labour market, economic affairs - which have established a different division of tasks between different ministries responsible for policy areas and between local and central level. The main Governmental authorities relevant to youth employment and entrepreneurship:

- the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#): responsible for developing entrepreneurship and economic affairs;
- the [Ministry of Education and Research](#): responsible for youth policy and education policy;
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#): responsible for labour market policy, but also for social protection and services including child and family policy.

See more in [Chapter 3.2](#).

The guidance services are currently financed with the support of EU structural assistance, specifically ESF. The services in the education sector (which are more directly targeted to youth and which also include pedagogical counselling and other support for learning) have a dedicated budget 34 927 542 euros for the years 2014-2020. The services provided as the active labour market measures (where young people are one of the target groups among other population) have a dedicated budget 5 200 004 euros for the years 2015-2020. See more in [Chapter 3.4](#). Currently, in Estonia, apprenticeship studies are less common than traditional school-based programmes. Workplace-based study-schemes are not used widely. See more in [Chapter 3.5](#).

3.1 General context

Labour market situation in the country

The National Reform Programme "Estonia 2020" ([Konkurentsivõime kava „Eesti 2020”](#)) provides the following analyses of the main trends over the years.

Since regaining of independence in 1992, the Estonian economy has grown nearly tenfold. Estonia saw extraordinary economic growth from 2001-2007. A correction began already in 2007 when the growth rate began gradually decreasing. After the 2008-2009 crisis, the economy has grown slowly. In 2015, the real growth was slower than its potential and reached 1.1% by the first estimation. According to the evaluation of different institutions, the growth potential in Estonia is 2-3% per year. Estonia's GDP growth up to 2007 was impacted above all by changes in the number of employed people and the productivity of the workforce. According to the [Statistics Estonia](#), the GDP dropped 5.6% in the second quarter of 2020. This is probably connected to the Covid-19 pandemic and will impact the economy in the future as well.

Estonia's future demographic trends are similar to the general trends in Europe. The population decrease in the 1990s has not yet impacted the percentage of the working-age population but a noteworthy impact will become evident in the coming years. The decrease in population will take place primarily in the working-age population (15-64-year-olds); and in 20 years, according to Eurostat estimates, Estonia will have more than 100,000 fewer working-age people. To maintain the economy at the current volume, there will be an increasing need for employees each year. Current rising employment and, in the long term, the readiness of those 65 years of age and older to work should help soften the decrease in the working-age population.

Labour market policy in Estonia is formulated by the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) and delivered by the [National Unemployment Insurance Fund](#). These institutions are also responsible for evaluating labour market policies and programs. Estonia introduced the active labour market measures in 1993. A significant change in labour market protection took place in July 2009 when the new [Employment Contracts Act](#) came into force. One of the principal goals of the employment law reform was to increase labour market flexibility and improve labour mobility, most important change was the reduction in the cost of terminating an employment relationship i.e. a reduction of the notice period and the amount paid in severance payments. After the reform in labour market protection induced by the economic recession in 2008, it can be said that labour in Estonia does not enjoy a high

level of protection. On the contrary, traditional institutions of protection against labour market risks (trade unions, employment contracts law, social security transfers) are weak.

In the Welfare Development Plan ([Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023](#)) lists the following challenges in achieving and maintaining a high level of employment the compliance between the supply and demand of the workforce, and the quality of working life, which ensures sustainability and growth of competitiveness:

- insufficient qualifications, as well as limited occupational and geographical mobility;
- lack of awareness about the different aspects of working life and unequal treatment in hiring and in an employment relationship;
- wage poverty and traps of unemployment and inactivity;
- working conditions that do not consider the changes in the labour market, as well as economic changes, do not support the establishment of smart jobs and the safe movement between various forms of employment;
- changed employment relationships and the formal involvement of employees does not motivate participating in the collective shaping of working conditions.

Target groups defined in the document as groups obstacles of which are participating in the labour market need special attention are young people 15-24, elderly, residents whose native language is not Estonian (mostly Russian-speaking population), new immigrants (including beneficiaries of international protection), people, who have been looking for a job for a long time or who have been away from the labour market for a long time, people with decreased workability.

Youth employment

In Estonia, after reaching one of the highest levels of youth unemployment rate in Europe during the financial crisis (32.9% in Estonia vs 21.5% in EU-28 in 2010), the situation stabilized fast and the share of youth searching for a job is lower in comparison with most other European countries (11.1% in Estonia and 15.0% in EU in 2019) The level of youth unemployment in Estonia still remains higher compared to the prime-age population, indicating the presence of barriers for youth in entry to the labour market.

Similarly, to other European Union countries, there is a high risk of unemployment in Estonia among young people who have a lower level of education and do not have professional education. The proportion of young people who are neither in employment nor in education (the so-called NEET youngsters) has dropped almost by half in five years (in 2014, it was 11.7% of all young people, in 2019, it was 6.9%). NEET youth have less experience in employment or practical work and they are not as competitive in the labour market, but different measures have improved the situation. The obstacles for young people entering the labour market include the restrictions of labour and tax regulation and the fact that young people are at a higher risk of suffering from work accidents.

Also, youth tend to turn less to the local employment office for support in case of unemployment, for example, in 2015 only 34% of the unemployed youth (age 15-24) turned to the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, while out of the prime-age group 47% turned to the Fund.

During the economic recession 2008-2010 young people, compared older age groups, experienced a higher increase in unemployment, a decrease in working hours and decrease in wages. National Reform Programme "Estonian 2020" ([Konkurentsivõime kava „Eesti 2020“](#)) defines young people, in the transition from education to the labour market and NEET-youth as risk groups at the labour market.

Main concepts

The Welfare Development Plan ([Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023](#)) states, that employment gives people an opportunity for self-realisation and financial security and is, therefore, one of the main prerequisites for socio-economic development, and a basis for a high-quality

life. The approaches and recurrent principles of the plan arise from the principles of a social and welfare state, the framework of fundamental and social rights, and social protection principles. On the one hand, the principle of a social state is ensuring that the strengthening of the state's economic development and competitive ability takes into account the needs of different social groups. On the other hand, the adherence to the principle of a social state is a premise for the state's economic development and competitive ability, as it prevents and reduces the exclusion of parts of the population from the social and economic life. The document points out, that it is necessary to find solutions in accordance with the general shift of welfare state policies: transferring from the policy that compensates social risks and repairs their consequences, to the policy that empowers and prepares people to cope with the risks. In addition to traditional social protection, increasing people's self-sufficiency and their social and professional activity has become more and more important.

In economic affairs and entrepreneurship, the Government considers important to focus both on raising the ambition of entrepreneurs as well as on enhancing research and development activities, innovation and investments and export. In terms of employment, the focus is on bringing about the structural changes in the labour market by increasing the share of jobs creating higher added value.

Definitions in use

- Economically active population/labour force – persons who wish and are able to work (total of employed and unemployed persons).
- Economically passive/inactive population – persons who do not wish or are not able to work.
- Employed – a person who during the reference period worked and was paid as a wage earner, entrepreneur or a free-lancer; worked without direct payment in a family enterprise or on his / her own farm; was temporarily absent from work.
- Unemployed – a person who fulfils the following three conditions: he or she is without work (does not work anywhere at the moment and is not temporarily absent from work); he or she is currently (in the course of two weeks) available for work if there should be work; he or she is actively seeking work.
- Entrepreneurship – attitude based on personality, characterised by creative and innovative thinking, need for accomplishment and capability to implement thoughts and ideas
- Entrepreneurship education – education developing entrepreneurship and preparing to be an entrepreneur, that deals with the complexity of creating and developing an enterprise.

3.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The legislation is liberal and offers a lot of flexibility in agreeing on terms and conditions of employment. Regulations regarding employment and labour contracts are regulated by the [Employment Contracts Act](#). According to [Human Capital Report](#) Estonia is a success story with regard to successful human capital potential maximization, ranking 15th globally. The Estonian labour market can be described by:

- highly skilled workforce
- 86% of adults speaking at least one foreign language
- low unionisation
- simple and straightforward labour legislation

- easy hiring and job contract termination processes

The employment market policy is developed in tripartite social dialogue representing employees, employers and the Government.

There is no single body responsible for youth employment and entrepreneurship as the domain covers several policy areas – most importantly education, youth, labour market, economic affairs - which have established a different division of tasks between different ministries responsible for policy areas and between local and central level.

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonised policy-making and implementation. There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policy-making and implementation that also covers youth social inclusion. 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 granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#). The [Ministry of Finance](#) also plays a coordinating role in planning, monitoring and ensuring the division of resources of different financial instruments including the state budget, among all the policy fields.

The main Governmental authorities relevant to youth employment and entrepreneurship:

- the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#): responsible for developing entrepreneurship and economic affairs
- the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).: responsible for youth policy and education policy
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#): responsible for labour market policy, but also for social protection and services including child and family policy

Main public actors and foundations of policy fields relevant to youth employment and entrepreneurship:

- [Social Insurance Board](#), an agency of the Ministry of Social Affairs, responsible for social insurance benefits and child protection services.
- [Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund](#), a public legal entity acting in the area of the Ministry of Social Affairs and responsible for provision of labour market services, governed by the tripartite Supervisory Board composed of the representatives of the Government, employees (the Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions, the Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation) and employers (the Estonian Employers' Confederation).
- [The Education and Youth Board](#) (Harno), a government agency of the Ministry of Education and Research that deals with the implementation of Estonian education and youth policy. The joint institution was established on the basis of the services of [Foundation Innove](#), [Foundation Archimedes](#), Information Technology Foundation for Education and [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#). Harno was set up on 01.08.2020.
- [Foundation Enterprise Estonia](#), an independent body established by the government under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, which helps to carry out innovation and enterprise policy through different support schemes, counselling and training.

The main non-public actors:

- [Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#), representative of the Estonian business community, which mission is to develop entrepreneurship in Estonia;
- [Estonian Employers' Confederation](#), includes all the main industry associations and many large businesses in Estonia;
- [Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions](#), an umbrella organisation for trade unions;

- [Estonian Employees' Unions' Confederation](#), an organisation uniting different professional unions;
- [Estonian Association of Youth Centres](#), implementing youth work including activities for NEET;
- [National Youth Council](#), the umbrella organization of youth associations and youth organizations.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

There is no single body responsible for youth employment and entrepreneurship as the domain covers several policy areas – most importantly education, youth, labour market, economic affairs - which have established a different division of tasks between different ministries responsible for policy areas and between local and central level.

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonised 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 granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#). The [Ministry of Finance](#) also plays coordinating role planning, monitoring and ensuring the division of resources of different financial instruments including the state budget, among all the policy fields.

3.3 Skills forecasting

Forecasting system(s)

System of labour market monitoring and future skills forecasting OSKA

There is an ongoing initiative by the Government to develop OSKA - a system of labour market monitoring and future skills forecasting. The initiative is under the responsibility of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and the implementing agency is the [Estonian Qualifications Authority](#).

OSKA provides accurate and clear information on society's labour market opportunities and needs as well as on the existing skills at the level of individuals for developing educational choices and policies in the key sectors of Estonian society. OSKA analyses the needs for labour and skills necessary for Estonia's economic development over the next 10 years. The aim of the action is to build platforms of cooperation between employers and education providers; to analyse the development opportunities and needs of different sectors of the Estonian economy; to prepare labour market training requirements based on various activities or professions to facilitate the planning of education provision at different levels of education and by types of school as well as in the fields of retraining and in-service training.

The implementation of OSKA is overseen by the OSKA Coordination Council, which consists of the representatives of the Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Finance, the Estonian Employers' Confederation, the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Estonian Service Unions' Confederation, the Estonian Trade Union Confederation and the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. The implementation of OSKA is funded by the European Social Fund. The web-page of the initiative is [OSKA](#).

Occupational barometer

In addition, the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund launched in 16.12.2016 an initiative "[Occupational barometer](#)". The occupational barometer is a qualitative method of forecasting short-term labour demand by occupation. The estimates are compiled by the regional departments of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, which involve external experts wherever possible. Labour demand forecasts look at two indicators. Firstly, an evaluation is made of how employers' demand for labour force will change in

the next 12 months, and especially how employers' demand for specific occupations will change. Secondly, the balance between labour supply and demand after the next 12 months is evaluated.

There is a web map available that shows either changes in labour force demand within or balance between labour supply and demand after the next 12 months amongst different occupations. The results are shown on a map showing the changes or balance in different counties of Estonia.

Skills development

Bringing labour qualification into conformity with the needs of the contemporary labour market and increasing the share of people with professional education at the vocational or higher educational level, is one of the aims of the National Reform Programme "Estonia 2020" (Konkurentsivõime kava „[Eesti 2020](#)”).

In order to cater to this need and to ensure that the education system has relevant input to develop the offer and content of the formal and adult education, the coordination system OSKA was created. The implementation of the coordination system of monitoring labour needs and developing skills will facilitate the planning of the structure, volume and content of formal education, adult education system and in-service training, the development of curricula and career planning and will help employers in their efforts to develop the skills of their employees.

In addition, the described barometer launched in December 2016 by the [Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund](#) helps to raise awareness about the real links of the labour market demand and skills.

3.4 Career guidance and counselling

Career guidance and counselling services

A young person in Estonia can use the offer of guidance and counselling services as part of the education system and as part of active labour market services.

Education system service

Lifelong guidance has been practised in Estonia for years. The service has been called in different ways – the latest version being "*career services and counselling services for special educational needs*".

The national basic school (the basic compulsory education is the nine-year comprehensive school) curriculum and national upper secondary school curriculum include eight compulsory central topics (cross-curricular topic), one of them is the topic which supports pupils' career planning: "Lifelong learning and career planning". In addition, the curricula are accompanied by the syllabi of the elective subject and an elective course in careers education, which enhance the use of this possibility in the school curriculum.

In addition to the guidance opportunities provided in the framework of the curriculum, there are centres to provide the service outside the school for young people. There are 16 centralised public centres in all counties. The regional youth guidance centres, called Pathfinder centres (Rajaleidja), provide free educational counselling services, where different problems regarding a young people studying or behaviour are being addressed (that prevent their successful educational path). They also support adults, who are around that concrete young person in order to guide how to support the youngster, what kind of services the young person needs, etc. There are different specialists that work in Pathfinder centres - social pedagogue, special pedagogue, speech therapist, and a psychologist. The Pathfinder services are provided by the [Education and Youth Board](#).

The career services are provided by the Estonian [Unemployment Insurance Fund \(Töötukassa\)](#) starting from 2017. The main tasks are intermediating career information and career counselling. The main goal of the career services is to support people in thinking

through their choices in education and work life. The services are targeted to all people, including young people, job seekers, employees, parents, and retired people. There are career counsellors and career information specialists, who provide the full career service.

Labour market service

The provision of national labour market services including career information service and career counselling and the payment of labour market benefits in Estonia is organised by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund through its regional departments, which are located in every county. The legal basis of the activities of Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund is the [Unemployment Insurance Act](#), which describes the unemployment insurance system and the organization of Unemployment Insurance Fund, and the [Labour Market Services and Benefits Act](#), which contains the provisions concerning job mediation and related services. Career information is accessible through Unemployment Insurance Fund web portal and public career information rooms in the offices of Unemployment Insurance Fund are open to all, including the opportunity to take part in the workshops and receive help finding career information. Starting from 2015, career counselling in Unemployment Insurance Fund is open to all people (being previously limited to groups of the population already having problems at the labour market ie unemployed).

Unemployment Insurance Fund (Estonian PES) on their [website](#) has a self-service portal for job-seekers and employers. Job Seekers can do following: draw up a CV, look/apply for a job, receive automatic job offers, fill in job-search diary, follow-up decisions regarding registration and benefits, follow up the activities in the individual action plan, search and register for a training course, notify of getting a job, submit registration application, submit unemployment benefits applications, apply for a business start-up subsidy and follow up services and upload business reports.

In addition, there are several job search portals available for job-seekers by private providers.

There are services available through helpline by phone – one central service in labour sector is available for all introducing services and disseminating contact information; regional services within the education sector – every regional centre has publicly announced the phone. Pathfinder (rajaleidja.ee) has a central e-mail service. When a client identifies the region of origin, the relevant regional centre is responsible for the response.

Guidance services in the education system are independent of the Youth Guarantee's scheme.

Main actors

Lifelong guidance services are provided both in the public and private sector. At the national policy level, the responsibility is divided by two authorities – [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) (labour affairs). The two main public service providers in the field of lifelong guidance are [Education and Youth Board](#) in the education sector and the Unemployment Insurance Fund (Estonian PES) in the employment sector. Foundation Innove provides services in and its' guidance centres in counties (16 centres) and the Unemployment Insurance Fund has labour offices in all counties. Educational institutions are there for learners in formal education.

Lifelong guidance forums.

Co-operation, co-ordination and exchange of information within the institutional network in the fields of education, guidance, youth work and employment is essential to efficient and coherent guidance systems. Lifelong guidance forums are an important feature to bring together actors and stakeholders in partnerships. Estonian career guidance forum was established in 2008 when involved stakeholders agreed that there is a need for a common understanding and leadership, strategic thinking at the national level. The membership includes representatives from the ministries of education, labour and economy, public employment service, training institutions, employer, client and

practitioner organizations. Since 2012, the scope of the forum enlarged – special focus is on children and youth with special educational needs.

Guidance services are independent of the Youth Guarantee's scheme.

Funding

The guidance services are currently financed with the support of EU structural assistance, specifically ESF. The services in the education sector (which are more directly targeted to youth and which also include pedagogical counselling and other support for learning) have a dedicated budget 34.9 million euros for the years 2014-2020. The services provided as the active labour market measures (where young people are one of the target groups among other population) have a dedicated budget of 5.2 million euros for the years 2015-2020.

Quality assurance

The quality of guidance services is supported for both sectors (i.e. education and labour market) through activities of the [Education and Youth Board](#), which one department coordinates the guidance service for the education sector. The department coordinates cooperation, networking, research and methodological support for guidance services.

Guidance research in Estonia is procurement based i.e. there is no dedicated funding allocated for any national research units and there are several organizations including universities and private companies, which have experience in the field.

In 2006 and 2011, two major national studies were undertaken by Foundation Innove (starting from 01.08.2020 the [Education and Youth Board](#)) to build the evidence-base for career guidance. The aim of the study was to evaluate the citizens' awareness of career services and their career planning skills, analyse the availability of career services and cooperation between different stakeholders at providing career services in Estonia. In 2014, several other studies were undertaken in order to assess the field. One study was targeted to assess the long-term usefulness of the training and methodical materials and the needs of career specialists. The [results](#) showed that the training activities were generally useful, but the specialists need more methodical materials and training regarding that. Another [study](#) regarding the impact of career education in general showed that the career education was considered as a normal part of formal education, the career lessons were useful, but lots of critics were targeted to different tests that were too superficial and students need more practical approaches and methods.

There are specific indicators set to measure the results of the activities in the period 2014-2020:

- Share of students who have newly benefitted from individual career information and/or individual counselling in the third level of basic education and who are pursuing studies at the next educational level on 10 November of the calendar year following the completion of lower secondary education
- Share of small (less than 150 students) general educational schools which use ESF supported counselling services provided by regional guidance centres
- Number of children, learners and young people who have received individual educational guidance and career services
- Number of students who have received individual career information and/or counselling in the third level of basic education

The outcomes of the quality assurance activities implemented in Estonia support further development of the services and design of policy measures. As the services are currently financed by ESF, the conditions apply set for EU structural assistance.

3.5 Traineeships and apprenticeships

Official guidelines on traineeships and apprenticeships

The [Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020](#) (EÕS) foresees the development of both apprenticeships and the placement system (traineeship). The strategy foresees also an analysis of the share of traineeships in curricula on both the higher and vocational education level, according to the needs of the labor market, and respective amendments will be proposed.

Currently, in Estonia, studies based largely on apprenticeship are less common than traditional programs. Workplace-based study-schemes are not used widely. Most relevant is the issue in vocational education, where every year, some 500-600 students study in vocational education institutions under workplace study arrangements. Expanding workplace-based study form in Estonia is one of the main goals for the vocational education training system until 2020.

There is a legal definition of workplace-based studies (used as a synonym for apprenticeships) in vocational education. According to the regulation by the Minister of Education and Research about the conditions and procedure for the organization of workplace-based studies, workplace-based studies constitute a specialized form of vocational education where the ratio of practical assignments undertaken in companies or institutions encompasses at least two-thirds of the curriculum („[Töökohapõhise õppe rakendamise kord](#)”). There have been no legislative changes following the adoption of the Quality Framework for Traineeships in 2014. The student achieves the learning outcomes described in the curriculum by fulfilling working tasks at the company. The remainder of the studies will be undertaken at school. Workplace-based studies are conducted upon signing an intern contract between the school, student and employer, which stipulates the rights and obligations of parties as well as the exact details of the learning process. The employer has to recompense the student for tasks performed to the amount agreed upon in the intern contract. The agreed wages must not be less than the statutory minimum wage established by the government. In cases where the student and employee are already bound by a valid employment contract, no extra wages are paid.

Open market traineeships (practical experience offered by the companies), which are most often offered to students, but are outside the formal education curricula and therefore not controlled by the educational institution, are not regulated in Estonia. Since 1 July 2014, it is required to register any person working (or doing any activities, including as a trainee) in the premises of the employer at the [Tax and Customs Board](#). This also includes the case where there is no salary/wage provided – in this case, work has to be registered as volunteering. Conditions for active labour market policy (ALMP) measures are regulated by [Labour Market Services and Benefits Act](#). The regulations for ALMP type traineeships largely comply with the Quality Framework for Traineeships recommendations, with the exception of the proper recognition of the traineeship and transparency regarding hiring chances.

The activities to support traineeships and apprenticeships are independent of Youth Guarantee's scheme.

Promoting traineeships and apprenticeships

The Ministry of Education and Research launched a program PRÕM for the years 2015-2020 to support the development and the quality of traineeships and apprenticeships in formal education (legal base of the initiative: Regulation by the Minister of Education and Research „[Tegevuste „Praktikasüsteemi arendamine kutse- ja kõrghariduses sh õpetajakoolituse koolituspraktika” ja „Kutsehariduse maine tõstmine, töökohapõhise õppe laiendamine” \(PRÕM\) toetuse andmise tingimused](#)”, 2015). It is planned that 8 000 apprenticeship study places will be created and 6 000 apprentices will acquire a qualification in the period 2015-2020. This measure will help in reducing the share of people without professional qualification or vocational training, and a workplace-based

study form will also be more widely used in Estonia. Under the program, the following activities will be supported relevant to the issue:

- development of systems for traineeships and apprenticeships in vocational and higher education including, trainings, guidelines, best practice, etc.;
- raising awareness about the importance of practical studies incl. information dissemination materials, events, etc. in cooperation with the organization representing employers;
- monitoring and research for better traineeships and apprenticeships;
- support to cover transportation and accommodation costs for students;
- development of traineeships in teacher training;
- support to create apprenticeship study places;
- promotion of vocational education.

The implementation agency is the [Education and Youth Board](#).

There are also initiatives to highlight the importance of the traineeships and apprenticeships in education both for young people and for employers such as the special issue in a [national newspaper](#) in 2016. The Ministry of Education and Research is promoting the importance of [practical studies, especially in vocational education](#).

Recognition of learning outcomes

In Estonia, the qualifications acquired in general, vocational and higher education are described on the basis of learning outcomes (competencies). The principles of the recognition of non-formal and informal learning (recognition of prior learning and work experience; in Estonian: *varasema õpi- ja töökogemuse arvestamine* (VÕTA)) have been defined by legislation.

Qualification awarding bodies, including educational institutions and awarding bodies of vocational qualifications, prepare their procedures for the recognition of prior learning and work experience (VÕTA procedures) following these principles.

A person can have his or her prior learning and work experience (including apprenticeship and traineeship) evaluated and recognized by the designated body (VÕTA commission) of the educational institution. Educational institutions may recognize prior learning and work experience both on the completion of the curriculum and when awarding qualifications recognizing the prior learning and work experience as an ECTS and ECVET ie it is possible to obtain credits on the bases of prior learning, traineeships, and apprenticeships. Educational institutions must inform students about the conditions of and procedure for the recognition of prior learning and work experience, including the terms and cost of assessment as well as the conditions of contesting the results, and ensure that all applicants have access to the necessary information, guidance, and counseling.

The learning gained through a work-related, hobby or other daily life activities is proved by reference to or presentation of completed works, a portfolio of samples, a copy of a professional certificate, employment contract, certificate of appointment or any other documentary evidence. A similar approach is used both in vocational and higher education. In the period 2009-2013, different universities fully accepted more than 35,000 applications for the recognition of prior learning and work experience, non-formal learning (including continuous education and training), informal learning (including work experience), multi-component recognition (a combination of formal, non-formal and informal learning recognition). Students have the right to apply for prior learning and work experience to be recognized as the completion of the entire study program, except for the final thesis. The recognition of prior learning and work experience is not used on university enrolment.

In general, VÕTA in Estonia is widely used. VÕTA has made (re)entering education more flexible, enabling to take into account the knowledge and skills acquired outside formal education and providing adult learners the opportunity to combine work and studies. VÕTA enables learners to complete their studies within a shorter timeframe.

The [Vocational Educational Institutions Act](#), which entered into force in 2013, provided that persons aged 22 and above who have not completed basic education may enroll in a vocational educational institution to commence studies on the basis of a curriculum enabling the acquisition of vocational secondary education, provided that the school finds that their knowledge and skills are adequate for further studies.

In general education, the recognition of prior learning and work experience is a new phenomenon and there is no established practice.

Young people can also describe their knowledge, skills and practical experience acquired through youth work using a designated online tool [Teeviit](#) (previously known as Stardiplats). There is a growing number of registered users of the website, which was launched in 2010 by the [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) (starting from 01.08.2020 the [Education and Youth Board](#)) in order to facilitate the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired through youth work. The tool is based on self-assessment and provides young people opportunity to generate a CV based on the descriptions. The tool enables young people to send the CV to potential employers as well.

Funding

The provision of education in Estonia is generally funded by public funding (though there are private education institutions as well).

Public funding specifically targeted to support traineeships and apprenticeships is available since the launch of the program PRÕM (described above) financed with the support from ESF. The budget of the program for the years 2015-2020 is 18,500,355 euros, of which the support for placements is 12,132,900 euros.

Quality assurance

All the services initiated, developed and supported by the Government are part of the strategic planning of the relevant policy area.

The quality of traineeships and apprenticeships is supported through activities of the [Education and Youth Board](#), which coordinates the implementation of the program PRÕM (described above). The indicators set in the PRÕM program are as following:

- A number of apprenticeship placements.
- Percentage of successful graduation of those participating in workplace-based studies.
- Percentage of vocational and higher education institutions participating in the activities to develop traineeships and apprenticeships.
- A number of enterprises accepting placements.
- A number of employers recognized for achievement in the development of traineeships and apprenticeships.

Under the program also activities supporting monitoring and research are planned.

The outcomes of the quality assurance activities implemented in Estonia support further development of the services and design of policy measures.

The Ministry of Education and Research has a program to link labour market and learning more closely ([Tööturu ja õppe tihedama seostamise programm](#)) that was funded up to 2020 with 51 million euros. There are several indicators to measure the results of the program:

Activity	Indicator	2014	2015	2020
Creating OSKA system	Number of acting field councils	0	5+1	20+1
Developing of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial studies on all education levels	% of institutions using the entrepreneurial module	0	5	90
Improving the quality of vocational education	Number of accreditation of curricula of vocational and applied higher science schools	0	-	270
Improving the reputation of vocational education	The students' awareness of possibilities of vocational education - % of respondents who are well aware of studying possibilities in vocational schools	61% basic school 57% secondary school	-	70% 65%
Developing the practise system in vocational and higher education	% of educational institutions participating in the program amongst all educational institutions	0	50	80
Expanding apprenticeships	Number of people participating in apprenticeships	583	700	8000
Number of companies participating in apprenticeships programs	-	100	350	
Language studies	Number of people participated in activities	0	700	3000

3.6 Integration of young people in the labour market

Youth employment measures

Estonia does not currently have comprehensive labour market policy targeted only at youth; rather young people can apply for all available benefits and services.

Young people (starting from the age of 16) can benefit from all other public employment services provided to the registered unemployed by the [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#). The specific needs of each unemployed person are identified by the Unemployment Insurance Fund as part of an Individual Action Plan. Unemployed young people are offered personalized labour market services to support their job search.

As part of the Youth Guarantee scheme several initiatives were created, specifically targeting youth: career workshops, "[My First Job](#)" and the [Tugila](#) (Youth Prop Up) programme.

[My First Job](#) is designed to encourage the recruitment of young people, and thereby reducing youth unemployment. The service supports employers who employ young people aged 16-29,

- who have been registered as unemployed for at least four months and have not found a job, and
- who have no professional qualification (they have either primary or secondary education), and

- who do not have work experience, or is it a short-term (in the last three years worked for less than a year, or have worked in a total of fewer than two years).

The employer can receive up to 50% of the salary of the young person for 12 months. In addition, the training costs for the employer can be reimbursed for up to 2,500 euros (per young person of the YG program) during the first two years from the commencement of employment, to promote the development of the skills of the young person and increase his/her competitiveness in the labour market. An employment contract with a young person must be signed for a minimum of two years. The target outcome is that 70% of the participants are employed 6 months after having participated in the measure. The responsible body for the provision is the [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#).

[Youth Tugila](#) (Youth Prop Up) programme started at the end of 2015 under the Youth Guarantee. The aim is to support young people through youth work in order to facilitate the transition to work or back to school. The target group is 15-26-year-old NEET youth. Youth centres participating in the programme are responsible for finding NEET youth and carrying out different activities, which may last up to 6 months – during this period young people are helped to decide whether to continue studying or work. Centres help to create contacts with schools, the Unemployment Insurance Fund, career centres and employers. After participating in the programme, the contact with the young person is preserved for another 6 months to give extra help if needed. The responsible party for the provision of the programme is the [Estonian Association of Youth Centres](#).

Since 2012, the [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#) has signed 14 partnership agreements with large companies in different economic sectors. These companies in line with other cooperation activities are also willing to give young people a chance to learn skills on the job and gain (first) work experience by providing on-the-job training and organizing work-trials. In 2020, there were 5 companies that offer first work experience through the programme "My first job".

Starting in 2018, employers have the possibility to ask funding from the [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#) in order to hire minors aged 13-16. The financial support is 30% of the gross salary of the underaged person. Altogether, the total amount of funding is planned to be 3.87 million euros. The measure is financed by the European Social Fund action "Provision of labour market services to ensure better access to employment".

Flexicurity measures focusing on young people

There are currently no specific policies for young people to improve their flexibility of working arrangements and their social security net.

The only specific active labour market measure addressing the issue of flexicurity of young people is the initiative "[My First Job](#)" – a service is to reduce youth unemployment by helping young people with little or no experience and without specialized education to find work. The measure includes paying wage support to the employer (50% of the employee's wage, but not more than twice the national minimum wage, for 12 months) and remunerating the costs of training (up to 2,500 euros during two years).

Since 2017, the [Employment Contracts Act](#) was changed with the specific aim to support employment opportunities for young people under 18.

Reconciliation of private and working life for young people

There are no youth-specific policy measures to support flexibility in working time arrangements. Also, there are no youth-specific policy measures to promote gender equality in the labour market.

Funding of existing schemes/initiatives

Young people (starting from the age of 16) can benefit from all public employment services provided to the registered unemployed by the [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#), which mostly are financed by the state budget.

There are active labour market measures provided as part of different ESF programmes (including for young people), where most of the budget consists of 85% of ESF funds and 15% of the state budget. A youth-specific example - "[My First Job](#)" - service is funded 85% by ESF and 15% by the state budget. "[My First Job](#)" includes paying wage support directly to the employer (50% of the employee's wage, but not more than twice the national minimum wage, for 12 months) and remunerating the costs of training (up to 2,500 euros during two years).

- The dedicated budget for the "[My First Job](#)" for the years 2015-2020 is 18.9 million euros, the yearly budgets depend on the demand.
- [Youth Tugila](#) (Youth Prop Up) programme budget for the year 2016: 818,771 euros.

Quality assurance

There is no single system for evaluating all policy measures and initiatives to support youth employment. All the services initiated, developed and supported by the Government are part of the strategic planning of the relevant policy area i.e. the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the policies described in [chapter 3.2](#).

All the programmes and activities implemented with the support of ESF are part of the monitoring and evaluation framework: a system of evaluation (ex-ante, mid-term and final evaluation). No evaluations relating to the activities specifically supporting young people and described above have been conducted by the end of 2016.

There was an evaluation commissioned by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2015-2016 concerning the active employment policy measure "My First Job" to find out main reasons, why it is not so actively used by youth and what are the main obstacles for youth to enter the programme. The [evaluation](#) showed that one of the main reasons for not using this measure is the low knowledge of the possibilities of this activity, fear amongst employers and young people in having a long-term working contract, but also the fear of employers in hiring young people with no special education and little working experience. The report brings out that in order to help the young people most in need of help gaining working experience the criteria for the activity have to be lowered and better support for employers and youth both during entering the activity and afterwards as well. This would raise the experience gained and lower the amount of terminated contracts.

The indicators used to assess the quality of employment measures under the Youth Guarantee scheme:

- Service "My First Job" - 70% of participants are in employment 6 months after the service.
- Beginning supportive measures for the NEET youth, supporting the return of these young people to education and/or successful entry to the labour market - 55% of NEET youth (aged 15-26) who participated at the supportive measures are, in 6 months following the activities, no longer in the NEET youth status.
- Workshops introducing the labour market for young people offered by EUIF - 70% of participants (aged 15-26) in services have acquired knowledge and skills raising their employment-readiness.

3.7 Cross-border mobility in employment, entrepreneurship and vocational opportunities

Programmes and schemes for cross-border mobility

The activities to support young people work, training and entrepreneurial experience abroad is offered by the [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#) as part of [Your first EURES job](#), which is a European Union job mobility scheme to help young people find a job, traineeship or apprenticeship opportunity in another EU country, Norway or Iceland and to help

employers find qualified workforce. It aims to match hard to fill vacancies with young jobseekers and people looking for job-based trainings across Europe. Through Your first EURES job young people can get financial support for an interview trip abroad, as well as for training (e.g. language courses), recognition of qualifications and relocation expenses. Your first EURES job is opened to candidates with different levels of education and/or work experience. The budget of the Estonian input to the EU Your first EURES scheme is not available.

The [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#) is also a contact point for the EU EURES project [Drop'pin](#), which aims to help young people boost their employability and skills by connecting them with a range of opportunities across Europe. Drop'pin opportunities range from onsite, on-the-job learning to online training courses. The budget of the Estonian input to this EU Project is not available.

Legal framework

The [Employment Contracts Act](#) regulates the working conditions of young people under 18, but no specific legal framework exists for cross-border mobility of young workers, trainees/apprentices, and young professionals/entrepreneurs.

International students in Estonia do not need additional work permits to work while studying. Students who are third-country nationals (non-EU citizens) have to apply for a temporary residence permit for study at the Estonian Embassy or Consul in their home country or country of residence. Non-EU students who have been issued a residence permit for studies are also allowed to work without work permits when it does not interfere with their studies. All non-EU students can also stay in Estonia for an additional 6 months after their graduation to look for a job in Estonia and to apply for the temporary residence permit for work.

3.8 Development of entrepreneurship competence

Policy Framework

There are several policy documents combining the policy framework for entrepreneurship competence and its development:

- The "[Estonian Entrepreneurship Growth Strategy 2014-2020](#)" ([Eesti Ettevõtluse kasvustrateegia 2014-2020](#)) for developing entrepreneurship and achieving growth. The general goal of the Estonian Entrepreneurship Growth Strategy 2014–2020 is to facilitate the achievement of the umbrella objectives within the competitiveness plan "Estonia 2020" to enhance productivity and employment. The plan seeks to reach the goal where Estonian entrepreneurs earn greater income through products and services with a higher value added. To that end, entrepreneurial and innovation policy should be dealt within a single strategic framework that ensures the coherence between the policies that have, so far, stood apart at the strategic planning level, and by that ensure better performance. The strategy is being implemented by the [Ministry of Economics and Communication](#) and [Enterprise Estonia](#) and partner institutions ([Ministry of Education and Research](#), etc.), the process of implementation includes the establishment of the implementation plan and annual reporting. The target groups are potential entrepreneurs, beginning entrepreneurs and existing entrepreneurs (who are already active on the market and are searching for growth). The strategy will have a new version for the years 2021-2035 called "Estonian Science and Developmental Activities, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Development Plan 2021-2035" ([Eesti teadus- ja arendustegevuse, innovatsiooni ning ettevõtluse arengukava 2021–2035](#)).
- The [Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020](#) ([Eesti elukestva õppe strateegia](#)) includes five strategic goals, of which two are related to entrepreneurship education: change in the approach to learning (the goal is to implement an approach towards learning that supports each learner's individual and social development, learning skills, creativity and entrepreneurship in the work at all levels and in all types of education);

consistency between lifelong learning opportunities and the needs of labour market. The authority responsible for the implementation is the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), the process of implementation includes the establishment of the implementation plan and annual reporting. The target group of the strategy includes the whole population as potential students, educational institutions and organisers of education provision.

- The Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020](#)), which states the need to support young people's employability by providing opportunities to obtain work experience (including voluntary work) and better understand the world of work, paying particular attention to risk groups. Also, the ability of young people to act as a creator of the labour market needs support including support for youth initiative and implementation a variety of youth work provision for entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial spirit. The authority responsible for the implementation is the Ministry of Education and Research, the process of implementation includes the establishment of the implementation plan and annual reporting. The target group of the plan is young people in the age group 7-26, youth workers and organisers of youth work provision. The development plan will have a follow-up for the years 2021-2035 (see more in [Chapter 1.3.](#)), where one measure is specifically targeted to encouraging youth entrepreneurship, creativity and ideas.
- The 'Entrepreneurship Education Development Plan: Be Enterprising!' ([Ettevõtlusõppe Edendamise Kava](#), a cooperation agreement signed by multiple parties 7.10.2010); is a specific strategy for entrepreneurship education signed at the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry in 2010, which addressed ISCED 1-3 including school-based IVET. Its main objectives include awareness-raising of entrepreneurship education, teacher training, teaching materials, and allocation of resources. It includes a map of entrepreneurial learning outcomes across the educational levels, with a strong focus on integrating these into curricula. The target group of the plan includes educational institutions and students.

Formal learning

Entrepreneurship education is explicitly referred to in the [curricula](#) as follows:

- In ISCED 1-3, new national curricula explicitly recognise EE as a general competence and a cross-curricular objective. It is also included as the cross-curricular topic 'Civic Initiative and Entrepreneurship'
- In ISCED 2-3, it is taught in the optional separate subjects 'Entrepreneurial Studies' (ISCED 2) and 'Economic and Entrepreneurship Studies' (ISCED 3), and in the compulsory subject 'Civics and Citizenship Education' (ISCED 2-3).

Central level recommendations for teaching methods are available through the new curricula for basic schools and upper secondary schools.

Learning outcomes for EE are defined in the general part of the National Curricula for Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools as well in subject syllabi. Some examples are:

- in ISCED 1, students are expected, for example, to understand that money pays for things and is earned by working and to know how to cooperate with others;
- in ISCED 2, students are expected, for example, to have an understanding of labour market opportunities for those with different educational levels, as well as know what it means to be an owner, entrepreneur, employer, employee or unemployed person;
- in ISCED 3, students are expected, for example, to understand entrepreneurship as a career choice and understand that it is possible for them to become entrepreneurs.

There is an ongoing initiative by the Government to develop [OSKA](#) - a system of labour market monitoring and future skills forecasting (OSS). The measure is designed also to include tight networking of education and labour market stakeholders. For example, the implementation of OSKA is overseen by the [OSKA Coordination Council](#), which consists of

the representatives of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#), [Ministry of Social Affairs](#), [Ministry of Finance](#), the [Estonian Employers' Confederation](#), the [Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry](#), the Estonian Service Unions' Confederation, the [Estonian Trade Union Confederation](#) and the [Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund](#).

"[Enterprising School](#)" is an education programme, which was launched in Ida-Viru County in 2006 and focuses on the integration of business studies into the school system in order to enhance the quality of education and hence the success of young people in life. The network of "Enterprising School" has expanded into ten counties, where the programme is coordinated by the county development centres (CDCs). Application of the model "Enterprising School" helps the educational institutions:

- to integrate the learned things with real life, with no games but real things and activities;
- to do successful co-operation with parents and partners;
- to make studies more interesting;
- to make both the students and the teachers enthusiastic;
- to contribute to the local community, when completing something in reality.

The network of "Enterprising School" includes the educational establishments, who in their establishments have set the aim of education to form enterprising attitude through study assignment counting on the national curriculum.

Non-formal and informal learning

The aims and objectives of the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020](#)) include the need to support young people's employability, creativity and entrepreneurial spirit. The activities envisaged in the plan include:

- the opportunities for youth to obtain work experience (including voluntary work)
- support for young people to better understand the world of work, paying particular attention to risk groups;
- support for youth self-initiative
- implementation of a variety of youth work services to support entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial spirit of young people.

The new development plan for the years 2021-2035 brings also out the need to support young people's entrepreneurship and employment.

In order to implement the aims, the [Education and Youth Board](#) (until 01.08.2020 [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#)) is coordinating the activities to create work-shops (occupational labs), which give young people more opportunities to acquaint themselves for future occupations, supporting the provision of youth work camps, to give young people practical work experience etc.

The mini-company programme carried out by [Junior Achievement Estonia](#) is a non-formal education activity supporting the development of entrepreneurship competences.

The recognition and validation of the learning, including entrepreneurial learning, in non-formal and informal learning environments, is been an important topic in education and youth policies for a long time. There is a legal framework allowing prior learning and work experience to be recognised and validated in the formal education system (see also [chapter 3.6.](#)) The [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) highlights the non-formal environment, including awareness about the possibilities to support entrepreneurial mind-set through youth work. There are several projects and initiatives implemented in the youth field to support awareness. One of the initiatives implemented by the [Education and](#)

[Youth Board](#) to support the recognition of non-formal and informal learning by providing an instrument for young people is the project [Teeviit](#) (formerly known as Stardiplats). Teeviit is a web-based instrument for young people and youth workers to develop skills of describing learning in a non-formal and informal environment.

Educators support in entrepreneurship education

The [Ministry of Education and Research](#) launched [a programme for the years 2016-2018](#) to support the development of tools for entrepreneurship education across all the levels of formal education.

The main activities of the programme are:

- Development of the methodologies and study-instruments for entrepreneurship education including mapping the need for support, development of methods for teacher training and modules to use in schools under several subjects;
- Development of training opportunities for providers of entrepreneurship education;
- Support for entrepreneurship education in general education and vocational schools and higher education institutions and for the increased cooperation with the partners outside of schools.
- Development of competencies with regard to the entrepreneurship education, including support for research and development activities on the subject and support for self-assessment models to include the assessment of the entrepreneurship education.

Entrepreneurship education is included in all initial teacher education curricula in Estonia. The universities and other providers – [Education and Youth Board](#) (until 01.08.2020 [Foundation Innove](#)), NGO [Junior Achievement](#) (JA) Estonia and Association of Teachers of Economics – have provided programmes for all teachers in primary education, but only for teachers of social studies, economics and mathematics in general secondary education. JA Estonia and Association of Teachers of Economics have also organised Job Shadow Days for teachers.

The [Ministry of Education and Research](#) has financially supported the development of the assessment tool for the cross-curricular topic 'Civic Initiative and Entrepreneurship' at lower secondary education level, as well as workshops, summer and winter schools organised by the Association of Teachers of Social Studies and Association of Teachers of Economics. The Chamber of Commerce organises twice yearly entrepreneurial think tank meetings to support the collaboration between schools and stakeholders. The networking initiative, 'Dreams Become Reality,' encompassed organizations that contribute to the promotion of an entrepreneurial mindset, supporting different school level activities. A network of teachers from primary and secondary education has been organised by JA Estonia. They meet once a year to discuss problems and improve their skills and knowledge. In addition, Association of Teachers of Economics, which involves mainly upper secondary teachers, as well as some lower secondary teachers, works closely with JA Estonia on issues linked to entrepreneurship education.

3.9 Start-up funding for young entrepreneurs

Access to information

The county development centres are public development organizations which are located in all the counties and offer free advisory services to starting and operating enterprises, local governments, starting and operating non-profit associations and foundations. Young people have been specific target-group for these [services](#).

The information and counselling on entrepreneurship, including funding opportunities, programmes, and services devoted to the funding of start-ups is part of the guidance and counselling system for youth. Please see [chapter 3.4](#). for more detailed information.

Access to capital

Young people have access to the following capital as entrepreneurs:

- Loans meant for entrepreneurs whose business plan is not financed by a bank or who lack the self-financing required by banks in order to get a bank loan.
- State guarantee that helps, in the eyes of the bank, compensate for insufficient securities of the entrepreneur and improve the creditworthiness of the entrepreneur.
- Credit insurance that helps Estonian exporters offer long-term financing solutions to foreign purchasers. This helps entrepreneurs reduce the risks associated with foreign purchasers and their potential insolvency, as well as the political risks associated with the place of stay of purchasers.
- Venture capital (or equity investment) that is meant for entrepreneurs with high growth potential who have a novel but risky business idea that requires also experience and a network of contacts in addition to capital in order to implement it.
- **Start-up grant** – The purpose of the support is to help people with little experience in entrepreneurship to establish an enterprise that has high growth potential and capacity to internationalize.
- **Baltic Innovation fund** - Baltic Innovation Fund (BIF) is a fund of funds established by Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and the European Investment Fund (EIF) with the aim of providing entrepreneurs of Baltic States with other financing options besides bank loans thus improving access to capital.
- **Innovation voucher** - The current support measure for vouchers allows entrepreneurs in cooperation with a partner providing innovation or development services to:
 - Seek solutions to development problems enterprises are facing
 - Develop and test innovative solutions
 - Build knowledge of new technologies
 - Study issues concerning intellectual property

3.10 Promotion of entrepreneurship culture

Special events and activities

The main government-level programs to raise awareness about entrepreneurship are Entrepreneurship Awareness program and Start-up Estonia.

[Entrepreneurship Awareness program](#)

The purpose of the support scheme is to raise awareness on entrepreneurship in society, among specific target groups and support the development of established entrepreneurs. The following activities are carried out within the framework of the program:

- Advice and information is given in regional development centers
- Training in various sectors essential to entrepreneurship, e.g. management, marketing, etc.
- Events to raise awareness on entrepreneurship, e.g. entrepreneurship week and entrepreneurship days, an entrepreneurship competition
- Activities aimed at increasing the export capacity of entrepreneurs, e.g. fair visits, export consultants and creation of a contact network in foreign markets
- Activities aimed at building Estonia's reputation

Funding for this program - European Regional Development Fund.

The target group of the program:

- People who might be interested in entrepreneurship today or in the distant future and who wish to start a business
- Entrepreneurs (incl. managers of enterprises, employees and owners).
- Organizations related to entrepreneurship.
- Present and future investors.
- Other legal or natural persons who promote entrepreneurship and contribute to the development of entrepreneurship.

[Start-up Estonia program](#)

Start-up Estonia is a program for developing an ecosystem of start-ups aimed at increasing the potential for entrepreneurship in people. The program contributes to developing a financing model for start-ups that would help them become successful. The initial Start-up Estonia program was launched by the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#) in 2011. The aim of the program is to improve the business environment for start-ups and increase the development of innovative products and services. Two types of activities are supported within the framework of the program:

- Training and development programs introduced in pre-start-up stages:
 - Programs for developing start-up skills and knowledge
 - Programs for establishing start-ups and achieving investor readiness
- Support of accelerators in start-up stages

The program took effect in July 2015 and has been implemented since autumn 2015.

Annually the entrepreneurship week is organized all over Estonia by the initiative of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. During the week different conferences, work-groups and trades are organized in Estonian counties. Every spring national "Entrepreneur of the year" gala is held, where entrepreneurs are awarded in various categories.

In addition, there are TV-shows created supported by public funding such as [Kapital](#), [Ajujaht](#), [Kapist Välja](#), etc. to raise awareness about entrepreneurship by showing different steps and phases of entrepreneurship.

Networks and partnerships

There is a long tradition of cooperation between major governmental and non-governmental (especially organizations representing employers) stakeholders to support entrepreneurship in Estonia. However, few of them are specifically targeting entrepreneurship of young people and those have been named in [chapter 3.9](#).

One of the most prominent promoters of entrepreneurship culture among young people has been the Foundation [Junior Achievement Estonia](#), established in 1994, which aims to develop the entrepreneurial spirit in young people by giving them the ability to think economically, but also ethically. JA Estonia main activities include:

- Preparation of training materials
- Training of economics and business teachers.
- Organizing student activities.
- Sending students and teachers to competitions, conferences and other educational events.
- Raising public awareness of the need for entrepreneurship education.

There are currently no specific initiatives to support partnerships focusing on young people.

3.11 Current debates and reforms

There are no current debates or reform on the topic in 2020.

4. SOCIAL INCLUSION

The approaches and principles concerned with social inclusion and welfare in 2016 defined at the Government level in the document [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 \(Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023\)](#) arise from the principles of a social and welfare state, the framework of fundamental and social rights, and social protection principles. There is no single body responsible for the social inclusion of young people as the domain covers several policy areas, with established division of tasks between different ministries and between local and central level. In youth field and in the field of child protection the provision of services is generally the responsibility of local governments, while state provides the legal framework and additional support in areas of strategic priority and quality of services. See more in [Chapter 4.2](#).

There is no single document targeted to deal with social exclusion at national level, but a set of official documents integrating major directions guide the policymaking and implementation of respective ambitions in relation to the social inclusion of young people. Young people are in the centre of the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), adopted 12.08.2021. To foster the social inclusion of youth, the focus is on youth participation, empowerment and social security, while taking account specific needs as well as the limited rights and access to resources of young people.

In addition, youth population is covered in strategies with a general notion of social cohesion and social protection in society, like:

- [„Estonia 2035“ Strategy and Action Plan \(Strateegia „Eesti 2035“, „Eesti 2035“ Tegevuskava\)](#)
- [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 \(Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023\)](#);
- [Draft Welfare Development Plan 2023-2030 \(Heaolu arengukava 2023-2030 Koostamise ettepanek\)](#)(tbc).

See more in [Chapter 4.3](#).

In 2021 the Government approved the [Green Paper on Mental Health \(Vaimse tervise roheline raamat\)](#) prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs in 2020, aiming at contributing more to the prevention, early detection and timely availability of high-quality care throughout Estonia. [The Green Paper on Mental Health \(Vaimse tervise roheline raamat\)](#) presents children and youth at the age of 0-19 years as one of its specific focuses.

There are special programs designed to support the social inclusion and social security of young people, see more in [Chapter 4.4](#).

4.1 General context

Main challenges to social inclusion

Specific data related to main challenges of youth social inclusion can be found in [Youth Monitoring Dashboard](#), a policy making support tool of visualised data by [Statistics](#)

[Estonia](#). It features the rates of absolute poverty by age group; youth unemployment; shares of NEET youth and youth with disabilities; offences committed by young people etc.

At national level strategic documents, specific focus on youth is taken by the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#). There are four strategic objectives defined, each of them with references to specific challenges also in relation to the social inclusion, f.ex:

- to recognise youth as impetus for societal change and development, ensuring perspectives for self-development, self-realisation and entrepreneurship for everyone, with specific attention to youth with fewer opportunities;
- to safeguard the rights and participation of young people with specific approaches and tools for youth with fewer opportunities and risk backgrounds;
- to guarantee the access to quality youth work services reducing the regional disparities and moving barriers for young people with special needs;
- to strengthen the social security of youth by fostering the early stage prevention, support to different risk groups (like young people not involved in education, training or work and those with health challenges) and better awareness in society at large with the aim to fight stigmatisation.

In addition, more overarching views on social inclusion are elaborated in:

- [„Estonia 2035“ Strategy and Action Plan \(Strateegia „Eesti 2035“, „Eesti 2035“ Tegevuskava\)](#)
- [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 \(Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023\)](#);
- [Draft Welfare Development Plan 2023-2030 \(Heaolu arengukava 2023-2030 Koostamise ettepanek\)](#)(tbc).

The [“Estonia 2035” strategy](#), approved by the Government of Estonia in 2021, sets out five long-term strategic goals related to people, society, economy, living environment and governance and puts forward nine important development needs in relation to these goals. The strategy emphasises that children and youth deserve special attention and supportive environments related to different challenges, f.ex:

- demographic changes and the need to establish sustainable population policies;
- socio-economic inequalities in different regions;
- equal access to education, work and public services.

The [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023](#), adopted by the Government of Estonia in 2016, prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs, highlights the following as the most important areas that need development and support for inclusion of young people:

- participation in working life
- economic coping of people
- social services and protection
- equality
- health

The [Draft Welfare Development Plan 2023-2030 \(Heaolu arengukava 2023-2030 Koostamise ettepanek\)](#)(adoption in progress) aimed at replacing the former [Strategy of Children and Families 2012-2020 \(Laste ja perede arengukava 2012-2020\)](#), highlights also the challenges in relation to support services provided to children, youth and their families and aims at reforming the support system in order to guarantee that help and support is available at the earliest possible stage, with coordinated efforts from all the needed experts (child welfare, education, medicine etc).

Continuous efforts are targeted at taking stock of and reducing the **COVID-19 crisis impacts on youth population**, most notably in relation to mental health and access to employment and education. F.ex the [key findings of the Study „COVID-19 Impact on the need for labour force and skills“](#) confirm the raise in youth unemployment and enlarged vulnerability in this respect.

Related to health, [The Green Paper on Mental Health \(Vaimse tervise roheline raamat\)](#), adopted in 2021, highlights that during the COVID crisis period, 49% of young people at the age of 15-24 years have felt stress that is notably higher than among other age groups. Also, the majority of mental health challenges appear during childhood or young adolescence, in 50% of cases before the age of 14 years and in 75% of cases before the age of 24 years.

Children and youth are strongly influenced by the factors of their social environment and accumulated risk factors have demonstrated to significantly increase the likelihood of health challenges, f. ex the risk for alcohol and drug abuse and depression raises up to 4-12 times for children and youth experiencing 4 or more different risk factors. Thus the coherency and cooperation between different services and policy fields is of great importance ([The Green Paper on Mental Health \(Vaimse tervise roheline raamat\)](#)).

Main concepts

The approaches and principles concerned with social inclusion and welfare are defined in 2016 at the Government level in the document the [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023](#) arise from the principles of a social and welfare state, the framework of fundamental and social rights, and social protection principles. On the one hand, the principle of a social state is ensuring that the strengthening of the state's economic development and competitive ability takes into account the needs of different social groups. For that purpose, equal opportunities must be supported and created for the population groups that would not be able to secure their livelihood and welfare in the conditions of the competition of the market economy. On the other hand, the adherence to the principle of a social state is a premise for the state's economic development and competitive ability, as it prevents and reduces the exclusion of parts of the population from the social and economic life. The broader view of the welfare of people and society is understood as affected by all aspects of life and the policies that concern them. The solutions are visioned in accordance with the general shift of welfare state policies: transferring from the policy that compensates social risks and repairs their consequences to the policy that empowers and prepares people to cope with the risks. In addition to traditional social protection, increasing people's self-sufficiency and their social and professional activity has become more and more important. Therefore, the social and labor market policies are treated in the welfare policy as investments that support people's participation in society and economy, and thus, provide an important contribution to the development of society and economy.

Some of the most important concepts are defined as the following:

- **Prevention** refers to the need to primarily focus on the prevention of social risks and the realization of their consequences, which will prevent the progression and accumulation of the problems, and overall, make solving them more time- and resource-efficient.
- **Shared responsibility** means that the person themselves and their family bear primary responsibility for securing their welfare, coping, and a decent life. State and local authorities provide support in situations where a person or a family is not able to secure their livelihood on their own. The provision of help is also based on the shared responsibility principle, as it encourages people's self-responsibility and prevents learned helplessness and dependency on help.
- **Ensuring human dignity** is the central objective for the protection of social rights. Thereby, human dignity means both a decent treatment and a decent life.

- **A comprehensive approach to human needs** means that a person's needs are assessed as comprehensively as possible and the assessment is used in designing and implementing the measures by combining and connecting, if necessary, benefits, grants, and services.
- **Equal treatment** is based on the idea of equality among people and the prohibition of discrimination as the central principle of a social state, which must be taken into account in granting rights, their implementation, and the creation of equal opportunities. The principle of equal treatment means considering the needs of all people, not the uniform treatment of all people.

4.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The approaches and principles concerned with social inclusion and welfare are defined at the Government level in the document [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023](#) (Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023) arises from the principles of a social and welfare state, the framework of fundamental and social rights, and social protection principles. ([See more detailed description in chapter 4.1.](#)).

There is no single body responsible for the social inclusion of young people as the domain covers several policy areas, which have established a different division of tasks between different Ministries and between the local and central levels.

Two most relevant policy areas – youth field and social protection are under the responsibility of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) (youth field), the Youth Affairs Department (starting from 01.01.2021 the Youth and Talent Department) and the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) (child protection), Department of Children and Families.

The main other Governmental authorities and their responsibility according to the [Government of the Republic Act](#) relevant to social inclusion:

- the [Ministry of Education and Research](#): responsible for youth policy and education policy;
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#): responsible for child and family policy, labor market, social protection, gender equality, and equal treatment policies;
- the [Ministry of Culture](#): responsible for integration policy;
- the [Ministry of Interior](#): responsible for crime prevention;
- the [Ministry of Justice](#) responsible for the justice system;
- the [Ministry of Finance](#): responsible development of local governments, planning, and coordination of regional development;
- the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#): responsible for developing E-governance and e-services.

Main public actors and foundations of policy fields relevant to social inclusion:

1. [Chancellor of Justice](#), an independent official institution responsible for ensuring the rights of children would be protected;
2. [Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner](#), an independent office responsible for the protection of equal rights;
3. [Social Insurance Board](#), an agency of the Ministry of Social Affairs, responsible for social insurance benefits and child protection services;
4. [Töötukassa](#) (Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund), a public legal entity acting in the are of the Ministry of Social Affairs and responsible for the provision of labor market services;

5. [Education and Youth Board](#), a governmental institution responsible for implementing education and youth policy;
6. [Integration Foundation](#), an independent body established by the government under the Ministry of Culture, responsible for supporting the integration of national minorities in Estonia.
7. [The National Institute for Health Development](#), a governmental institution under the Ministry of Social Affairs responsible for health promotion.

The main non-public actors:

- the [Eesti Noorsootöötajate Kogu](#) (Association of Estonian Youth Workers)
- the [Estonian National Youth Council](#)

Cross-sectorial cooperation

There is no single body responsible for the social inclusion of young people as the domain covers several policy areas, which have established a different division of tasks between different ministries and between local and central levels.

Two most relevant policy areas – youth field and social protection are under the responsibility of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) (youth field) and the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#) (child protection). The responsibilities in the youth field and in the field of child protection use similar division of tasks between the local level and central level, where the provision of services is generally the responsibility of local governments and the central level are responsible for policy, legislation and state budgeting.

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policy-making and implementation that also covers youth social inclusion. 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 granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#). The [Ministry of Finance](#) also plays a coordinating role in planning, monitoring and ensuring the division of resources of different financial instruments including the state budget, among all the policy fields.

4.3 Strategy for the social inclusion of young people

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. See more in Chapters 4 & 4.1.

There is a prominent focus on social inclusion in the current national youth strategy, [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), adopted by the Government 12.08.2021. This presents the central policy strategy in the area of youth specifically, hence the details of the national youth field strategy are elaborated in following.

Scope and contents

[The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) aims at a wide variety of development opportunities, a sense of security, and strong support for young people to create Estonia that youth wishes to further develop and advance. The strategy is specifically for the age group of 7–26 years old, declaring that in comparison with other age groups, young people have more limited rights (for example the legal capacity of minors) and opportunities (such as entry to the labour market or access to economic resources). To foster the social inclusion of youth, the focus is on youth rights and participation, empowerment and social security.

The Development Plan declares that youth work activities are based on the principle of equal treatment and that the national youth strategy provides the prerequisites for making youth work available to all young people by including young people at risk of exclusion, belonging to a minority or having special needs in order to provide opportunities for the versatile development of the youth. The readiness of youth for independent life (entry into the labour market and access to youth work services and activities regardless of age) is supported and the issue of age-sensitivity (the position of young people in the society) is addressed. The development plan also supports the regional availability of youth services and the provision of specialist training of youth workers on regional level. Attention is paid to the removal of geographical circumstances hindering participation in youth work activities; participation of young people in the local-level decision-making processes is supported (including the relevant responsibilities of local governments).

There are four strategic goals defined – momentum; participation; independence; security – each of them with references to specific challenges also in relation to the social inclusion of youth, f.ex:

- to recognise youth as creative momentum for positive societal change and development, ensuring perspectives for self-development, self-realisation and entrepreneurship for everyone, with specific attention to youth with fewer opportunities;
- to safeguard the rights and participation of young people with specific approaches and tools for youth with fewer opportunities and risk backgrounds;
- to guarantee the access to quality youth work services reducing the regional disparities and moving barriers for young people with special needs;
- to strengthen the sense of security of youth by fostering the early stage noticing and prevention of exclusion and detachment, support to different risk groups (like young people not involved in education, training or work and those with health challenges) and better awareness in society at large with the aim to fight stigmatisation.

In addition to strategic goals and more specific objectives, the national youth field strategy defines the strategic indicators, f.ex in relation to social inclusion the ratio (%) of 15-29 year olds not in education, employment or training (NEET-youth), the ratio (%) of 15-26 year olds who evaluate support as available to them etc.

The implementation of the development plan is based on inclusive management and organisation of youth policy. It is ensured that youth policy has a multidisciplinary approach and is based on understanding the real circumstances and needs of young people and the inclusion of the youth. The management of the area is based on a functioning youth field monitoring and analysing system which ensures the efficiency, impact analysis and development monitoring of youth field services. A consistent evaluation of a youth-centred policy development is organised in cooperation with the Estonian National Youth Council.

On operational level, programmes with more specific quality assurance measures are being prepared and will follow for the years until 2035.

Responsible authority

[The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) was approved by the Government of the Republic after discussing the document at the Riigikogu. The implementation of the development plan is coordinated by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) with all relevant ministries contributing within their scope.

The implementation of the development plan is based on inclusive management and organisation of youth policy. It is ensured that youth policy has a multidisciplinary approach and is based on understanding the real circumstances and needs of young people and the inclusion of the youth, in cooperation with the Estonian National Youth Council.

The implementation of the development plan and relevant reporting is supported by a broad-based management committee. The work of the committee is led by the Ministry of Education and Research and the committee includes representatives from the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#), [the Ministry of Justice](#), [Ministry of the Interior](#), [the Ministry of Culture](#), [the Ministry of Finance](#) and the [Government Office](#).

Revisions/Updates

[The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035](#) was adopted 12.08.2021 and presents a strategic long-term visionary and is implemented through the youth field programme and if necessary, through a joint programme (work in progress). The programme specifies a time-scheme and specific activities per each area, plus the costs for the four years (1+3). The programmes are prepared while planning the State Budget Strategy (SBS) and are reviewed annually in order to ensure coordination with the changing external circumstances and the SBS.

Development plan reporting is organised for each programme, using needs-based evaluation. The achievement of the development plan's goals is evaluated at least twice during the implementation period with the final interim evaluation organised not later than three years before the termination of the programme period. [The Ministry of Education and Research](#) prepares an annual progress report.

4.4 Inclusive programmes for young people

Programmes specific for vulnerable young people

There are several programmes initiated by the ministries responsible for the areas of work in the youth social inclusion domain.

Since the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), the central policy document in the area of youth, has been adopted in August 2021 and will be in force until 2035, more detailed Action Plans, including the provision of programmes, will follow.

In 2019, the [Programme agreement of Local Development Programme with Estonia](#) was signed until 2024. The programme is operated by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The programme funding (excluding co-financing) amounts to €21 million and is funded through the EEA Grants (€10.6 million) and Norway Grants (€7.4 million).

The local development programme addresses challenges in Estonia related to the wellbeing of children and youth, gender-based violence, the health care system and revitalization of cultural heritage. The programme will address early school leaving, limited services and support available for vulnerable children and youth e.g. in the justice and education systems and shortage of extrajudicial alternatives to sanctions such as social and educational programmes that could hinder reoffending.

Related to the welfare of children and youth, two pre-defined projects will be supported which will establish a mediation system and develop a specialised juvenile justice approach to support the wellbeing of vulnerable children and youth. Two open calls will support projects developing models for integrated services at local level and to pilot measures to support transition of disadvantaged children and youth across school levels from education to the labour market, including smart solutions in youth work. Finally, two small grants schemes will implement and raise awareness of restorative justice measures for youth and develop and pilot career orientation programmes.

Since 2015 the national programme [Noortekohtumised \(Youth meetings\)](#) supports 11-19 years old young people living in Estonia from diverse ethnic backgrounds to develop and undertake common projects, based on their common interests. Youth will be able to set up contacts with peers from different ethnic groups all over the country and self-initiate cooperation and meetings with duration of 3-6 days with each other, supported by their

teachers, youth workers, also with training and coaching support from the programme coordination.

The programme is managed by [Education and Youth Board](#). The [Impact Assessment of the programme](#) (2019, available in Estonian) confirmed the positive influence on participating youth and their supporting adults, with enlarged (inter-) cultural competence and greater interest towards intercultural cooperation and self-initiatives, entrepreneurship.

During 2015- 2023 Estonian Operational Programme for EU Cohesion Policy Funds special investment priority "Active inclusion, including with a view to promoting equal opportunities and active participation, and improving employability" is implemented with specific objective of "Inclusion and improvement of the employability of young people, incl. those at risk of exclusion", aimed at:

- improving access to youth work services and engaging youth with risk for exclusion;
- strengthening the competence of youth and enlarging their contacts with work life;
- launching support mechanisms for NEET youth;
- further developing the knowledge and understanding of youth and the impact of services targeting youth.

The programme combines a range of activities (f.ex innovation programmes to local municipalities, individual support services to NEET youth etc), coordinated by the [Education and Youth Board](#).

Earlier in Estonia significant developments in the area of youth social inclusion have been supported by various programmes f.ex "Children and Youth at Risk" ([Riskilapsed- ja noored](#)), during the period 2009-2014, extended until April 2017.

Funding

There is a dedicated funding allocated by the [Government](#) for the programmes supporting the inclusion of young people. The programmes are in line with prioritised goals in strategies related to fighting social exclusion of youth.

For programmes described above, incl. [Programme agreement of Local Development Programme with Estonia](#), [Noortekohtumised \(Youth meetings\)](#), ["Inclusion and improvement of the employability of young people, incl. those at risk of exclusion"](#) specific funding and co-financing principles (if applicable) have been defined.

Since the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), the central policy document in the area of youth, has been adopted in August 2021 and will be in force until 2035, more detailed Action Plans, including the provision of programmes, will follow, with funding tbc.

Quality assurance

All the programmes described are subject to the detailed multi-layered quality assurance mechanism established by the financial instruments of these programmes. The programmes are also subject to quality indicators as defined either in the national [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) and/or operational instructions (f.ex [for the programme targeted at NEET youth, both the base indicators 2013 as well as target indicators 2023 have been defined](#)). Further quality indicators and mechanisms are defined in the operational programmes.

4.5 Initiatives promoting social inclusion and raising awareness

Intercultural awareness

According to the national umbrella [strategy „Estonia 2035“ \(„Eesti 2035“\)](#), one of the strategic goals is to guarantee that Estonia’s society is caring, cooperative and open-minded. The strategy declares that „We will ensure participation opportunities, joint activities and the availability of various cultural events both for Estonians and people with other mother tongues, promoting cooperation, flexibility and creative solutions of various institutions and organisations, such as job offers, flexible transport, teleworking, cooperation with the private sector, etc.“ Hence it is evident that support to intercultural awareness and inclusion of people with different origins concerns various policy fields. Concerning initiatives targeted at youth, the role of youth sector and youth work is recognised.

The [Ministry of Culture](#), particularly the Department of Cultural Diversity, is responsible for the integration policy supporting the cultural societies of national minorities, kindred nations and compatriots and helps to promote their cultural life and activities. [The report of the latest strategy „Integrating Estonia 2020“](#) confirms the steady progress in the area of integration and social cohesion. Over seven years, nearly €81 million were allocated for the implementation of the activities related to the development plan; 15% of which came from the European Social Fund and the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund. The [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) played significant role in achievement of youth-related objectives of the strategy : “Students with a native language different from Estonian actively participate in youth work and have close contacts with Estonian-speaking peers.” via youth events, youth meetings, camps etc.

The Ministry of Culture has prepared the draft of [„Cohesive Estonia Development Plan 2021-2030“ \(Sidusa Eesti arengukava 2021-2030\)](#) (tbc).

[The vision of the civil society programme until 2030](#) which is part of the [Civil Society Programme 2021-2024](#), prepared by the [Ministry of Interior Affairs](#), includes a wider use of the participation cafés approach among Estonian- and Russian-speaking youth as a recognised consultation format developed for the youth field. The programme also refers to the youth as the precursor of the sustainability of the civil society – it is important to integrate the work of youth organisations, NGOs and schools in order to support youth participation. The popularisation of volunteer work and a more playful approach in the fund-raising system with the help of the youth field allows to improve the activity options at youth organisations and to create additional opportunities for expressing one’s opinion and enlarging intercultural awareness, partaking in joint activities or showing initiative.

A specific national initiative [Noortekohtumised \(Youth meetings\)](#) that supports 11-19 years old young people living in Estonia from diverse ethnic backgrounds to develop and undertake common projects has been described in Chapter 4.4.

Young people's rights

The general framework for the government-level initiatives in the area of youth rights is regulated mainly by the [Child Protection Act](#). The Act also defines (§5) principles of ensuring rights and well-being of children, such as every child has the inherent right to life, survival and development; every child has the right to equal treatment without any discrimination; every child has the right to independent opinion in all matters affecting the child and the right to express his or her views.

Youth participation is a prominent strategic goal of the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), adopted 12.08.2021, declaring the ambition that „the protection of youth rights in the state is consistent and active youth participation is supported.“ The strategy foresees maintaining the level of already achieved positive outcomes such as existing participation formats (79 in 2021) and ratio of local

governments out of all local governments that have a functioning youth council (89,9% in 2021) while also proposing new initiatives such as „creating a national youth council advising the prime minister and a youth roundtable at the President’s office to give young people increased opportunities to express their opinion.“

Since 2015 in Estonia young people are eligible for voting at local elections since the age of 16 years (first elections with the new regulation took place in 2017) that is seen as perspective to positively influence on youth citizenship and active participation in matters closest to their life reality on local level, also to respond to the interests and needs of young people to have their say. However, there is a need to continue activities that support better awareness of youth in order to realise the maximum potential of their voting rights. Several training and information campaigns are being run as initiatives to support youth awareness related to their participation rights, for example annual Youth Participation Cafes where youth meets with policy makers in order to discuss most urgent issues and possible solutions ([overview of the national Project in 2020](#), available in Estonian).

A state supported [Youth Participation Fund](#) is coordinated by Estonian National Youth Council funding projects that focus on creating new opportunities for participation, developing existing forms of participation and networking in the field of youth participation.

In order to support awareness raising among youth, a [national portal called “Teeviit”](#) (in English “Sign Post”) is an important youth information tool, combining active social media content, thematic events, campaigns etc in co-operation with youth volunteers, experts and social media influencers. COVID-19 period has reinforced the need for trustful youth information even further and since 2020 the portal operates both in Estonian and in Russian languages.

Key initiatives to safeguard democracy and prevent radicalisation leading to violent extremism

There is no specific programme or activity initiated on the governmental level to address specifically the issue of prevention of radicalization and violent extremism of young people, however, the violent extremism and radicalisation in Estonia is at policy level dealt with under the internal security policy, which is the area of responsibility of [the Ministry of the Interior](#). In the framework of combating terrorism, it is stated, that activities in Estonia and international cooperation should aim to stop radicalisation, the financing of terrorism and the smuggling of strategic goods. The government sets the policies for combating terrorism in the framework document on combat against terrorism approved in November 2013. In this Document, the prevention of terrorism and radicalization, and prevention of recruitment to terrorist organizations is highlighted as an issue of importance. It is drawn out, that Estonia is paying particular attention in order to prevent the activities of movements and people who spread racial, cultural, religious or affiliation hate in Estonia. The earliest signs of radicalism must be prevented, because – as shown by international experience – the growth of radicalism into extremism and then into terrorism is probable and therefore also an undisputed threat to the security of the state ([Fundamentals of Counter-Terrorism in Estonia](#)).

[The Internal Security Development Plan 2020–2030](#) prepared by the [Ministry of Interior](#) highlights the positive impact of youth work on the development of the social skills of young people and the importance of preventive work organised in cooperation with different partners (including from the youth field).

4.6 Access to quality services

Housing

The main initiatives by the [Government](#) to support issues concerning the housing of young people are:

1. housing loan guarantees,
2. home grants for families with many children,
3. state-funded housing during the studies
4. substitute home service

There is also a provision of dwelling available as a social service. [Social Welfare Act](#) (§41) defines the provision of dwelling as a social service organized by a local authority with the objective to ensure the possibility to use a dwelling to a person who due to socio-economic situation is unable to provide a dwelling which corresponds to the needs of the person and his or her family. The provision of dwelling is however not specifically targeted for young people.

Housing loan guarantees under the housing policy The long-term objectives of Estonian housing policy defined by the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#) are the availability of housing to the Estonian population, quality and sustainability of the housing stock, diversity and balanced sustainable development of residential areas. The initiative of the [Government](#) in the framework of the housing policy directed at access to housing and identifying young people as a specific target group is a housing loan guarantee executed by [the Foundation KredEx](#) (founded by the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#), to be merged with [Enterprise Estonia](#) as of 2022). The housing loan guarantee is designed for people wishing to take a loan for the purchase of new living premises or renovation of the existing ones, and decrease the downpayment obligation. Under the housing loan guarantee scheme there are two specific youth target groups defined:

- **The target group of the young family** i.e. a parent or parents raising a child of up to 15 years (included);
- **The target group of a young specialist**, i.e. an up to 35-year-old (included) person, who has acquired secondary or vocational secondary education (based on basic or secondary education) or vocational education based on basic or secondary education, and meets one of the following conditions below:
 1. an employment contract, service contract or board member contract has been concluded with the person, whereas the probation period (if applicable) shall be over;
 2. who is assigned to a post according to the Public Service Act, whereas the probation period (if applicable) shall be over;
 3. the person is registered in the business register or tax board as a self-employed entrepreneur, whereas he/she shall have operated as an entrepreneur for at least a year.

The housing loan guarantee is demonstrating a clearly increasing need in the market. In 2015 a total of 2,191 households purchased or renovated their homes with this support measure, while in 2019 it was 3,470 households and in 2020 it reached to 3,658 households. The amount of housing loan guarantees has been increasing as well: in 2015 it was 17.5 million euros, in 2019 it was 35 million euros and in 2020 it reached to 40,1 million euros.

Home grants for families with many children is a measure to improve the living conditions of families with many children. The target group of the grant scheme is households with low income, with at least three children under 19 years of age. Eligible activities include decreasing the repayment of the principal part of the current housing loan, purchasing, building, reconstructing, renovating, or expanding housing, the construction, replacement, or updating of technical systems or networks. The support has been growing over the years: in 2015 the applications of 242 families were funded (with total of 1,178 children growing in the families that received funding); in 2019, the number was 337 (with total number of children in these families of 1,192). In 2020 both the overall amount of this

support measure was increased (with total amount of 3+ million euros), also the maximum amount per applicant family. In total the living conditions of more than 950 children living in low income families have been improved with this measure in 2020.

Substitute Home Service According to the [Social Welfare Act](#), home service means ensuring family-like living conditions to a child for meeting his or her basic needs, the creation of a secure physical and social environment promoting his or her development and preparation of the child for coping in accordance with his or her abilities as an adult. The target group for the substitute home service are young people under 18 years who have been left without a parent with right of custody. The substitute home service can also be provided to unaccompanied minor aliens, minor victims of human trafficking and sexually abused minors. The substitute home service is financed from the state budget.

Social services

Social services in Estonia as part of the social welfare system are regulated in the [Social Welfare Act](#). The social services in Estonia are generally directed to target groups based on needs and the type of challenges a person has (for example disabled people, people with economic difficulties etc).

The [Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023](#) defines improving the accessibility and quality of social services, the development of services that include people in society as an important focus area of welfare setting it as one of the four areas of development. The document also states that the introduction of social innovations and the emergence of social enterprises in the social system will be encouraged.

Specific policies aimed at social services for children and their families have been set in the [Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020](#), supported by specific implementation plans (similarly to other policy strategies that are followed up with operational plans, programmes) that list all the activities, responsible bodies and budgets for these activities until 2023.

Both of these policy plans are aimed to be replaced by [The Draft Welfare Development Plan 2023-2030](#) (Heaolu arengukava 2023-2030 Koostamise ettepanek). While the development and adoption of these policy strategies is still work in progress, it aims at highlighting and proposing solutions to support services provided to children, youth and their families and aims at reforming the support system in order to guarantee that help and support is available at the earliest possible stage, with coordinated efforts from all the needed experts (child welfare, education, medicine etc).

In addition to social services defined through the welfare system, there are initiatives in other policy areas developed in order to support young people.

In education policy there are several policy measures that support acquisition of education: student loan, state education allowance, various scholarships; support for commuting and transportation allowance; support for provision of lunches in general education schools and vocational schools; municipal support (not universal in all municipalities) for lunches in kindergarten, grants for pupils starting in the first grade, yearly grants for the start of the school year). There is also a system of pedagogical counselling and career guidance (see [chapter 3.5](#)) established for young people in the education policy area.

In youth policy there are support schemes established for supporting for participation in summer camps for children from families with fewer opportunities, several municipalities provide financial support for participating in hobby education (see [chapter 4.8](#)) In order to reduce the potential risks and inequalities as result of the COVID crisis, specific support measures have been introduced since 2020 both in education and youth fields, f.ex support to camps aimed at increasing the learning motivation of children and youth etc.

Health care

Health care is provided and general health care provision is available for youth. According to the [Health Insurance Act](#) state considered insured permanent residents of Estonia under

19 and persons acquiring basic, general secondary, formal vocational or higher education i.e. their costs of health insurance are covered by [Estonian Health Insurance Fund](#).

Most important health service available to young people besides the care by the family doctors, is a system of health care services provided in general education schools. The students are provided with health services at school, including activities carried out by nurses financed by the school owner.

The priorities of health policy and health care, including in relation to children and youth are defined in the [Public Health Development Plan 2020-2030](#). The main objective of public health policy is to increase the life expectancy of Estonian people and the number of years of healthy life, and to reduce inequalities in health.

The objectives of the public health development plan 2020-2030 are to increase the average life expectancy of Estonian people by 2030 to 78 years of age in men and to 84 in women, and increase the average years of healthy living to 62 years of age in men and to 63 in women. The development plan also sets the goal that by 2030 the life expectancy of people with basic education will not be less than six years from the life expectancy of people with higher education.

The development plan consists of three programmes: human-centred healthcare, health-supporting choices and a health-supporting environment. The health supported options programme discusses the choices a person can make to shape their own habits and lifestyle. The environment programme for health shall focus on the health impacts arising from the environment around us; chemical, physical and biological risks and factors. The human-centred healthcare programme will focus on ways to provide health and social services that meet people's needs and expectations, which are safe, of high quality, and which are more integrated than ever.

While the general approach of the Public Health Development Plan 2020-2030 is to guarantee that awareness raising and support is equally available to everyone lifelong, specific attention is made to children and youth in relation to several objectives, like:

- support to mental health (as up to 50% of mental health concerns appear before the age of 14 and up to 75 % occur before the age of 24 years);
- prevention of injuries (as these appear to be the main reason of death among children and young adults);
- awareness raising and support to healthy eating and physical activeness (as according to research in 2018 26% of children entering the school as 1st grade pupils, were overweight).

The Government has established a [National Institute for Health Development](#) with a task (among others) to support health promotion i.e. the development of a way of life and behaviour which promotes and values people's health, as well as a systematic improvement of a health-supporting physical and social environment. One of the areas of activities to support health promotion implemented by the Institute is targeted at children and youth health. The Institute provides research and analyses related to the health of children and youth, supports local level networking, develops methodical materials and publications, provides training for specialists working with children and youth. The Institute also supports people active in health promotion providing the database of best practices and other relevant information in the dedicated web-portal www.terviseinfo.ee.

Training Centre of [the National Institute for Health Development](#) offers professional development courses to specialists working to support health, such as kindergarten and school employees, youth workers, child adopters, foster care families, employees of social welfare services and rehabilitation centres, county and local municipality employees, counsellors, psychologists, health care workers and health promoters, social workers, NGOs, etc. Main areas of training include HIV/AIDS and substance abuse, health promotion and health counselling. In addition, the centre also carries out an analysis of training needs and provides support to trainers in training methodology.

Financial services

The two main measures to support access to financial services for young people specifically are

1. study loan scheme;
2. housing loan guarantee scheme (described under housing services in this chapter).

Study loan is a state-guaranteed long-term loan for funding studies in higher education. The right to receive a study loan is held by a full-time student who is an Estonian citizen or resides in Estonia on the basis of a long-term residence permit or permanent residency. Study loans are provided by banks.

There is a debt counselling service available as a social service and organized by a local authority in order to assist a person through enhancing the ability to cope and resolve other problems related to debt. However, the service is not targeted specifically for young people. At the same time the educational programmes targeted at raising the financial awareness and the raise of financial competence among children and youth are emerging, for example also as part of the youth information services in national youth information portal [Teeviit](#).

Quality assurance

There is no single system of evaluating all services to support the social inclusion of young people. The services listed above are under the quality assurance mechanism defined by the area such as health, social and financial affairs.

All the services initiated, developed and supported by the Government are part of the strategic planning of the relevant policy area i.e. the mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the policies described in this [chapter 4.2](#). apply, including the indicators set in the documents. However, different policy areas apply different measures to evaluate and support the quality of services. These measures and the outcomes of these measures largely depend on the service, the level of regulation of the service (i.e. how detailed the regulation of the services is) and on the type of the bodies responsible for service provision. The measures can include studies (incl studies of user satisfaction), guidelines, support for self-evaluation, training etc.

4.7 Youth work to foster social inclusion

Policy/legal framework

[Youth Work Act](#) provides the legal basis for the organization and financing of youth work, including the youth work with a view to foster social inclusion. The Act defines the main terms used in the youth field, main institutions, organizations and forms of youth work, the principles of youth work, financing of youth work, etc. The Act describes the division of tasks regarding youth work of the Ministry of Education and Research and local municipalities. The Act defines municipal and local youth councils.

The policy goals of youth work are described in [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#). The document outlines strategic goals in the field of youth. The main goal introduced in the development plan is to provide young people with a wide variety of development opportunities, so that a sense of security and strong support for young people creates an Estonian state that the youth wishes to further.

See [chapter 1.3](#) for a more detailed information about the Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035, adopted 12.08.2021.

Main inclusive Youth-Work programmes and target groups

The programmes described in [chapter 4.4](#) include the most prominent initiatives in youth work targeting specifically vulnerable young people. Chapter [4.4](#) provides information on the content, target groups and funding of these programmes. Youth organizations have been consulted in designing the programmes and/or are actively involved in delivery of these programmes and results.

In addition to programmes mentioned in [chapter 4.4](#), there are other initiatives serving to support inclusion of young people, like the national [programme Caring Class \(Hooliv klass\)](#) that aims at supporting positive relationships between the class community of pupils, teachers and other support staff like youth workers, psychologists, social pedagogues etc in school. The programme is targeting pupils of 6-7th grade and is coordinated by the Education and Youth Board.

Youth work providers in the field of social inclusion for young people

Youth work, in general, is provided in Estonia by the local governments. The most important organizations and institutions involved in the actual offer of youth work services are:

- Youth and youth work NGOs;
- Youth centres;
- Hobby schools;
- Youth camps;

The conducting, managing and evaluating youth work contains the following main parts in Estonia:

- Policy goals are set at the level of Government of the Republic together with the budget allocation to the youth work, including resources from financial instruments, which the Government has the right to decide the allocation of.
- [The Ministry of Education and Research](#) together with [Education and Youth Board](#), as a national youth work agency, is responsible for the proposal of changes, monitoring and coordination of the implementation of the policy in cooperation with other ministries and public institutions. The Ministry and/or [Education and Youth Board](#) can contract local governments and other youth work providers or their umbrella organizations, universities etc to finance the services that are defined in the policy plans.
- Starting from 01.01.2021, also the management of EU youth programmes have been merged to the responsibilities of the [Education and Youth Board](#), with the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps formed. It operates as the Estonian NA for the [Erasmus+ programme](#).
- Local governments are responsible for provision, planning and implementation of youth work. Local Governments can establish municipal institutions for the provision of services or contract private institutions, including non-profit organisations such as youth organizations etc.
- Universities provide professional formal education for youth workers based on national [occupational standards for youth workers](#).
- The evaluation is done at the national level based on the guidelines developed in the frame of operational programmes following the adoption of the [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and reported to the [Government](#) yearly. The local governments are responsible for the evaluation of the provision of youth work services; there are supporting mechanisms created by the Education and Youth Board to support

the evaluation. Youth organizations, youth clubs etc that are NGOs are responsible for their internal evaluation mechanisms.

The public funding is available, however, it is difficult to specify the exact amounts allocated to youth work providers to support their capacity in the field of social inclusion of young people specifically as the work with such ambitions can take various formats. Furthermore, as inclusivity can be considered as a general aim of youth work in Estonia.

Training and support for youth workers engaged in social inclusion programmes

Professional formal education (BA or equivalent and MA level) is available for youth workers at two universities: Tallinn University and Tartu University, the latter providing opportunities to study in Narva College and in Viljandi Cultural Academy.

To support capacities of youth work sector to work for social inclusion of young people, there have been different programmes implemented on national level, both from the state budget as well as from the EU funds. For example there was a programme "Development of youth worker training" established by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) with the funding from European Social Fund and state budget for the years 2014-2020. The programme provided training for youth workers, training for trainers, supported the development of training materials etc. As an example, a [Handbook on Inclusive Youth Work \(Kaasava noorsootöö käsiraamat\)](#) has been published in order to support the respective competences in youth field.

[Education and Youth Board](#), a governmental institution under the administration of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), has a wide range of tasks for the implementation of youth policy and the development of youth work, including the implementation of different programmes supporting the capacity building of youth work providers, development of youth work quality and its instruments etc.

Financial support

The public funding in addition to the programmes initiated by the [Government](#) and described in this chapter is available, however, it is difficult to specify the exact amounts allocated to youth work providers to support their capacity in the field of social inclusion of young people specifically as the work with such ambitions can take various formats. Furthermore, as inclusivity can be considered as a general aim of youth work in Estonia.

The funding of youth policy including youth work is described in [chapter 1.8](#). The main sources of funding include the state budget, local budgets, EU support.

Quality assurance

The mechanisms to monitor and ensure the quality of measures in youth work are subject to the overall mechanism of policy monitoring and evaluation, and the outcomes of it, described in [chapter 4.2](#), the programmes described are in addition subject to the mechanisms derived from the financial instrument they are financed from (see [chapter 4.5](#)).

There are indicators defined in the [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) for each of the strategic objectives, some of them with clear focus on social inclusion, like:

- The number of youth-led projects (including the ratio of funded projects) ;
- The satisfaction of young people with youth work services;
- Per cent of 15–26-year-olds who evaluate support as available;
- Ratio (%) of 15–29-year-olds not in education, employment or training (young people with NEET status*).

More specific indicators are the subject of operational programmes developed as follow up of the national youth strategy.

4.8 Current debates and reforms

The [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), the central policy document in the area of youth, has been adopted in August 2021 and will be in force until 2035, with one of the major changes being aimed at strengthening youth-oriented solutions (including support and safety networks).

One of the strategic objectives of the Policy Development Plan is focused on assuring that the exclusion and detachment of young people is noticed and prevented through a safety network that increases a sense of security. In order to achieve this goal, following has been foresighted:

- 4.1. Providing young people necessary support and equal opportunities;
- 4.2. Reducing the risk of exclusion and detachment of young people;
- 4.3. Understanding the causes of young people's risk behaviour and the risk of exclusion; designing services based on the real needs of young people.

Based on the strategic plan, more detailed operational plans will need to be developed and that will largely determine also the focus of further debates and reforms.

Furthermore, based on wider directions of policy reforms in Estonia, in relation to social inclusion, among others, following issues are under attention:

- Further efficiency and decentralization of integrated services, aimed at providing early prevention and support closest to those who need it and with least effort for the clients in need. For example in the case of children and youth with special educational needs, an integrated approach from both education and social services. The ambition is to raise the effectiveness and impact of services including youth work services and through better coordination to safeguard the sustainability of the social protection system and services provision.
- Support to mental health of youth and parents.
- Support to parental skills.
- Development of e-services.

5. PARTICIPATION

Youth participation has been a starting principle in the youth sector in Estonia. [The Youth Work Act](#) outlines the principles of youth work in Estonia, whereby one of the main principles says: "youth work is done for youth and with youth, involving them in the decision-making process". See more in [Chapter 5.1](#). Most political parties in Estonia have a dedicated form for young people to participate – whether it is a substructure Under the organization or a separate organization. See more in [Chapter 5.2](#). In Estonia, the term "youth parliament" is not defined legally.

There are local and county level youth participation councils in Estonia. The Estonian National Youth Council coordinates and supports the development and activities of youth councils in Estonia. There are also higher education student unions, school student unions, which represent young people. See more in [Chapter 5.3](#). The participation of young people in decision making is defined as one of four strategic objectives in the Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020. See more in [Chapter 5.5](#).

5.1 General context

Definitions and concepts

Youth participation has been one of the most important principles and goals in youth work in Estonia. [The Youth Work Act](#) outlines the principles of youth work in Estonia, whereby one of the main principles says that youth work is done for youth and with youth, involving them in the decision-making process.

Youth participation is one of the central focuses also in the national youth strategy, [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#). In its preparation process the consultations with young people and their representatives were an important part, incl. online consultations, working groups, and written consultations during the whole process.

The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 describes the underlying concept of participation, referring that it is important to ensure meaningful active inclusion and participation of young people in weighing options, making decisions and implementing them. Young people must have the ability to make choices, show initiative and create solutions regarding important challenges by receiving enough information, support and feedback. Young people must also have their say in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of services intended for them. This is one way to empower young people in their development into active and caring citizens.

The concept of youth participation in Estonia is/was heavily shaped by the youth sector (i.e. youth work). The fact that youth should be a part of the decision-making process is already widely recognized, youth participation is guaranteed by the main documents in the youth field, also the awareness and efforts have been increasing in other sectors. As positive example, in the process of developing the national overarching national strategy „[Estonia 2035](#)“, led by the Government Office of the Republic of Estonia, participation of youth was given specific attention to. The society’s attitude towards the involvement of children and young people has become more supportive.

Institutions of representative democracy

Estonia is a centralized state governed by parliamentary democracy. The Constitution of Estonia came into force in 1992 and has continued the democratic spirit of the 1920 Constitution, with some added mechanisms to maintain the balance of power of the state.

Head of the State is the President, who is elected by the parliament or an electoral body for the term of 5 years. The President has mainly representative functions. The national legislature is the *Riigikogu*: a unicameral parliament of 101 members. Parliament is elected for the term of 4 years. The [Government](#) headed by the Prime Minister exercises the executive power. The Constitution provides a large degree of autonomy to local governments (towns and rural municipalities) elected for 4 years term.

The electoral system in Estonia is proportional representation. Voting is not compulsory. Available options for voting are voting with a ballot paper in the polling place, advanced voting, electronic voting, home voting and voting by post (in a foreign state).

The legal acts regulating the elections in Estonia are:

- [Riigikogu Election Act](#) (2002);
- [Local Government Council Election Act](#) (2002);
- [European Parliament Election Act](#) (2002);
- [Referendum Act](#) (2002);
- [President of the Republic Election Act](#) (1996).

5.2 Youth participation in representative democracy

Young people as voters

The official statistics of the Estonian [National Electoral Committee](#) about turnout and results of the voting in Estonia are not available by age-group, except for the statistics on e-voting.

The turnout of young people is described based on surveys.

- According to the study by Deželan in 2015 [„Young people and democratic life in Europe: what next after the 2014 European elections?“](#), voter absenteeism (i.e. those who did not vote) in EU 2014 parliamentary elections for Estonia among 18-24 years old was 87,5% compared to average 60% in Estonia and 56,9% in EU. Voter absenteeism in national parliamentary elections among 18-24 years old was 62,5% compared to an average of 32.8% in Estonia and 33,6% in the EU. Deželan argues, also concerning Estonia, that several studies show corroborative results that validate the widely accepted argument that the gap between young and older voters has widened considerably across the democratic world.
- Flash Eurobarometer 375 “European Youth: Participation in Democratic Life” published in 2015 studied young EU citizens’ participation in society. Young people (15-30) were asked whether or not they have voted in a political election in the last three years. In Estonia, 44% of respondents voted, which was lower than the EU average 56%. When comparing the findings with those from 2011, Estonia showed a decrease of 18 percentage points to 44%.
- According to Toomla (2011), who compared survey data from three consecutive parliament elections in Estonia: 2003, 2007, and 2011, from all the age-groups young people between 18-30 years old, were the most passive group to participate in the voting. Even though the passive position of young people has decreased by approximately 10 percentage points over the years observed, nearly one-third of young people did not go to vote in 2011. Among the older groups under observation (31-45 and 46-60) the level is approximately two times lower. Toomla also argued that the passive position of young people is not related to the fact of how many young candidates there are.

e-voting and young people

Since the restoration of independence in August 1991, Estonia has held 19 elections at either local, national or European level. As of 2019, Estonia has held 11 elections over ten years, where people could cast legally binding votes over the internet i.e. e-vote. The share of people using e-voting has increased over the elections: the share of e-voters in the first e-enabled elections in 2005 was 1.9%, in European Parliament elections in 2019 46.7% of votes were cast online. During the last two elections in 2019, the percentage of e-voters has increased significantly.

The amount of young voters of all e-voter has been as follows:

	2005 Local	2007 Parl.	2009 EP	2009 Local	2011 Parl.	2013 Local	2014 EP	2015 Parl.	2017 Local	2019 Parl.	2019 EP
% of e-voters from all voters	1.9	5.5	14.7	15.8	24.3	21.2	31.3	30.5	31.7	43.8	46.7
% of 16-17-year-olds among e-voters	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.9	-	-

% of 18-24-year-olds among e-voters	10	11	9	11	9	9	6	7	6.5	7.4	5.5
% of 25-34-year-olds among e-voters	33	33	28	28	27	26	23	25	21.8	21.8	18.3

Source: Estonian National Electoral Committee

For the last four consecutive elections, 2015 national, 2017 local, 2019 national and, 2019 European Parliament elections, e-voting is mostly used by middle-aged people, between 35–45 years old. The share of the youngest voting-eligible age segment, people between 16 to 24 years old is very small i.e. e-voters comprise a clearly smaller share out of voters within the 16–24 age group than they do among the 35–45 age group. The distribution of age among active e-voters mirrors the finding that voting online in Estonia is not the most popular option among the youngest and presumably most tech-savvy citizens.

The voting age limit for the national parliament, the European parliament and for the referendum is 18.

In 2015, the decision was made by two consecutive compositions of the Parliament to change the Constitution in order to lower the voting age for the local government election to 16 years old. The 16 and 17-years-old young people had the first possibility to vote at local elections that took place in October 2017. The percentage of e-voters from all voters at the age-group was 0.9%. There were 1,794 young people who gave their vote via e-voting, which is 7.4% of all the young people aged 16-17 and 0.6% of all young people in Estonia aged 7-26.

Persons, who have been convicted by a court and are imprisoned, cannot vote.

Young people as political representatives

Most political parties in Estonia have a dedicated form for young people to participate – whether it is a substructure under the organization or a separate organization – a youth wing of the party. Youth wings have limited autonomy as budgetary and policy issues are largely relying on the party. Political parties in Estonia are registered as not-for-profit organizations. The [Non-profit Associations Act](#) defines that „if a minor of at least 15 years of age becomes a member of such youth association which complies with the provisions of the Youth Work Act, the consent of the guardian need not be submitted to the non-profit association unless otherwise provided by the articles of association.

The age limit of standing as a candidate is regulated as follows:

- National parliament: 21
- Local Government Council: 18
- European parliament: 21

To a candidate for the position of the President, the age limit is 40 ([President of the Republic Election Act](#)). There is no age limit to serve in civil service in Estonia.

There is no quota concerning the seats reserved for young people, nor are there special provisions aiming at facilitating young people standing as political candidates.

In the legal acts regulating the elections in Estonia, there is a special regulation concerning the regular member of the Defence Force, but the regulation only concerns standing as a candidate (he or she cannot stand as a candidate). There is also a regulation concerning the persons, who have been convicted by a court and is imprisoned, cannot vote and stand as a candidate.

In the last elections in 2017 of the current Riigikogu ([Parliament](#)), the youngest elected member of parliament was 25, the average age of elected members of the parliament was 49.1. Toomla has analyzed the candidate lists for parliamentary elections of major parties in Estonia and has concluded that in 2003 there were 19% of candidates under 30 in top 20 positions of the lists, in 2007 and in 2011, 7 % both years. The average age of candidates in the last European Parliament elections was 48.6.

There are no specific functions within the parliament reserved for young members.

5.3 Youth representation bodies

Youth parliament

In Estonia, the term “youth parliament” is not defined legally. Therefore, the term has been used as a project name (for example a cooperation project to support youth participation in Estonia, e.g. see [Lastekaitse Liidu Noorteparlament](#); or [session of European youth parliament in Estonia](#)) and also as a name for some local youth councils (for example, [Narva Noorteparlament](#)).

Youth councils and/or youth advisory boards

[Estonian National Youth Council \(Eesti Noorteühenduste Liit - ENL\)](#)

Structure and composition

[Estonian National Youth Council](#) is an umbrella organization established in 2002. It unites 52 youth organizations and 42 youth councils throughout Estonia ([data from 2019](#)).

ENL is governed by the general assembly – representative body for all the member organisations, which elects the council (5-9 members) and the board (3-5 members).

Roles and responsibilities

ENL promotes cooperation between youth associations and active participation of young people in society. ENL is working for recognition and participation of young people. ENL represents, includes and supports youth organizations through creating opportunities for cooperation and development. ENL mission is to be an organization with a large, active and strong membership, an opinion leader on youth matters and a reliable partner in a society, where the ideas and activities of the Youth are valued and decisions are made in cooperation with the Youth.

ENL is also coordinating and supporting the development and activities of youth councils. In order to support the youth council, ENL provides training and guidelines for new and already active youth council (for example [a manual to support youth councils](#)) and financial support for youth councils. Public funding is available for youth councils via ENL in order to start a new youth council and in order to support projects of youth councils.

Funding

ENL itself is also receiving yearly public funding as a union of youth associations from the grant scheme dedicated for youth associations administered by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and [Education and Youth Board](#).

[Local and regional youth councils](#)

There are local-level [youth participation councils](#) (*osaluskogu*) in Estonia. Estonia National Youth Council, who is coordinating and supporting the development and activities of youth councils defines the terms as follows:

- By “[youth participation council](#)” we mean different institutions where young persons can take part in decision-making.
- County youth councils communicate the opinions of young persons from the respective county to the county’s decision-makers, i.e. enable young persons to take part in

decision-making processes and protect their interests in the fields concerning them at the county level - note that starting from 2017, the county municipals were demolished, so there are not that many county-level youth councils left.

- Local youth councils are youth participation councils attached to local government councils. The objective of local youth councils is to take part in local governments' decision-making.

The legal framework exists for the youth councils at a municipal level only. The [Youth Work Act](#) amendments in 2010 established the regulations for the youth councils as follows:

- A youth council is an advisory participation council consisting of young people which operates in rural municipality or city council;
- Youth council can be established at a rural municipality or city council.
- The objective of youth council shall be the discussion of issues concerning young people which are in the competence of the rural municipality or city and the making of proposals to the rural municipality or city council and rural municipality or city government in connection therewith proceeding from the needs and interests of young people.
- Youth council shall be elected democratically by the young people of the rural municipality or city pursuant to the procedure established by the rural municipality or city council.
- The bases for the activities of the youth council shall be established by the rural municipality or city council.
- The rural municipality or city shall support the sustainable activities of the youth council in their administrative territory pursuant to the procedure established by the rural municipality or city council.
- Upon the request of the youth council, the rural municipality or city council shall forward the drafts of their hearing agendas and draft legislation regarding young people to the youth council and before the taking place of the rural municipality or city council hearings.

The Act does not imply an obligation to establish a youth council, but an obligation to support the proceedings, activities and consult the existing council.

There is no parliamentary legislation in Estonia concerning the number of the council or board members, the age range (apart from the general definition of youth in Estonia i.e. persons between 7-26 years old), the election process, the duration of the mandate, the frequency of the council/board.

Starting from 2019, ENL has a new financial scheme for 40 local municipalities in the amount of 1,000 euros, in order for them to develop the participation of young people, support the active participation and inclusion into decision-making processes. For that support, a municipality can create new participation forms, eg. youth councils, youth actives, regular meetings with young people and deciders, new e-participation solutions, etc.

There were 42 youth councils in 2019.

Higher education student union(s)

Structure

Eesti Üliõpilaskondade Liit ([EÜL](#)) - Federation of Estonian student unions - was founded on 23. November 1991, shortly after Estonia regained independence. EÜL had 27,964 members in 2017. In 2020, there were 12 universities under EÜL.

EÜL's main decision body is the EÜL council where all of our member student bodies are represented. The council decides main future plans and policies, is in charge of the budget and elects the board and different committees. The council is elected by the local unions, all students of all members are eligible to be elected as a member of the council or the board. The board currently consists of 3 persons – the chairperson and two vice-chairs. They are responsible for the following fields: social policy, educational policy, democracy and financing of higher education. The current board has a mandate of 24 months. The board is helped by a staff of about 15 employees who work in the office every day and 2 committees who gather a couple of times a year.

There is no overseeing body of the students union in Estonia.

Composition

In 2020, EÜL had 12 members. Membership to EÜL is voluntary for a student body but all Estonian students are automatically members of their HEI student body. There are no membership fees or special obligations for the students.

The age range of students is mostly 19-30 years old.

Role and responsibilities

In Estonia, the Acts concerning higher and vocational education, define the legal framework for student bodies and student councils in the education institutions, e.g. the [Vocational Educational Institutions Act](#) (2013).

Generally, the definition of a Student Body defines the body as an institution which exercises the right of the students to self-government – to decide on and manage independently, be active on the issues of student life based on the interests, needs, rights and obligations of students, also to establish a student council.

EÜL's main goal is to represent students' interests on the national level. The main issues are student rights, educational and social issues. EÜL works closely together with the parliament, the government, different ministries, higher education institutions and other partners. EÜL is also a leading NGO in Estonia and sometimes also represents students in schools, youth in general or just NGOs in different committees. EÜL is recognised as a partner for policy-making by the Ministry of Education and Research and the government.

EÜL also distributes the [ISIC](#) card which is an identity card for students, teachers and youth in general. The ISIC card is the main source of revenue for EÜL.

EÜL also finances and publishes the national student newspaper [Üliõpilasleht](#) and organises [student days](#) in Tallinn.

EÜL is a member of [NOM](#), [European Students' Union](#) and [Network of Estonian Non-profit Organizations](#).

Funding

EÜL is receiving yearly public funding as a union of youth associations from the grant scheme dedicated to youth associations administered by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

School student union(s)

Structure

The main union for school student councils is Estonian School Student Council Union ([Eesti Õpilasesinduste Liit](#) – EÕEL). EÕEL, founded in 1998, is a non-governmental politically independent organization, which represents through the member councils approximately 90 000 school students in Estonia. 186 general education schools are members of the union in November 2020.

The Union is governed by the board that is selected on yearly bases at the general assembly of the union. There are voluntary and paid workers supporting the activities of the EÕEL.

There is no overseeing body of the students union in Estonia.

Composition

The school student council union members are school councils.

The age range of school students is 7-18 in Estonia.

Role and responsibilities

In Estonia, the [Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act](#) (2010) defines the legal framework for student bodies and student councils in basic and upper secondary schools. The Act defines, that the student body of a school has the right to decide and independently organise the matters of student life in accordance with acts and legislation adopted based on acts. A student body has the right to:

- form unions and organizations with other student bodies
- become a member of Estonian and international organizations or pursue cooperation with them through a student council
- decide and organise all the other matters of student life, which fall within the competence of student bodies.
- elect a student council who represents the student body within the competence of the student council

The main aims of the EÕEL are to:

- represent school students and their council's interest
- support the work of councils in the schools;
- protect the rights of school students and their councils;
- support the quality of education and the school environment, raise the motivation to study
- support the leisure time of school students and their cooperation
- inform school students
- increase youth participation and support the development of civil society.

EÕEL is a recognised partner for policy-making for the parliament, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Social Affairs etc.

Funding

EÕEL is receiving yearly public funding as a union of youth associations from the grant scheme dedicated to youth associations administered by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

Other bodies

There are no other important top-level or lower-level bodies for youth representation that are particularly prominent or important for youth participation.

5.4 Young people's participation in policy-making

Formal Mechanisms of Consultation

The participation of young people in decision making is defined as one of four strategic objectives in the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava](#)

[2014-2020](#)). Same is in the draft document of the new development plan for the years 2021-2035.

Legal provisions

There are regulations on youth involvement. The involvement of young people in general and of youth councils is defined in the [Youth Work Act](#). The involvement of pupils and students is defined in education institutions acts, and the participation of the children in the [Child Protection Act](#).

Forms and levels of consultations

There are plenty of mechanisms for the involvement of young people in public policy processes. In general, youth participation in public policy takes place within the general framework and practice of participatory governance in Estonia. In the consultation processes, the young people are addressed as a group of stakeholders, which means that generally young people are invited to the consultation as one of the consulted parties.

The collective consultation remains an important principle underlying the interaction between the young people and the state or municipality. This means that youth consultation and involvement occurs predominantly between a youth council, organization or association on the one hand and a state, municipal, third sector or business organization on the other hand. The consultation of unorganized young people is organized through opinion markets and other forms of participation.

At the municipal level, local youth councils are consulted on topics that are relevant for youth. In 2019, the municipal youth councils were active in 42 local governments. In addition, 15 county youth councils were active, one in each county of Estonia. Most of them are now demolished as the county level municipalities were also demolished. Most often the consultation is arranged with:

- local and regional youth councils – consulted at the local or regional level
- youth organizations – consulted at local and/or national level
- student and pupils councils – consulted partner at local and national level
- participation café – a form of consultation at the local level
- umbrella organizations of youth councils and youth organizations – consulted at the national level.

Consultation methods

The youth consultation in the public policy processes occurs mainly in 3 contexts:

- drafting sectorial strategies and development plans;
- implementing sectoral strategies and development plans;
- design of the youth work services.

The main method of involving young people in drafting strategies is the participation of the representatives of youth organizations or umbrella organizations in different working groups. In these settings, the young people are informed of the developments and they can express their opinion on particular themes and partake in discussions leading to final formulations. Technically speaking, this involves the formulation of positions regarding concrete questions, participation in meetings, involvement in communication, reacting to other participants' opinions and proposals, input to official document drafts and other activities to be carried out during the process.

Regularity of consultations

The consultations take place regularly at national-level policy. As the responsible ministries for policy areas are obliged to report annually on the implementation of the policy measures, the youth representatives are also mostly consulted annually on these policy document implementation reports.

Consultations take also place case-by-case depending on the emergence of new legislation or policy proposals.

Actors

Youth actors

In general, the main umbrella organizations are involved in drafting policy programs and legislative acts as representatives of young people in Estonia:

- [National Youth Council](#) (the umbrella organization of youth associations and youth organizations);
- [Estonian School Student Councils Union](#) (the umbrella organization of school student councils);
- [Federation of Estonian Student Unions](#) (the umbrella organization of college student councils).

In the implementation phase, local youth organizations, youth councils, and youth work organizations are involved in carrying out activities of a concrete policy program.

There are no specific target groups in general consultation mechanisms defined.

Main public authorities

- the [Ministry of Education and Research](#): responsible for youth policy and education policy
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#): responsible for labor market policy, but also for social protection and services including child and family policy
- [Education and Youth Board](#), a governmental institution responsible for implementation of education and youth policy.

Additional stakeholders

- [Estonian Association of Youth Centres](#), implementing youth work in youth centers;
- [Youth Agency of the Foundation Archimedes](#), an independent body established by the government under the Ministry of Education and Research, responsible for implementing youth policy, National Agency for Erasmus+ (note: starting from 01.01.2021 is also a part of the Education and Youth Board amongst other youth and education organizations).

Information on the extent of youth participation

There are some specific mechanisms of data collection and monitoring of youth consultation, e.g. Structural Dialogue, Ombudsman for Children reviews the youth rights, youth monitor, etc. However, there is no specific data collection system on the level of youth participation.

Outcomes

Participation of young people in decision-making has two main outcomes:

1. quality of the decision;
2. development of active citizenship.

Generally, based on the consultation, a draft law or policy document is revised. There is an obligation for the government authorities to provide information on every proposal whether it has been accepted and also the reasons, if not. Policy documents progress report is generally required from the ministry appointed as a responsible body for the policy document. Usually, it is necessary to report to the Government every year the implemented activities, achieved outcomes and results. The yearly reports are bases for

the Government to renew or to terminate the implementation of the policy document. The inclusion of interested parties to the reporting procedure is advised.

Large-scale initiatives for dialogue or debate between public institutions and young people

The most important government initiative to promote youth participation has been the introduction of the annual funding scheme for youth councils and youth organizations.

Estonian National Youth Council initiated a project "[Osaluskohvikud](#)" (Eng. *youth participation cafes*) to provide platform for local politicians, civil servants, professionals working with young people, parents, etc. to meet and discuss different relevant issues with local young people from schools, youth organizations, non-organized youth interested to take part at the event, etc. The cafes have been taking place in November every year in different communities all over the country and have involved more than 1,500 participants yearly.

5.5 National strategy to increase youth participation

Existence of a national strategy to increase young people's political and civil society participation

A specific National Strategy on Youth participation does not exist but Youth participation is one of the underlying concepts and one of the strategic goals of the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#), adopted 12.08.2021. Namely the strategic goal nr 2 focuses on participation and aims that the protection of youth rights in the state is consistent and active youth participation is supported.

While youth participation has always been one of the core pillars of national youth strategies in Estonia, the measures for better involvement of youth into policy making are taken even further with the current strategy highlighting the opportunities by:

- Creating the prerequisites for an increased trust in and commitment to the state by young people;
- Ensuring that young people can express their opinion and heard out on all levels of governance;
- Empowering young people to be active citizens.

Operational programmes directing the implementation of these strategic goals are under development (tbc).

Scope and contents

The Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 outlines the main strategic goals in the field of youth, incl. the strategic goal no. 2: participation – the protection of youth rights in the state is consistent and active youth participation is supported.

The strategy also defines the underlying principles for services and policy approaches concerning youth, incl. focus on ensuring meaningful active inclusion and participation of young people in weighing options, making decisions and implementing them. Young people must have the ability to make choices, show initiative and create solutions regarding important challenges by receiving enough information, support and feedback. Young people must also have their say in the planning, design, implementation and evaluation of services intended for them. This is one way to empower young people in their development into active and caring citizens.

The strategy highlights that the way how young people perceive their inclusion and their sense of belonging depend on whether their thoughts are heard and responded to at home, at school and in the community, whether they have a sense of belonging with their peers

and whether they are included in meaningful activities within the community. It is stressed that young people need the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to participate in the society and express their opinion and also to cope with major changes in the society. Participation opportunities help to avoid social apathy or the want and need for radical self-expression. To increase participation, the rights of young people must be protected and their civic participation, including their age-appropriate involvement in representative democracy, must be supported. This is the foundation for the development of a strong civil society and the survival of democracy.

In terms of how these strategic goals are foreseen to be approached, the strategy brings up 3 areas of attention:

1. Creating the prerequisites for an increased trust in and commitment to the state by young people:

- valuing and increasing the awareness about youth rights, including the right for free time and the right to make decision about time use;
- providing young people with opportunities to use the public space and by including young people in the design process of public spaces and services intended for them;
- harnessing the potential of the youth in developing the state (inclusion in national defence, developing attitudes and providing participation opportunities in the areas of the environment, safety, security, integration, and so on).

2. Ensuring that young people can express their opinion and heard out on all levels of governance:

- increasing knowledge about the actual needs and circumstances of young people that serves as the prerequisite of youth participation via the youth sector monitoring and analysis system;
- providing young people with the prerequisites of developing the habits and skills for self-expression (including through the development of school democracy on all levels of education and enabling creative self-expression through hobby education for young people);
- providing opportunities to express one's opinion by simple and convenient means (while also ensuring the representation of risk groups and young people living abroad and the participation of young people in the development of solutions supporting participation);
- giving young people feedback about how their opinion was taken into account, showing the actual impact of their participation and thereby increasing their motivation to express their opinion;
- increasing capacity for inclusion in ministries and local governments, for example by creating area- based solutions and responsibility networks for including young people and by training the decision- makers and officials;
- creating a advisory group at the Prime Minister's office and a youth roundtable at the President's office to give young people increased opportunities to express their opinion.

3. Empowering young people to be active citizens:

- ensuring young people has opportunities to partake in representative democracy in order to support growth in electoral turnout;
- supporting youth organisations and councils in including young people and ensuring the collection and dissemination of best inclusion practices;
- supporting youth initiatives on local level;
- supporting youth participation and meaningful contribution in the community (including themanagement of NGOs and volunteer work).

There are 4 indicators that will measure the results:

- Number of participation formats
- Ratio (%) of local governments out of all local governments that have a functioning youth council
- Ratio (%) of 18–26-year-old candidates out of the total number of candidates at the local government council elections
- Ratio (%) of 15–26-year-olds who have participated in organised volunteer work

Operational programmes directing the implementation of these strategic goals are under development (tbc).

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The development plan is approved by the [Government of the Republic](#) after discussing the document at the [Riigikogu](#). The implementation of the development plan is coordinated by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) with all relevant ministries contributing within their scope.

The implementation of the development plan is based on inclusive management and organisation of youth policy. It is ensured that youth policy has a multidisciplinary approach and is based on understanding the real circumstances and needs of young people and the inclusion of young people. The management of the area is based on a youth sector monitoring and analysing system which ensures the efficiency, impact analysis and development monitoring of youth sector services. A consistent evaluation of a youth-centred policy development is organised in cooperation with the [Estonian National Youth Council](#).

The implementation of the development plan and relevant reporting is supported by a steering committee. The work of the committee is led by the Ministry of Education and Research and the committee includes representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Finance and the Government Office. Additionally, an important role is taken by youth representatives; strategic partners of the Ministry of Education and Research and experts of relevant areas are also included. The committee advises the minister, supports the consideration of the connections and impact between different areas when implementing the development plan, analyses reports and evaluates progress towards the development plan's goals. The steering committee gives recommendations for the introduction, amendment and conclusion of programmes on the basis of related progress reports and provides an evaluation regarding the amendment and conclusion of the development plan.

Following the adoption of the national youth strategy, operational programmes are developed, with key responsibility shared between the [Estonian Ministry of Education and Research](#), Department of [Youth and Talent Policy](#) and the [Education and Youth Board](#).

Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation of the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035\)](#) is part of the general mechanism established for all policy fields in Estonia. In general, it is required from the ministry appointed as a responsible body for the policy document, to report to the [Government](#) every year the implemented activities, achieved outcomes and results.

An approach to evaluation and monitoring of the strategy is also described. The implementation of the development plan, also monitoring and evaluation is coordinated by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) with all relevant ministries contributing within their scope and co-organised in cooperation with the [Estonian National Youth Council](#).

The reporting is supported by a steering committee. The work of the committee is led by the Ministry of Education and Research and the committee includes representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Finance and the Government Office. Additionally, an important role is taken by youth representatives; strategic partners of the Ministry of Education and Research and experts of relevant areas are also included. The committee advises the minister, supports the consideration of the connections and impact between different areas when implementing the development plan, analyses reports and evaluates progress towards the development plan's goals. The steering committee gives recommendations for the introduction, amendment and conclusion of programmes on the basis of related progress reports and provides an evaluation regarding the amendment and conclusion of the development plan.

Revisions/Updates

Like stated in previous sub-chapters, the measures for better involvement of youth and supporting youth participation have been taken even further with the current strategy on the visionary level. For example, the strategy aims at further advancing the participation opportunities for youth with diversifying the participation formats and introducing two new measures at highest level, like creating a advisory group at the Prime Minister's office and a youth roundtable at the President's office to give young people increased opportunities to express their opinion. Based on this, it is important to note that the operational programmes directing the implementation of these strategic goals are yet under development (tbc) which means that further updates will follow in this respect.

5.6 Supporting youth organisations

Legal/policy framework for the functioning and development of youth organisations

Youth organizations in Estonia are registered as not-for-profit organizations and defined in the [Youth Work Act](#) as follows: "a non-profit association at least two-thirds of the members of which are young people and the objective of which is the organization and performance of youth work". The Act also defines the umbrella youth organizations as "a union of youth associations is a non-profit association the members of which are youth associations".

The policy to support youth organizations is part of the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#), where 3 specific activities are planned:

1. sustainable development of traditional forms of participation (primarily such as youth councils and associations) is supported;
2. a system that ensures annual budgetary support for youth associations and councils is further developed;
3. increase in the membership of youth associations is supported by improving youth leaders' competence for inclusion.

Public financial support

There is public funding available for youth organizations in Estonia. The [Youth Work Act](#) already in 1999, when it was first adopted, established an annual grant scheme from the state budget to support youth organizations. The Act defines, that the objective of an annual grant scheme for youth associations is „the increase of the capability of youth associations and the achievement of national objectives of youth policy.“ Eligible to apply are:

- the youth associations the membership of which includes at least 500 young persons and the local units of which operate in the territory of at least one-third of the counties;
- union of youth associations the members of which include at least 30 youth associations;
- school student councils' union if it aggregates at least one-third of Estonian basic school, upper secondary school or vocational educational institution students through its members;
- federation of student unions the members of which include at least one-half of all student unions of educational institutions implementing higher education level studies.

The allocation of annual grants to youth associations is decided by the minister of Education and Research, taking into account:

- the national priorities of youth work and youth policy;
- the youth association development plan, activities and former achievements in the field;
- the scope of activities of youth association, target group, membership and capability including the performance of former duties;
- the compliance of the applicant and application with the established requirements.

The annual grant scheme does not specify the types of expenditures that are eligible for funding.

Initiatives to increase the diversity of participants

In 2015, Estonian National Youth Council started with a collaboration project „Common Youth“ (["Ühised noored"](#)), which aimed to involve young people at risk in the network of youth associations, as well as to prevent social exclusion and offences committed by young people. The project was implemented by April 2016.

Project activities involved different parties: eight youth associations, children and youth who live at-risk conditions and institutions and organizations who deal with youth at risk. Within the project, the members of youth associations were trained to involve the target group in their activities. There were also different opportunities introduced that help youth associations and organizations who deal with youth at risk to collaborate with each other. As a result of the project guidance materials were prepared in collaboration with partners and experts. Youth associations all over Estonia will be able to use the materials in the future with the aim of involving and helping youth at risk better. Project „Common Youth“ was funded through the EEA grants program „Children and Youth at Risk“.

5.7 “Learning to participate” through formal, non-formal and informal learning

Policy Framework

There are two most relevant policy documents in relation to social and civic competencies and participation of youth in Estonia:

In 2002 the Parliament adopted [The Estonian Civil Society Development Concept](#), that forms a basis for the strategic development of civil society in Estonia. The document defines principles and values that are important both for the public and non-profit sector. Under this document, the [Government](#) adopted the [Civil Society Development Plan 2015–2020](#) ([Kodanikuühiskonna arengukava](#)) prepared under the leadership of the Ministry of the Interior, which aims at the promotion of civil society in 2015–2020. The plan focuses on two priorities: socially active residents and acting capabilities of citizens' associations, i.e. ensuring that citizens' associations have sufficient possibilities for achievement of their goals. The development plan establishes the goal of participation of citizens' associations in the formation of policy as natural and valued cooperation. It is also important to increase the influence of citizens' associations in the process of dealing with social problems and improvement of the well-being of people through social innovation, social entrepreneurship and provision of public services.

The Document is implemented under the responsibility of the [Ministry of the Interior](#), who allocates the funds and contracts partners in order to ensure the implementation.

The framework of reference for the civic and social competences used in the development plan is not defined.

There are no specific youth target groups defined in the Document.

The national strategy to increase youth participation is part of the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020](#); [see chapter 5.5](#)). Please see [chapter 5.5](#) for information on the implementation and target groups of the plan. The framework of reference for the civic and social competences used in the development plan is not defined.

Formal learning

Citizenship education "Civics and citizenship education" exists as a compulsory separate subject both in basic and secondary general education. In basic school, the obligatory time taught in 2nd stage of study is 1 lesson per week and 3rd stage of study 2 lessons per week. The National curriculum for upper secondary schools defines that two courses are obligatory to be taught in Civics and citizenship education. The national curricula introduced in 2011 established several competencies related to citizenship education (values, social skills, communication skills and entrepreneurship skills) for which the specific knowledge, skills and attitudes to be mastered by the end of each ISCED level are defined.

According to the national curriculums, the following learning objectives are defined for a basic and upper secondary school in the area of social studies and in particular Civics and citizenship education.

[National curriculum for upper secondary schools](#): the objective of teaching social subjects in upper secondary school is to develop students' social competence; it refers to the ability to understand the causes and effects of the social changes taking place in the history of humankind and in modern-day society; recognize basic social scientific research methods and use some of them in studying and in everyday life; create future scenarios and visions in an area that is important socially or personally; know about and respect human rights and democracy, be informed about civil rights and duties, and be familiar with the skills and behaviour that are in accordance with them; recognize cultural specificities and follow generally accepted etiquette; and continuously show an interest in the development of one's nation, community and the world, shape one's own opinions and be an active and responsible citizen. In Civics and citizenship education students acquire social writing skills: knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary for functioning in society and making responsible decisions. The aim of the subject is to create the preconditions for the strengthening of the identity of a citizen and social cohesion, shaping active citizens, supporting the formation of readiness for dialogue and respect towards people who understand the world differently, as well as the self-awareness of students in questions regarding worldviews.

Non-formal and informal learning

Participative structures within formal education settings (e.g. pupils' participation in school councils)

In Estonia, the [Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act](#) defines the legal framework for student bodies and student councils in basic and upper secondary schools. The Act defines, that the student body of a school has the right to decide and independently organise the matters of student life in accordance with acts and legislation adopted based on acts. A student body has the right to:

- form unions and organisations with other student bodies
- become a member of Estonian and international organisations or pursue cooperation with them through a student council
- decide and organise all the other matters of student life, which fall within the competence of student bodies.
- elect a student council who represents the student body within the competence of the student council

The Acts concerning higher and vocational education, define the legal framework for student bodies and student councils in the education institutions, e.g. the [Vocational Educational Institutions Act](#) (2013).

Generally, the definition of a Student Body defines the body as an institution, which exercises the right of the students to self-government – to decide on and manage independently, be active on the issues of student life based on the interests, needs, rights and obligations of students, also to establish a student council.

Measures to encourage student participation in the local community and wider society

The Network of Estonian Non-profit Organizations in cooperation with Estonian Youth Work Centre and the Ministry of education and research launched a programme [Community practice](#) (*kogukonnapraktika*) in 2015. Supported by European Social Fund and state budget the programme aims to introduce a practical community work as part of the curricula of civic education for upper secondary level. The cooperation programme provides students with the opportunity to experience a short-term practical work period.

Partnerships between formal education providers, youth organisations and youth work providers

The [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) defines the following policy goals in relation to partnerships between formal education providers, youth organisations and youth work providers:

- measures are devised and implemented for systematic cross-sectoral and inter-agency communication and collaboration;
- youth work in schools is enhanced;
- the use of youth work tools and training resources are supported in formal education.

The financial support for these policy measures is not specified but is part of larger programmes supporting youth work and the implementation of the Development plan in general.

Supporting non-formal learning initiatives focusing on social and civic competences

In Estonia, the youth participation and initiatives to support the capability to participate through non-formal learning are generally supported via youth work provision as the participation is defined in Estonia both as a goal and as a method in youth work. There are specific policy goals defined in the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) and there

is systematic public financing available. In general, the youth work programmes supporting the participation include support scheme for youth organisations and youth councils, there are training programmes available for youth workers both as higher education and as training (see [chapter 1](#) for additional information). In the plan, the specific attention is given to the target group of youth at risk of exclusion due to several reasons. Please see [chapter 5.5.](#) for further information.

Quality assurance/quality guidelines for non-formal learning

There is no single system of quality assurance/quality guidelines specific to non-formal learning activities/projects in general. There is support for youth work quality initiated by Estonian Youth Work Centre (starting from 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Board](#)) and there is a mechanism to monitor policy implementation (see [chapter 5.5.](#)), however, the participation of young people is considered as a part of youth work and youth policy goals.

Educators' support

There is no specific certification in the area of civic educators established in Estonia. There is a possibility to gain professional education as a teacher and youth worker, both professions include competencies in relation to civic education and participation as part of the occupational standard.

Until 2019, there was a [regular offer of training and materials](#) available for people working in formal and non-formal settings with young people systematically provided [by Youth Agency of the Archimedes Foundation](#) (starting from 01.01.2021 the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps).

There is an [initiative to create a network of stakeholders](#) active in the civic education field in order to support the development of cooperation inside and between formal and non-formal education.

5.8 Raising political awareness among young people

Information providers / counselling structures

Public authorities

Youth information belongs to the area of responsibility of the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), a central organisation responsible for the system of Rajaleidja (Pathfinder) centres is [Education and Youth Board](#), which is also implementing youth policy, including the development of the provision of youth information.

Contact points for youth and youth information and counselling structures

Youth information has been recognized as a specific field in youth work since 2001. There was a separate system of youth information centres, which in 2014 were merged with career guidance centres (career guidance was transferred to the Unemployment Insurance Fund in 2018). In 2020, there were 16 centralised publicly financed centres in all counties. The regional youth guidance centres, called [Pathfinder centres](#) (Rajaleidja), provide information and counselling for young people up to 26 years.

There are also dedicated websites available for the provision of youth information:

- [National portal](#)
- Web-sites providing information for youth, e.g. [Rajaleidja](#); [Teeviit](#)
- Regional youth information portals such as [Põlva Noored](#); [Noorteinfo](#)

The centres and youth information activities are receiving annual public funding.

Youth-targeted information campaigns about democratic rights and democratic values

There was [an initiative in 2016](#) supported by public funding from the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) of the [Estonian National Youth Council](#) connected with the change in the voting system, that allowed 16 and 17 years old to vote first time in the 2017 local elections. The initiative offered schools the opportunity to invite young people from the National Youth Council to give a lesson or a simulation exercise for pupils.

The National Youth Council also promotes the visibility of youth participation through photo-project [#noorednähtaval](#).

Promoting the intercultural dialogue among young people

In Estonia, the issue of cultural diversity is among the most important policy areas considering there are representatives of around 190 nationalities living in Estonia. The area of integration responsibility area of the [Ministry of Culture](#), where there is also the position of the Undersecretary of Cultural diversity. The ministry is in charge of the coordination of the strategy of integration and social cohesion in Estonia "[Integrating Estonia 2020](#)" ([Lõimuv Eesti 2020](#)). The general objective of the strategy is that Estonian society is integrated and socially cohesive; people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds actively participate in society and share democratic values. In the framework of the strategy, several objectives are defined relevant to social inclusion of young people and intercultural awareness:

- Supporting the awareness of common information space and of cultural diversity
- Supporting everyday contacts, communication and involvement in society
- Supporting the native language and culture of ethnic minorities
- Creating opportunities for less integrated Estonian permanent residents with a foreign background for increasing their social activity and supporting their integration.
- Promotion of equal treatment on the labour market
- Offering adaptation training programmes and developing support services and adaptation training targeted at new arrivals
- Ensuring competitive education opportunities for individuals and improving the knowledge of the official language of individuals with a native language different from Estonian

The youth-specific objective of the strategy is "Students with a native language different from Estonian actively participate in youth work and have close contacts with Estonian-speaking peers." The objective shall be achieved through increasing opportunities for initiatives, joint activities and increasing the involvement of young people in youth work. The measure is based on the activities under the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#). The aim is to increase the capability of the youth work field to create and develop a socialising environment suitable for young people and support young people's own initiatives and the organising of youth projects. It supports the self-initiative of young people and common activities through youth work; various forms of participation are created and developed and youth workers are trained for work with different youth groups.

Promoting transparent and youth-tailored public communication

Currently, in Estonia there is no policy frameworks, guidelines or initiatives on transparent public communication targeting specifically young people.

See more about the national distribution and development of youth information from [Chapter 10.7](#).

5.9 E-participation

The most important e-participation tool in Estonia is e-voting. As of 2019, Estonia has held 11 elections over ten years, where people could cast legally binding votes over the internet i.e. e-vote. The share of people using e-voting has increased over the elections: the share of e-voters in the first e-enabled elections in 2005 was 1.9%, in European Parliament elections in 2019 46.7% of votes were cast online. During the last two elections in 2019, the percentage of e-voters has increased significantly.

For the last four consecutive elections, 2015 national, 2017 local, 2019 national and, 2019 European Parliament elections, e-voting is mostly used by middle-aged people, between 35–45 years old. The share of the youngest voting-eligible age segment, people between 16 to 24 years old is very small i.e. e-voters comprise a clearly smaller share out of voters within the 16–24 age group than they do among the 35–45 age group. The distribution of age among active e-voters mirrors the finding that voting online in Estonia is not the most popular option among the youngest and presumably most tech-savvy citizens.

The 16 and 17-years-old young people had the first possibility to vote at local elections that took place in October 2017. The percentage of e-voters from all voters at the age-group was 0.9%. There were 1,794 young people who gave their vote via e-voting, which is 7.4% of all the young people aged 16-17 and 0.6% of all young people in Estonia aged 7-26.

There are several e-services and online opportunities created to express opinions, however, these are open to the general public, not only to young people. On the local level, there have been initiatives of online participation such as inclusive budgeting, however, these are not youth-specific.

5.10 Current debates and reforms

In Estonia currently, innovative forms of youth participation are sought including supported by e-services and technologies.

Smart youth work including youth work using the developments of the technology is a subject of high-priority in youth policy throughout the youth field development plan period until 2020 and now with the new period up to 2035 as well. See more about smart youth work in [Chapter 10.4](#).

6. EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Estonia's demographic trends are having a deep impact on education. The number of children in pre-school education was on the rise until 2015 and is falling in the following years as children born in the years with the highest birth rates are reaching school age. In the academic year 2019/20, just over 153,000 children and young people were studying in general education schools. Tertiary educational attainment is one of the highest in the EU. The employment rate of recent graduates has recovered after the economic crisis. The number of adult learners is increasing. For example, 20.1% of the Estonian population aged between 25 and 64 participated in formal education or in non-formal training in 2019 (17.6% in 2016). See more in [chapter 6.1](#).

The main governmental authority responsible for education and training is [the Ministry of Education and Research](#). The main function of the Ministry of Education and Research is to ensure targeted and effective development of education, research, youth and language policy, and a high level and competitiveness of research and development. See more in [chapter 6.2](#).

6.1 General context

Main trends in young people's participation in education and training

Participation in formal education

Estonia's demographic trends are having a deep impact on education. The number of children in pre-school education was on the rise until 2015 and is falling in the following years as children born in the years with the highest birth rates are reaching school age. The last time the number of first-grade students exceeded 15,000 was in 2000. At the same time, the number of gymnasium students (general upper secondary) fell and that of basic school students (lower secondary) grew.

In the academic year 2019/20, just over 153,000 children and young people were studying in general education schools. Initial estimates suggest that this is about two thousand more than the last academic year. The increase in the number of students concerns primarily larger towns and the suburbs of Tallinn. In most of the remaining local government units, the number of children continues to decrease or is stabilizing.

The decreasing number of schoolchildren in the past 15 years has also affected higher education institutions – the number of university students continues to fall. While the number of vocational students remains stable, the average age of learners is increasing, i.e. vocational schools attract an increasing number of people who have completed their education and wish to improve their professional skills or retrain. Tertiary educational attainment is one of the highest in the EU. The employment rate of recent graduates has recovered after the economic crisis. The number of adult learners is increasing. For example, 20.1% of the Estonian population aged between 25 and 64 participated in formal education or in non-formal training in 2019 (17.6% in 2016).

Achievers and underachievers in formal education

Estonia continues to have a well-performing education system combining a low proportion of underachievers with a low impact of socioeconomic status on education outcomes. Estonia ranks very high among the EU countries participating in [PISA](#). The proportion of low achievers in reading, maths, and science is small and the impact of socioeconomic background on results is low. However, there are performance differences between Russian-speaking and Estonian-speaking students, and between rural and urban schools. The average performance of Russian-speaking students is lower, although the skills gap has decreased.

Early in 2016 [OECD published a report on low-performing students](#) and the reasons for poor performance, based on PISA 2012. In Estonia, the share of low-performing students (below the baseline level) aged 15 is the smallest in both Europe and the world. The proof of the uniform strength of Estonian schools lies in the fact that the difference in the shares of low-performing lower secondary students in rural and city schools is the smallest compared with other PISA countries

Early school leaving and drop-out rates

Reducing early school leaving remains a challenge in the context of the increasing demand for high-skilled workers. In 2015, the share of early school leavers was 11.2% and around the EU average, but above the strategy "[Estonia 2020](#)" ([Konkurentsivõime kava "Eesti 2020"](#)) target, which is 9.5%. According to the Estonian Education Information System (EHIS), about 20% of young people fail to complete secondary education within 7 years of finishing basic school and Estonia is the only OECD country where the share of secondary education graduates is decreasing in younger age groups.

The drop-out rates from mainstream basic schools are brought out in the [Lifelong Learning Strategy](#) ([Elukestva õppe strateegia](#)) and the rates have stabilized (in 2008–2012 the dropout rates were 0.9%–0.6%–0.5%–0.5%–0.6% respectively). This indicates that support measures (establishment of counseling centers, implementation of the principles

of inclusive education, including support measures implemented under the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, teacher training, etc.) have served their purpose. Drop-out rates from the 1st years of upper secondary schools have stabilized at around 1%: in 2008–2012, the drop-out rates were 0.9%–1%–1.1%–1.4%–1.1% respectively).

Students' dropout rates from VET and higher education are still very high. Drop-outs are particularly a problem in the first year of upper secondary vocational educational training (VET) (22.4 % in 2016), but it is on a decreasing trend. In secondary VET, the dropout rate (during the first year of studies) has decreased from 26.2 in 2012 to 24.7 in 2015. However, it is far below the 2020 target (less than 20%).

Mobility

According to the Eurydice report „[Mobility Scoreboard: Higher Education Background report](#)“ 8% of Estonian students took in 2012/13 a degree in a different education system. The share of tertiary students enrolled abroad in 2012/13 was 5.3%. The share of students participating in the Erasmus program based on total enrolments in 2013/14 was 1.7%. According to the [2019 report](#) of the Ministry of Education and Research, in 2017 almost 4,000 students were studying abroad.

The attractiveness of Estonia as a target country has increased among foreign students. The number of foreign students has more than doubled over the past five years (from 1,573 in the academic year 2011/12 to 3,476 in 2015/16). In 2019, the ratio of foreign students in Estonia was around 12.2%.

Organisation of the education and training system

In Estonia, the obligation to attend school applies to children who have attained 7 years of age by 1 October of the current year. Children up to 7 years may attend preschool childcare institutions. The obligation to attend schools lasts until basic education is acquired or until a student attains 17 years of age.

The Estonian education system is decentralized. The division of responsibility between the state, local government and school is clearly defined. The organization of education:

- preschool education (ISCED level 0) is for children aged from 1.5 to 7 years of
- basic education (ISCED levels 1 and 2) is the minimum compulsory general education. The basic school includes grades 1–9
- upper secondary education (ISCED level 3) is based on basic education and is divided into general secondary education, which is acquired in upper-secondary schools and vocational upper-secondary education, which is acquired in vocational schools. The length of general upper-secondary education is 3 years (grades 10–12).
- vocational education is
 - vocational upper-secondary education (ISCED level 3), which can be entered after basic school and where the study volume is 180 credit points (the volume of vocational education curricula is calculated in VET credit points- EKAP);
 - post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4), which may be acquired after graduation from upper secondary school. The study volume of VET after secondary education is 120–150 credit points.
 - vocational education for people with unfinished basic education, who can enter VET studies, the study volume is 15–120 credit points (ISCED 2).
- higher education (ISCED levels 6, 7 and 8) may be acquired as professional higher education in a vocational school, institution of professional higher education or in academic higher education. The general structure of academic study has three levels or cycles: Bachelor's study, Master's study, Doctoral study.

- adult education is divided into formal education and continuing education. Formal education acquired within the adult education system allows adults to acquire general lower and upper secondary education at adult upper secondary schools. In addition to formal education, VET and higher education institutions provide continuing education and retraining courses.

For further information, please consult the [Overview of the Estonian education system in Eurydice](#).

Main concepts

The main concepts of education and training are defined in the [Strategy of Lifelong Learning](#).

Lifelong learning combines formal education (kindergarten, basic education, secondary education, vocational education, higher education) and education offered outside that - re- and further training, non-formal and informal learning. The new knowledge and skills can be obtained from work, free education, hobby education, youth work, participation in civil society activities, or even virtual spaces.

Non-formal learning is defined as learning that takes place outside the school lessons, is undertaken consciously, has a purpose to develop yourself. Non-formal education can happen in different environments, where learning and teaching might not be the only nor main function. Non-formal education is targeted like formal education but is voluntary.

Informal learning is non-targeted learning from the learners' point of view that happens in daily life situations (e.g. family, work, free time, etc.). The results of informal learning might not be seen straight away.

Formal education takes place in the school environment and is organized based on curriculums. Formal education is targeted and it is carried out by teachers with special preparation and qualification.

6.2 Administration and governance

Cross-sectorial cooperation

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policy-making and implementation, which also covers the area of education and training of youth. 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, monitoring the cooperation and in case of need initiating the cooperation - is granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#). The [Ministry of Finance](#) also plays a coordinating role in planning, monitoring and ensuring the division of resources of different financial instruments including the state budget, among all the policy fields.

Governance

The main governmental authority responsible for education and training is [the Ministry of Education and Research](#). The main function of the Ministry of Education and Research is to ensure targeted and effective development of education, research, youth and language policy, and a high level and competitiveness of research and development. For detailed information on the tasks of the Ministry, please consult the section ["Administration and Governance at Central and/or Regional Level of the Estonian education system" in Eurydice](#).

The main other Governmental authorities relevant to Education and Training:

- the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#): responsible for developing entrepreneurship and economic affairs;

- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#): responsible for labour market policy, but also for social protection and services including child and family policy.

The main public actor starting from 01.08.2020 is the [Education and Youth Board](#), which is responsible for the implementation of education and youth policy.

The main non-public actors:

- Estonian School Students Union ([Eesti Õpilasesinduste Liit](#)), uniting student councils in general education schools;
- Estonian Students Union ([Eesti Üliõpilasesinduste Liit](#)), uniting student councils in higher education;
- Estonian Teachers Union ([Eesti Õpetajate Liit](#)), representing pedagogical professionals;
- Estonian Association of School Heads ([Eesti Koolijuhtide Ühendus](#)), unites and represents headmasters of general education schools;
- [The Estonian Association for Advancement of Vocational Education](#) ([Eesti Kutseõppe Edendamise Ühing](#)), a voluntary organisation that has as its goal the development of higher quality Vocational Education;
- [Universities Estonia](#) ([Rektorite Nõukogu](#)), non-profit organisation uniting universities represented by rectors;
- [Estonian Rectors' Conference of Universities of Applied Sciences](#) ([Rakenduskõrgkoolide Rektorite Nõukogu](#)) is the cooperation body for Estonian universities of applied sciences;
- [Association of Estonian Adult Educators Andras](#) ([Eesti Täiskasvanute Koolitajate Assotsiatsioon](#));
- National Youth Council ([Eesti Noorteühenduste Liit](#)), the umbrella organization of youth associations and youth organisations;
- [The Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities](#) (Eesti Linnade ja Valdade Liit), representing cities and rural municipalities.

The general distribution of responsibilities

The responsibility for education and training is divided between the central government and local government. The regional (county) governments are abolished since 1.01.2018.

Local governments are vested with the primary responsibility for the accessibility of general education (from preschool to upper secondary education), the fulfilment of compulsory school attendance, maintenance of preschool childcare institutions and schools. For detailed information on the tasks of the local government, please consult the section [Administration and Governance at Local and/or Institutional Level](#) in Eurydice.

6.3 Preventing early leaving from education and training (ELET)

National strategy

There is no comprehensive strategy for early leaving.

Formal education: main policy measures on ELET

Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020

The [Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020](#) sets among key indicators the need to reduce the % of early leavers from education and training (% of the population aged 18-24 with at most lower secondary education and not in further education or training) to the

level below 9% by 2020. At the end of 2020, the level is around 10%. In order to reach this goal among other key indicators, five policy aims have been set:

1. Change in the approach to learning.
2. Competent and motivated teachers and school leadership.
3. Concordance of lifelong learning opportunities with the needs of the labour market.
4. A digital focus in lifelong learning.
5. Equal opportunities and increased participation in lifelong learning.

In a thematic report [„Young people with low level of education“ \(2016\)](#) Ministry of Education and Research underlines, that all the measures were taken under the strategy in all the areas of education – especially general and vocational education, but also measures related to teacher training and guidance provision play crucial part in addressing the issue of ELET in Estonia.

Policy measures in general education

Guidance and counselling

In order to support education acquisition and to prevent early leaving from education and training, the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act guarantees educational support services to all students, enabling them to get psychological counselling, speech therapy and study counselling.

In addition to the guidance opportunities provided in the framework of the curriculum, there are centres to provide the service outside the school for young people. There are 16 centralised public centres in all counties. The regional youth guidance centres, called Pathfinder centres (Rajaleidja), provide career information, career counselling, psychological, socio-pedagogical, special education counselling and speech therapy. Career guidance is provided for young people up to 26 years. The other 4 services are focused on the need for children and youth (aged 1.5 – 18) with special educational needs and practitioners main direct target group is school personnel and parents.

Starting from 2017, the career services are under the administration of the [Unemployment Insurance Fund](#). They have career information rooms and job search workshops for people of all ages.

Data gathering

Estonian Education Information System analyses ELET data once a year for aggregating education statistics, but schools approve the data on a monthly basis which allows for ad hoc extractions of data. The Estonian Educational Information System (EEIS) is a national register that consolidates information on the education system, including information on educational institutions, pupils, teachers, graduation documents and curricula. Local governments can use EEIS to access information on the pupils living in their territory, and on those who have moved to a school located in the territory of another local government. Educational institutions are obliged to enter information into the EEIS and to check and amend the entered information for accuracy. Pupils and teachers can view the education-related information held on them. The register tracks each student's educational career. It is also visible if the student has dropped out of school and if he/she has continued in an evening school, vocational school etc. The register does not provide data about entry into the labour market.

Policy measures in vocational education

In secondary VET, the dropout rate (during the first year of studies) has decreased from 26.2 in 2012 to 24.7 in 2015. However, in 2019, the rate was 21.2, which is more than the 2020 target (less than 20%).

ELVET rate has been set as one of the performance indicators for VET institutions related also to the level of financing, which has increased the attention in schools to the problem and has prompted schools to redesign support systems for students in VET, also to develop

new initiatives and measures to reduce the ELVET rate. Each VET school has been assigned with specific ELVET level to be reached in the school's development plan. Best practice seminars are held between the schools.

The improved cooperation with regional youth guidance centre (Pathfinder centres) has supported better organisation of entrance and beginning of studies in VET, also the individual support for students.

Guidance and training for students with special educational needs have been developed and delivered for VET teachers so as to reduce high rates of ELVET.

Specific target groups identified in the youth population

According to thematic report [„Young people with low level of education“ \(2016\)](#), 66% of dropouts during the last five academic years (2010/2011 – 2014/2015) in basic schools are men, 86% of them have studied in Estonian as a language of instruction and 14% in Russian (compared to 89% and 11% in total). After the graduation of basic school, 4.5-5% will not continue their studies. 71% of those have low study results in their final exams. In vocational secondary education, 18.2% of men drop out the school compared to 15.3% of women. The lower the study result in final exams in the basic school was for a student, the more probable is leaving the vocational education studies early.

According to the data from PISA ([OECD 2016](#)), social-economical indicators most correlated to predicted low performance in school is the parents' foreign origin (both parents are born in a foreign country) and the language spoken at home. Inequality in length of studies is most related to family background, home language and gender: a boy from a family with other home language than Estonian, with two parents with basic education and few books at home studies 5 years less than a girl with highly educated parents, Estonian as a language and good learning environment at home (report [„Young people with low level of education“ \(2016\)](#)).

Addressing ELET through non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

The [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) brings out as one of the indicators the decrease in the proportion of young people (aged 18-24) with a basic or lower level of education who do not continue in education. All the measures taken in the framework of this development plan support young people's self-determination, motivation for and positive experiences of learning, inclusion and active participation in society hence supporting prevention of ELET, returning to and coping with formal studies. The plan is aimed at all young people from 7 to 26 years old. The activities in the framework of the Youth Field Development plan are financed mostly from state budget via the Ministry of Education and Research.

The [Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020](#) brings out activities to prevent dropouts, but none of the activities is connected with youth work.

Cross-sector coordination and monitoring of ELET interventions

There is no mechanism established that can be considered a systematic partnership amongst the public and non-public actors who play a significant role in preventing ELET and compensating for its consequences. At the local level the networking mechanisms exist between the specialist from the different field working with youth, however, they are not specifically targeting ELET as the main task.

[Results of YG monitoring for 2015](#) show that the YG scheme in Estonia reached less than a quarter (23.3%) of NEETs aged under 25, though this represents a small improvement compared to 2014 (19.7%). Over half (55.3%) of those leaving the scheme in 2015 took up an offer within 4 months of registration, slightly less than in 2014 (58.3%). Follow-up data to look at subsequent outcomes are not yet available.

6.4 Validation of non-formal and informal learning

Arrangements for the validation of non-formal and informal learning

For the recognition of non-formal and informal education, VÕTA system, which takes into account earlier studies and work experience, has been developed in Estonia. Its objective is to make visible and value any knowledge and skills regardless of where these were acquired.

VÕTA allows recognising:

1. earlier formal education acquired within the adult education system;
2. knowledge obtained during further training or individually;
3. knowledge and skills obtained from working experience.

Recognising the learning and working experience requires that the educational institutions opened up to a new approach, agreed on procedures and rules and were ready to address every person individually. Please see [chapter 3.5](#) for a more detailed description of VÕTA system in Estonia.

Procedures for the validation

The learning gained through a work-related, hobby or other daily life activities is proved by reference to or presentation of completed works, a portfolio of samples, a copy of a professional certificate, employment contract, certificate of appointment or any other documentary evidence.

Young people can also describe their knowledge, skills and practical experience acquired through youth work using a designated online tool [Teeviit](#) (formerly known as Stardiplats). There is a growing number of registered users of the portal, which was launched in 2010 by the Estonian Youth Work Centre (since 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Board](#)) in order to facilitate the recognition of knowledge and skills acquired through youth work. The tool is based on self-assessment and provides young people the opportunity to generate CV based on the descriptions.

Procedures for obtaining formal education qualifications

In Estonia, the qualifications acquired in general, vocational and higher education are described on the basis of learning outcomes (competencies). The principles of the recognition of non-formal and informal learning have been defined by legislation.

Qualification awarding bodies, including educational institutions and awarding bodies of vocational qualifications, prepare their procedures for the recognition of prior learning and work experience (VÕTA procedures) following these principles.

Currently, a person can have his or her prior learning and work experience (including apprenticeship and traineeship) evaluated and recognized by the designated body (VÕTA commission) of the educational institution. Educational institutions may recognize prior learning and work experience both on the completion of the curriculum and when awarding qualifications recognizing the prior learning and work experience as an ECTS and ECVET ie it is possible to obtain credits on the bases of prior learning, traineeships, and apprenticeships. Educational institutions must inform students about the conditions of and procedure for the recognition of prior learning and work experience, including the terms and cost of assessment as well as the conditions of contesting the results, and ensure that all applicants have access to the necessary information, guidance and counselling.

For further information please consult section [Validation of Non-Formal and Informal learning](#) in Eurydice.

There is no specific target group(s) within the youth population defined in Estonia for which the validation of competences acquired through non-formal and informal learning is specifically supported.

There is no specific program for the development of the professional competences of staff involved in the validation process, but different educational institutions train their staff themselves.

Information and guidance

Educational institutions must inform students about the conditions of and procedure for the recognition of prior learning and work experience, including the terms and cost of assessment as well as the conditions of contesting the results, and ensure that all applicants have access to the necessary information, guidance and counselling

Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#) (until 31.12.2020 the Youth Agency of Foundation Archimedes) manages and develops the portal [Mitteformaalne](#) aimed at promoting non-formal and informal learning of youth, raising awareness of its value and opportunities for recognition, including [Youthpass](#). The portal is widely known among youth workers in Estonia.

Quality assurance

No system of quality assurance of the procedures and/or the criteria/indicators/standards used to assess for the validation of non-formal and informal competences exists in Estonia.

6.5 Cross-border learning mobility

Policy framework

The more important directions and choices in Estonian education have been set out in the [Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020](#), which emphasises, inter alia, the importance of openness, tolerance and international cooperation in the development of the lifelong learning system. Additionally, the strategy highlights the relevance of internationalisation in the preparation of employees in the areas of economic growth. It is also necessary to support the introduction of international experience and competence in the institutions of higher education with a view to improving the quality and attractiveness of education. It is of importance to make an effort to participate in the global labour market, which requires an increasingly stronger focus on professional knowledge and skills, foreign language skills, cultural awareness and tolerance. Similarly, the benefits to society from the internationalisation of education need to be explained. For more detailed information by the level of education, please consult the section "[Mobility and internationalisation](#)" in [Eurydice](#).

Higher Education

The implementation programme of the [Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020](#) in the area of higher education – the [Higher education programme 2020-2023](#) - highlights the role of the internationalisation of education in supporting the development of Estonian areas of economic growth and the quality of higher education. Providing academic and professional foreign language training in Estonia, paying attention to work practice opportunities and creating employment opportunities for graduates in the Estonian labour market are also integral to the internationalisation. The same principles are supported by the Estonia's competitiveness strategy 'Estonia 2020', which also recognises the relevance of internationalising at home – attracting talents to the areas important for Estonia and becoming more active in hiring foreign teaching staff in Estonian institutions of higher education to give the local students unable to study in a foreign institution of higher education an opportunity to have a contact with an international environment.

Vocational Education

According to [the European Commission's Mobility Scoreboard](#) on IVET, Estonia has a policy intention to integrate international learning mobility experiences in the curricula of IVET programmes. This can be seen from some paragraphs from the Act for Vocational Education Institutions, in particular:

1. Paragraph 26, which establishes that in the application of Estonian vocational education credit points, the European Credit System for Vocational Education and Training, ECVET, shall be used; and
2. Paragraph 22, which stipulates that the Vocational Education Standard sets out the principles for recognition of prior learning and professional experience that is closely connected with learning mobility.

The Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy's Vocational Education Programme sets an overall goal for improving international cooperation in general. The goal of the programme is to support participation in the Erasmus+ Programme to increase the student and teacher mobility and school participation in international networks. The Vocational Education Programme is updated every year with regard to the upcoming four years and confirmed by the Minister of Education and Research. In addition, most of the vocational institutions in Estonia have set qualitative and quantitative targets in its development plan to improve international cooperation between vocational institutions and increase the IVET learner's mobility. Some schools have compiled even its own internationalisation strategy with specific IVET mobility indicators (e.g. "the share of students participating in mobility" or "the number of implemented mobility projects").

Main cross-border mobility programmes for students in formal education

The following national mobility programmes are available:

- Youth for Understanding ([YFU](#)) exchange programmes in general secondary education, in-and outgoing exchanges for several periods (year, semester and summer programmes). The programme is financed largely by private budgets of participants.
- [Erasmus+](#) short and long term study mobility: under the cooperation projects of general education school; student mobility in higher education and vocational education, work practice of vocational educational institutions under Erasmus+ study mobility; duration varies from the 19 days to year depending from the specific action line. The Erasmus+ is financed by the EU budget and in general, the allocation covers travel and living costs for young people.
- [Kristjan Jaak scholarship programme](#): a national scholarship programme initiated in cooperation between the Ministry of Education and Research and Archimedes Foundation with a view to supporting the studies abroad of Master's and Doctoral students enrolled at Estonian institutions of higher education and academic and research related secondments abroad of the Master's and Doctoral students (and teaching staff). Duration of the mobility period varies from 30 days to the whole period of the degree studies (Master's and Doctoral studies). The allocation supports travel and living costs. The programme is financed by the public budget.
- [Young scholar grant programme](#): a scholarship programme founded in cooperation between private companies, the Ministry of Education and Research and Archimedes Foundation, aimed at supporting talented upper secondary school graduates towards acquiring a Bachelor's degree in acknowledged foreign universities. The programme provides general grant of 4 000 euros. The budget is combined from public and private sources.
- [DoRa Plus](#). The programme supports 1-10 month outward and inward study mobility of young researchers and Master's students. Dora Plus' total budget from 1.08.2015-

31.05.2023 is 22.5 million euros. The programme covers generally travel and living costs.

- [Compatriots programme 2014-2020](#). Supporting the studies of expatriate Estonian youth at Estonian public universities, state institutions of professional higher education and vocational educational institutions. The budget covers the starting sum and travel and living costs for students.
- [Kindred peoples programme IV](#). A programme launched to support the languages and cultures of the indigenous Uralic peoples (Finno-Ugric and Samoyed) under which Doctoral or Master's studies in Estonian state universities of people of Finno-Ugric origin living in Russia are funded. The grant covers travel and living costs.
- [National Scholarship Programme for International Students, Researchers and Teaching Staff](#). A scholarship schema, which is partially based on the foreign agreements of the Ministry of Education and Research and offers students scholarships for formal education, exchange programmes and participation in summer schools.
- Scholarships for the academic study of the Estonian language and culture by foreign students. The programme awards the scholarship [Estophilus](#), under which funding is provided for Estonia-related studies and research carried out in Estonia by Masters and Doctoral students or researchers holding a Doctoral degree who are enrolled in foreign institutions of higher education. In addition, the participation in intermediate and advanced summer or winter courses of the Estonian language and culture is supported.
- [Ministry of Foreign Affairs scholarships](#). The Ministry of Foreign Affairs offers Masters and Doctoral scholarships under the instruments of development cooperation to the citizens of the development cooperation states of relevance for Estonia. Scholarship applications must be submitted by universities on a project basis, i.e., students cannot apply for the scholarship directly. After that, the students have the possibility to apply directly from the university.

Promoting mobility in the context of non-formal learning, and of youth work

The cross-border mobility in non-formal learning and youth work in Estonia is in large part based on the opportunities offered through Erasmus+ programme i.e. opportunities for learning mobility for youth groups (youth exchanges) and individuals (European Voluntary Service).

Estonian Ministry of Education and Research also has established cooperation with Japan to provide a mutual learning opportunity for young people under which a regular exchange of youth groups takes place. The programme is financed by public budgets of Japan and Estonia.

Quality assurance

In general, the quality assurance system for cross-border mobility programmes listed above is based on the legal framework of the programme (such as the legal base for the Erasmus+ programme) and consists of the following elements:

1. programme steering group/committee in charge of allocating the grant in accordance with the legal base;
2. annual reporting.

The reporting is in general considered as an input for the national policy programme annual reporting. The annual reporting on the policy level is connected to set the targets for the next years together with planning future allocation.

6.6 Social inclusion through education and training

Educational support

The target groups identified in official documents

The term "student with special educational needs" refers in Estonia to a student whose talent, learning difficulties, health status, disability, behavioural and emotional disorders, longer-term absence from schooling or insufficient proficiency in language of instruction of a school bring about the need to make changes or adjustments in the subject matter, process, duration, workload or environment of study (e.g., teaching materials, school rooms, language of communication, including a sign language or other alternative means of communication, support staff, teachers who have received special training), in the expected learning outcomes or in the work plan drawn up by a teacher for working with a class.

The term "higher education student with a special need" is applied for a student who has a hearing, vision or movement disability or a special psychological need or any other disability with functional impairment due to which he or she requires support services for participation in the study and successful studying.

Students in threat of being excluded from education include students with socio-economic difficulties, behavioural disorders and problems, students whose mother language is other than the language of instruction, new immigrants, health-related problems.

Policies in the context of formal education

According to the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, everyone has the right to education. According to the Education Act and the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, Estonia has an inclusive education policy and every child has the right to attend a preschool child care institution of his or her residence area or study, according to a curriculum of an appropriate level (the national curriculum for basic schools, the national curriculum for upper secondary schools, the simplified national curriculum for basic schools), in an ordinary class of a school close to home and to receive different kinds of support to study.

The general objectives of education of students with special needs are not different from the general objectives of the corresponding educational level and do not depend on whether it is conducted in mainstream or in special schools. According to the general concept of disability policy of the Republic of Estonia, equal rights to preschool, basic, secondary and higher education must be guaranteed for people with special needs. Please consult the section ["Educational Support and Guidance" in Eurydice](#) for further information.

Programmes/projects/initiatives in non-formal learning, informal learning, and youth work

["Inclusion of youth at risk of exclusion and improvement of youth employability"](#) is a governmental programme supported through European Social Fund and implemented until 2023. During this period, many different sub-programmes are implemented (the Youth Prop-Up Programme, the Youth Summer Work Programme, Community Practice, Mobile Workshops, Youth Initiatives) aimed at supporting youth participation in youth work, education and/or employment, paying special attention to youth at risk of exclusion. Most of the activities have ended, but some still continue until the end of the programme. In addition to these programmes, support is also provided to local governments to develop and improve their youth work services in order to reach youth currently not taking part in youth work and provide young people with more opportunities to participate in youth work. For this, local governments must co-operate with each other. Together they map the situation of youth work (i.e., available youth work services, available youth workers, the number of young people, etc.) and plan activities that best meet the needs of young people and the local communities. In addition, we have planned activities to increase knowledge about young people and the effectiveness of youth work measures created for them (this

includes among other things various analysis and studies). Furthermore, through the programme, youth workers are provided various training opportunities (several long-term and thematic training activities are focused on inclusion, e.g., how to involve more young people in NEET status, how to develop an awareness of intercultural learning and diversity in youth work, etc.).

[EEA grants programme “Children and Youth at Risk”](#) – a programme implemented in 2012-2017. The aim of the programme was to improve the well-being of children and young people at risk. For this, many different projects were implemented. For example, the HUKK-AP project (involving and developing hobby schools) was aimed to create more opportunities for young people to take part in youth work and to increase their competences for continuing education or for being successful in the labour market. As a result of the project, 3 231 young people with fewer opportunities participated in hobby activities, 69 new regional hobby groups were established and 1647 specialists working participated in training and mentoring. All of this has helped to make hobby schools more inclusive. [The HUKK-AP Project](#) - Involvement of Organisations Working in Area of Hobby Education for Young People – was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Research and implemented by Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency (since 01.01.2021 the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#)). The aim of the programme was to support the variety of hobby activities, their efficiency and suitability for youngsters` needs. The objective is to create prerequisites and working solutions in order to involve disadvantaged youngsters in hobby education. It is important to support opportunities for participating, introduce new methods and increase competencies of educators that enable to increase access of disadvantaged young people to hobby education, mostly in the are of culture and art education.

The main directions of activities:

1. increasing the capability of hobby schools to involve young people with fewer opportunities systematically;
2. promoting hobby activities in new priority target groups;
3. involving young people with fewer opportunities into hobby activities;
4. monitoring and assessing the impact of the project and hobby education.

„[Developing youth workers training](#)“ is a governmental programme supported through European Social Fund and implemented in 2015-2019, which aimed to provide youth workers with training opportunities and developed the methodology in youth work and quality of training. The total budget of the programme was **1.89 million euros**.

[Youth Meetings](#) is a programme established to increase interactions between young people from a different ethnic background and thus increase their mutual understanding and development but also to enhance their cultural awareness, openness and tolerance. Through the programme, organisers promote positive contacts between young people (11 to 16 years-of-age) living in Estonia but speaking different mother tongues (mainly Estonian and Russian) by giving them an opportunity to carry out projects together. These projects detail the goals and targets they expect to achieve. “Youth Meetings” has been very popular since its creation in 2015 with 1,551 Estonian and Russian speaking young people participating yearly in the project. Altogether, “Youth Meetings” has brought together around 1,700 young people annually. The “Youth Meetings” programme is financed through the Ministry of Education and Research. The budget for the programme in 2020 was 234,022 euros.

Estonian Youth Agency (since 01.01.2021 the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#)) together with 14 other agencies for Erasmus+ youth activities, initiated and was involved in a strategic co-operation [“Strategic Partnership on inclusion”](#) – SPI - to involve more inclusion organisations and increase the participation of young people with fewer opportunities by capacity building and their involvement in the E+ programme. The

consortium of agencies has developed a strategic approach to reach out and involve three target groups: young people with disability/health problems, young people with low education attainment and young people from disadvantaged rural areas – i.e., young people that are underrepresented in Erasmus+ in different countries. In 2017, a new strand was initiated together with Latvian and Lithuanian agencies and other partners to work more strategically with young people in NEET situations. Long-term results are yet to be seen since the partnership is halfway on its first cycle.

In addition, Estonian Youth Work magazine MIHUS has focused on issues such as inclusion and solidarity among young people:

1. [Youth work with young people with fewer opportunities](#) (2010),
2. [Youth work and sensitivity towards different cultures](#) (2016).

In addition, a manual for inclusive youth work has been created and published in Estonian and Russian languages: "[Inclusive youth work](#)" (2012).

Social cohesion and equal opportunities

Policies in formal education

Citizenship education exists as a compulsory separate subject both in primary and secondary education in Estonia. The length of time it is taught as a compulsory subject 5 years. Please consult [Citizenship Education in Europe. Eurydice Report](#) for detail information.

The activities in education to support social cohesion are based on the "Integrating Estonia 2020". [Integrating Estonia 2020](#) is a strategy of the Government to ensure integration and social cohesion in Estonia in the period 2014-2020. The general objective of the "Integrating Estonia 2020" is a socially cohesive society where individuals with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds actively participate in society and share democratic values. The plan serves as the basis for integration policy that is carried out during 2014–2020, and it aims at:

- increasing the cohesion of society;
- increasing the competitiveness of the Republic of Estonia;
- ensuring security;
- preserving the Estonian language and culture;
- preserving the culture and language of the ethnic minorities;
- ensuring increasing tolerance towards different groups of society;
- ensuring a stronger civic identity.

The estimated total cost of the development plan from 2014–2020 is 73.52 million euros.

In 2017, the Ministry of Education and Research developed a "[Concept for education path without bullying](#)" – a document stating the main understanding of bullying, its prevention and interventions in Estonia. It lists main programmes available to address bullying through all levels of education. The concept does not ensure public funding for the programmes.

Programmes/projects/initiatives in the context of non-formal and informal learning, and youth work,

In Estonia, the main aim of activities in the youth field for the years 2014-2020 is to support establishing a coherent and creative society through development and self-realisation possibilities provided for young people. Please see [chapter 4.7. Youth work to foster social inclusion](#) and [chapter 8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture](#) for the overview of main programmes, projects and initiatives of youth work and non-formal learning.

6.7 Skills for innovation

Innovation in formal education

The [national curriculum for upper secondary schools](#) includes subjects and topics supporting the innovation skills of students. Entrepreneurship education is explicitly referred to in the national curricula and is described in detail in [chapter 3.8](#).

In addition, the curriculum also defines „Technology and innovation“ as a cross-curricular topic. The cross-curricular topic “Technology and innovation” strives to shape the pupils into people who are open to innovation and who can expediently use modern technology and cope in rapidly changing technological living, learning and working environments. The pupils are guided to:

1. acquire knowledge about how technology functions and what its development trends are in different spheres of life;
2. comprehend the influence of technological innovation on how people work and live, on their quality of life and the environment today and in the past;
3. understand the mutual influences and connections of technological, economic, social and cultural innovation;
4. comprehend and critically assess the positive and negative effects of technological development and develop balanced opinions on ethical issues of technological development and the corresponding applications;
5. use information and communication technology (ICT) to solve vital problems and make learning and working more efficient; and
6. develop creativity, cooperation and initiative skills when implementing innovative ideas in various projects.

Covering the cross-curricular topic on this level of study focuses on the group works and research projects in the school. The goal is to develop positive attitudes towards technological innovation and related career possibilities, to ensure preparedness for all pupils to use ICT in everyday life, studies and work.

In vocational training [the Vocational Education Standard](#), which defines uniform requirements for vocational training, there is competence “Initiative and entrepreneurship” defined as a result, that should be achieved in the vocational training. Students are guided to:

1. think systematically and creatively, to evaluate the ideas critically and to find opportunities to implement them;
2. initiate, develop and implement ideas;
3. have an initial knowledge about entrepreneurship
4. be able to draft a personal short and long-term career plan with guidance;
5. find independently opportunities for further studies and employment;
6. connect training with labour market demands.

Teachers capability of developing skills for innovation is generally supported through tools and training concerned with entrepreneurship education support. Please see [chapter 3.8](#) for more information.

Fostering innovation through non-formal and informal learning and youth work

Youth work in Estonia by its guiding principles defined in [the Youth Work Act](#) aims to “support the initiative of young people” which includes supporting new ideas and endeavours young people are developing and also supporting competencies to develop and implement ideas. The whole youth work sector therefore in all its forms has to find ways to fulfil this aim including youth work in youth centres, hobby schools, youth

organisations, summer camps, etc. To support the development of innovation in youth work a “Smart Youth Work concept” was approved. Please see [chapter 6.8](#) for more information.

6.8 Media literacy and safe use of new media

National strategy

The Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 sets “A digital focus in lifelong learning” as one of five key policy aims. The vision of the strategy is that by 2020 modern digital technology is used for learning and teaching effectively and efficiently, an improvement in the digital skills of the total population has been achieved and access to the new generation of digital infrastructure is ensured. Successful implementation of the modern approach to learning and an increase in the quality of learning requires students and teachers, teaching staffs and heads of schools to be equipped with digital competence. Use of digital learning resources helps to make learning more engaging, supports the teacher in the process of learning and broadens the opportunities in lifelong learning.

In order to implement the goal of the strategy, a [Digital Focus Programme](#) was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2014. The digital focus programme concentrates on an improvement in the digital competences of learners, teachers, teaching staffs and Heads of schools and on purposeful use of digital learning resources with a view to supporting the implementation of a modern approach to learning and an increase in the quality of the study.

Authority responsible: Ministry of Education and Research. Period: 2015-2020. Budget: about 47 million euros.

Main activities and measures:

- the curricula for basic schools and upper secondary schools as well as the curricula for vocational education will be updated in view of the acquisition of digital competences;
- the exploitation of ICT in all subject areas of general education will be supported, the requirements for ICT competencies in professional standards will be updated; digital competences of learners will be assessed on a regular basis;
- general digital skills of teachers and the teaching staffs will be developed; a digital skills self-assessment environment for teachers will be developed;
- programmes targeted at the development of the digital skills of learners will be developed (e.g., ProgeTiiger, Robootika, TeadusTiiger, Wolfram) which also attracts learners into the areas of exact and natural sciences, engineering, design and technology and ICT;
- in general education and vocational education, the e-assessment methodology will be implemented; an information technology application will be developed for e-assessment (Eksamite Infosüsteem EIS (Examinations Information System)) which will be applied at all levels of education;
- from 2015, new textbooks are digitally available; quality requirements for digital learning resources will be established; an information system for digital learning resources will be developed and implemented;
- development of digital learning resources for general and vocational education will be supported through competitions, tenders and contracted specialist work;
- Schools and managers of schools will be supported in ensuring a suitable network connection in general education schools;
- a needs-based support system will be created for providing students with personal digital devices.

Expected impact and changes:

- digital competence as one of the key competences is developed in all subjects and hobby activities; it is a natural part of the process of study;
- digital competences of learners, teachers, teaching staffs and Heads of schools have improved;
- digital learning resources are of high quality and easily accessible to everyone;
- public access to the new generation of digital infrastructure has improved;
- schools have a modern digital infrastructure; personal digital devices, e.g., smartphones, are also used for learning on a daily basis.

No evidence-based monitoring/assessment/evaluation of the implementation of the programme has been conducted as of yet.

No major revisions/updates of the programme have gone through since its introduction.

Media literacy and online safety through formal education

The [National curriculum for upper secondary schools](#) defines digital competence as a general competence, that should be shaped through learning outcomes expected in all subjects, but also through discussing cross-curricular subjects at lessons, extracurricular and out-of-school activities. The „digital competence“ is defined as the ability to use developing digital technology for coping in a quickly changing society for learning, acting as a citizen as well as communicating in communities; to use digital means for finding and preserving information and to evaluate the relevance and trustworthiness of the information; to participate in creating digital content; including creation and use of texts, images, multimedia; to use suitable digital tools and methods for solving problems, to communicate and cooperate in different digital environments; to be aware of the dangers of the digital environment and know how to protect one's privacy, personal information and digital identity; to follow the same moral and value principles as in everyday life.

The curriculum also defines „information environment“ and „technology and innovation“ as cross-curricular topics:

1. information environment – the aim is for the student to develop into an information-conscious person who senses and is aware of the surrounding information environment, is able to analyse it critically and acts according to his or her aims and society's communications ethics;
2. technology and innovation – the aim is for the student to develop into a person who is well-disposed toward innovation and who knows how to use contemporary technologies in a goal-oriented manner, who copes with the rapidly changing technological living, learning and work environment.

In vocational training [the Vocational Education Standard](#), which defines uniform requirements for vocational training, there is an informational technology competence defined as a result, that should be achieved in the vocational training after the Basic school. The IT competence defined in the Standard states for the 3rd level students in vocational education, that student „should know main opportunities and potential risks of IT“ and „is able to use the internet both for personal and professional goals“. For the 4th level students in vocational education, the outcome of the studies should, in addition, ensure, that a student should be able to use main applications; to assess the trustworthiness of the information available; to create, present, search and understand information.

Previously known as [the Information Technology Foundation for Education \(HITSA\)](#) (since 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Board](#)) was established with a goal to ensure that the graduates at all levels of education obtain digital skills necessary for the development of economy and society and the possibilities offered by ICT are skilfully used in teaching and

learning, which helps improve the quality of learning and teaching at all levels of education. HITSA was a non-profit association established by the Republic of Estonia, the University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Technology, Eesti Telekom and the Estonian Association of Information Technology and Telecommunications. The activities of the educational programmes are targeted at advancing and intensifying the cooperation between ICT industry, universities, other educational institutions and the state. HITSA also offers [a training portal](#) for educators, youth workers etc in the area of digital technologies,

In 2016, [the Information Technology Foundation for Education \(HITSA\)](#) (since 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Board](#)) developed a guiding material to understand and develop digital competencies among students in all the level of education. The material includes a [model of digital competencies for learners](#).

Promoting media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning

Smart Youth Work

One of the measures planned Under the Youth Field Development Plan for 2014-2020 was to develop a concept for smart youth work in order to 1) to make greater use of information technology in working with youth, including raising youth digital literacy in offering ICT-related hobby activities; 2) developing youth work using new means and 3) raising the competencies of youth and youth workers.

The Smart Youth Work concept was approved in 2017 with an aim to describe the basic principles for smart youth work and to create preconditions for development and adoption of smart solutions in youth work. 3 main directions for activities have been set:

1. smart youth work solutions for youth;
2. digital solutions related to youth workers' competencies and work methods;
3. quality, organisation and efficiency of youth work provision and better knowledge of youth.

Under these directions, 22 activities on the national level are implemented in the years 2017-2018.

Training on smart youth work has been offered to youth workers by the [Foundation Archimedes youth agency](#) until 2019. Since 01.01.2021, the [Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency](#) was joint with the [Education and Youth Board](#), and it became the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps (NA for the [Erasmus+ programme](#)). See more about smart youth work from [Chapter 10.4](#).

Please also see [chapter 8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies](#) for examples of initiatives to promote media literacy and online safety through non-formal and informal learning.

Raising awareness about the risks posed by new media

The central initiative to raise awareness about the risks on the internet is [Safer Internet Centre in Estonia – Targalt Internetis](#). The project's mission is a smarter Internet use by children and their parents and the prevention of the online distribution of child sexual abuse material. The project is co-financed 50% by the European Commission Connecting European Facility Programme. The project includes:

- training sessions and seminars for children, parents, teachers and social workers, and awareness-raising events for the general public;
- the drafting of training and awareness-raising materials for children, teachers and parents;
- creative competitions for students;

- assistance and counselling from the [Children's Helpline](#) 116111 children and parents on the safe Internet and digital mobile devices use by telephone, MSN (user info@lasteabi.ee) and other IM solutions;
- the web-based hotline [Vihjeliin](#), which allows Internet users to provide information about web environments which contain material that violates children's right to sexual self-determination; notices about other materials that are inappropriate for children may also be sent to Vihjeliin;
- cooperation among different stakeholders in Estonia and Europe and participation in the INHOPE and INSAFE cooperation networks.

The activities of the follow-up project are being implemented by four organisations:

1. the Estonian Union for Child Welfare is a coordinator of the project and contributes to awareness-raising activities, coordinates youth participation and operates Estonian Hotline [Vihjeliin](#);
2. the Information Technology Foundation for Education coordinates and carries out awareness-raising activities;
3. the Estonian Advice Centre (which manages the Children's Helpline 116111) provides help and counselling for children and parents if problems emerge in the use of the Internet and digital media devices, and participates in awareness-raising activities;
4. the Police and Border Guard Board is contributing its competence to all activities.

6.9 Awareness-raising about non-formal and informal learning and quality youth work

Information providers / counselling structures

Youth information is defined as one area of youth work in Estonia and The Youth Agency of the Archimedes Foundation (since 01.01.2021 the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#)) is supporting access and promotion of [European youth portal](#) in Estonia.

There are 16 centralised public centres in all counties. The regional youth guidance centres, called Pathfinder centres (Rajaleidja), provide career information, career counselling, psychological, socio-pedagogical, special education counselling and speech therapy. Please see [chapter 3.4](#). for more information on guidance and counselling in Rajaleidja Centres.

[Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) (since 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Board](#)) organised yearly an information fair for youth [Teeviit](#) attended by thousands of young people in Estonia. The event ended in 2017, and, in 2018, Teeviit became the national youth information channel for young people.

In addition, local and regional information for youth is available through local youth information portals such as

- [Põlva Noored](#)
- [Noorteinfo](#)
- [Tallinna noorteinfo](#)

Awareness raising initiatives

Throughout the years, different awareness-raising campaigns have been implemented, especially supporting awareness about learning that takes place in a youth work setting. As a result, the importance of nonformal and informal learning is currently acknowledged

in several policy documents such as the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 and the Youth Field development plan 2014-2020.

There are 3 dedicated resource portals to support the development of understanding about the value of non-formal and informal education, especially in youth work:

1. [Mitteformaalne](#) is a resource and information portal targeting mainly youth worker, young leaders, teachers and trainers with an aim to promote the value of non-formal learning and to support its development by providing access to training materials, publications, methods and training opportunities.
2. [Teeviit](#) (formerly known as Stardiplats) is a resource and information portal targeting young people in the age group 7-26 as a main target group, but also youth workers. The aim is to provide opportunities and support to acknowledge and document the learning that takes place in youth work.
3. [Noortepass](#) is a portal to support young people to use European Youth Pass as a tool to document and recognise non-formal and informal learning.

6.10 Current debates and reforms

There are continuing debates on the formal education system's cooperation with non-formal and informal education, which has also been brought out in the draft document of the new youth field development plan for the years 2021-2035.

7. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

The concept of health and well-being are used together as the need of the two sectors cooperating is increasing constantly. The concept of well-being is more prevalent. The main governmental authority responsible for youth health and well-being is the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#). Their role is to plan the health care policy and organize its implementation. See more in [chapter 7.2](#).

Two cross-national studies provide information about young people's well-being, health behaviors, and social context:

1. [Health Behavior in School-aged Children](#) (HBSC) is conducted once every four years among 11, 13 and 15-year-old students.
2. [The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs \(ESPAD\)](#) collects data on substance use among 15-16-year-old students once every four years.

According to those studies, 88% of young people rate their health as good or very good and are satisfied with their life. See more in [chapter 7.1](#).

The [Child Protection Act](#) defines early detection and prevention of risks as important areas. Prevention is specifically addressed in the act. See more in [chapter 7.6](#).

7.1 General context

Main trends in the health conditions of young people

Two cross-national studies provide information about young people's well-being, health behaviours and their social context:

1. [Health Behaviour in School-aged Children](#) (HBSC) is conducted once every four years among 11, 13 and 15-year-old students.

2. [The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs \(ESPAD\)](#) collects data on substance use among 15-16-year-old students once every four years.

According to the latest HBSC study, most Estonian young people rate their health (an indicator of general health) as fair (88% rated their health as good or very good) and are satisfied with their life (88% rated life satisfaction high). During recent years mental health problems have increased in frequency among Estonian youth – students have reported more episodes of depression and difficulties in sleeping. Increased screen time (TV, computer, tablet) also affects students' well-being. About half of the students aged 11-15 spend five or more hours using electronic devices. Excessive internet use and internet addiction are growing problems in Estonia.

According to the HBSC and ESPAD surveys, young people are using less tobacco and alcohol compared to previous years. At the same time, Estonian young people are among the first three countries in Europe where tobacco and alcohol initiation and binge drinking are highest (young people were asked at what age they first smoked a cigarette, drank alcohol or got drunk). A positive trend is that compared to previous studies, the usage of illegal substances, including cannabis, has decreased remarkably over the years, however, the usage of cannabis during the previous 30 days has not decreased. According to the study published in [2019](#), the usage of drugs and alcohol is connected with risk behaviour and bullying, satisfaction with school, etc.

Another serious problem in Estonia is obesity caused by inactive lifestyles and poor nutrition. Only one in every six children takes part in moderate-to-vigorous physical activity that lasts 60 minutes per day. Less than half of all children consume fruit and vegetables daily. Strategies and interventions are needed that focus on increasing physical activity and shaping children's eating habits.

Sexual behaviour among Estonian youth has consistently improved: the number of teenage pregnancies, abortions and sexually transmitted infections has decreased. At the same time, the last HBSC study demonstrated a decrease in the use of condoms at the time of last intercourse.

Main concepts

In general, both "health" and "well-being" are in use in Estonia but as the understanding of factors that influence health and well-being and cooperation need has increased, the use of the well-being concept is more prevalent.

According to the [Child Protection Act](#), a child's well-being means "the condition supporting the development of the child in which the physical, medical, psychological, emotional, social, cognitive, educational and economic needs of the child are satisfied".

In the renewed [Public Health Act](#), the use of the term "health profile" will be changed to "health and well-being profile". The reason for this change is that all partners at local, regional and state levels feel more connected to making the communities healthier.

7.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The main governmental authority responsible for youth health and well-being is the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#), where the responsibility lies with the Minister of Social Protection and in two departments:

1. the Health System Development and Medicine Department,
2. the Department of Children and Families.

The role of the Ministry of Social Affairs is to plan health care policy and organize its implementation and to ensure people's social coping and development and support the well-being of children and families.

The main Governmental authorities and their responsibilities according to the [Government of the Republic Act](#) relevant to the health and well-being of youth are:

1. the [Ministry of Education and Research](#): responsible for youth policy and education policy,
2. the [Ministry of Culture](#): responsible for sport and social cohesion and integration policy,
3. the [Ministry of Interior](#): responsible for crime prevention,
4. the [Ministry of Justice](#) responsible for the justice system.

Main public actors and foundations of policy fields relevant to social inclusion are:

- [Chancellor of Justice](#), an independent official institution responsible for ensuring the rights of children would be protected,
- [Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner](#), an independent office responsible for the protection of equal rights,
- [Social Insurance Board](#), an agency of the Ministry of Social Affairs, responsible for the social insurance benefits and child protection services,
- [Health Board](#), an agency of the Ministry of Social Affairs, responsible for regulating issues with medical professions, devices, etc., and also for monitoring, prevention, and control of communicable diseases and risk analysis in epidemiology,
- [National Institute for Health Development](#), a governmental institution under the Ministry of Social Affairs responsible for health research and promotion,
- [Health and Welfare Information Systems Centre](#), a governmental institution under the Ministry of Social Affairs responsible for data and IT systems in areas of the Ministry,
- [State Agency of Medicines](#), a governmental body under the Ministry of Social Affairs; main responsibility is the protection and promotion of public and animal health, through the supervision of medicines for human and veterinary use,
- [Education and Youth Board](#), a governmental institution implementing education and youth policy,
- [Foundation of Sports Training and Information](#), a semi-governmental body Under the Ministry of Education and Research responsible for sports information and professionalization in sports.

The main non-public actors:

1. [Estonian National Olympic Committee](#)
2. [Sports For All](#), an umbrella organization for sports and healthy lifestyle promoters;
3. [Estonian Union of School Sport](#), an umbrella organization for local and regional school sports associations;
4. [Estonian National Youth Council](#)
5. [Estonian Sports Association Jõud](#) is the national umbrella organization for sports associations of all the 15 counties of Estonia directing its efforts at sports movement and providing better conditions for sports activities.

The general distribution of responsibilities

In general, health and well-being responsibilities are divided between the central government and local government according to the different laws in different areas of the health and well-being domain. Most importantly:

1. local governments are responsible for ensuring the maintenance of health and wellbeing institutions, sports infrastructure if it is under their ownership,
2. child protection services provided is the responsibility of local governments,
3. local governments are obliged to analyze public health and security situation and prepare health and well-being profile, that will be a base for the strategic plan,
4. health services are regulated and financed in general from the central government level,
5. the services in the area of sports are mostly provided via private and non-governmental institutions and supported via state budget.

Planning of the policy, financing and developing laws and regulations is the responsibility of the central government and its agencies.

Cross-sectoral cooperation

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policymaking and implementation, which also covers the issues of health and wellbeing of youth. The central position in this mechanism - approving the propositions to develop a policy document or to change the existing one, monitoring implementation through action plans and their reports, monitoring cooperation and, in cases of need, initiating the cooperation - is granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#). The [Ministry of Finance](#) also plays a coordinating role in planning, monitoring and ensuring the division of resources of different financial instruments including the state budget, in all the policy fields.

In addition, there are several permanent cooperation bodies established:

[Child Protection Council](#)

The Council was formed in 2017. The tasks of the Council are to:

1. establish the objectives of the state child protection policy and to coordinate the activities necessary for the implementation,
2. submit proposals concerning the protection of children's rights and ensuring the well-being of children to the Government of the Republic and other relevant institutions,
3. give relevant recommendations for cross-sectoral preventive measures of child protection.

The Council includes representatives of the Estonian Union for Child Welfare, the Association of Estonian Cities, the Association of Municipalities of Estonia, the Union of Estonian Student Councils and the Estonian National Youth Council, as well as the Minister of Education and Research, Minister of Culture, the Minister of Justice, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister of Finance and the Directors of the Social Insurance Board and the National Institute for Health Development. The chairman of the Council is the Minister of Social Protection.

[Drug Prevention Committee](#)

The Minister of the Interior leads the permanent committee, the goal of which is to coordinate prevention work and reduce the availability of narcotics. Members of the committee decided by the government and committee is supported by experts working group.

[Crime Prevention Committee](#)

The Minister of Justice leads the permanent committee, which co-ordinates the fight against crime, including crime prevention. Committee members are Minister of the Interior Affairs, Minister of the Education and Research, Minister of Finance, Minister of Social Affairs, Director General of the Police and Border Guard Board, Prosecutor General. The committee is supported by an expert working group.

7.3 Sport, youth fitness and physical activity

National strategy(ies)

On 18.02.2015, the Riigikogu (parliament) approved „[The general Principles of Estonian sports policy until 2030](#)“ (Eesti spordipoliitika põhialused aastani 2030. Decision by the Parliament 18. February 2015).

The vision of Estonian sports policy is that:

1. in 2030, the mental and physical balance and welfare of the Estonian people correspond to the level of Nordic countries and Estonia has a living environment contributing physical activity together with accompanying services that support people’s healthy life expectancy and self-fulfilment, as well as economic growth,
2. exercise and sport have a significant and growing role in increasing the vitality of the Estonian people, creating a diverse living environment and creating a good reputation for the Republic of Estonia.

There are four priority goals:

1. a majority of the population exercise and are engaged in sport,
2. exercise and sport is a significant economic branch and employer with strong organisation,
3. exercise and sport are the carriers of spirit, coherence and positive values,
4. Estonia is represented in an effective and dignified way at the international level.

The measures specifically targeting children and young people:

1. to boost exercise and sporting activities, a support system for recreational activities is developed and introduced for children and young people,
2. safe and age-appropriate sporting conditions are ensured for children and young people,
3. the priority of the development of achievement sport is regular, diverse and planned training of children and young people in sports clubs and sports schools,
4. the Government values targeted sports activities of children and young people and support this field in a systematic way; regional and nationwide study and training centres are to be created and developed.

In the preamble of the document, it is noted that „sports and exercise are healthy, educational, entertaining and social activities of all demographics and social target groups, diversifying cultural and youth work“.

No specific target groups within the youth population are identified.

The connection to EU Physical Activity Guidelines is not specified in the document.

The government authority responsible for the implementation, coordination and monitoring of the strategy is the Ministry of Culture.

No evidence-based monitoring/assessment/evaluation of the implementation of the strategy has been conducted yet.

The document has not been revised or updated since its introduction.

Promoting and supporting sport and physical activity among young people

Support for coaches and instructors of children and youth sports

Since 2015, the government has supported the salary of coaches and instructors working with children and youth with a fixed additional support sum in order to increase the variability and accessibility of sports for young people.

Quarterly, around 1000-1300 coaches and 30 000-40 000 young athletes are supported in the amount of 0.8 - 1.7 million euros. The [maximum support](#) per coach in one month in 2020 was 630 euros with taxes from the state. The employer has to add at least 734,76 euros with taxes additionally in order to be eligible for the support.

Support for hobby education

In 2017, the government proposed and the parliament [decided](#) to [finance additionally hobby education and hobby activities](#) including sport from state budget with an aim to increase access to and the variety and quality of hobby education and activities for young people between 7-19 years old. The annual budget is 15 million euros. It is divided into local government budgets based on the number of young people, taking into account the problems young people are facing in the municipality (the formula includes the number of young people with special needs, the financial capability of local government and the ratio of the number hobby opportunities and the number of young people). In order to use the support, a local government (or a group of local governments together) has to draw up a plan on how to increase access to and the variety of hobby education and activities provided. The first deadline to submit the plans was 1.09.2017. A vast majority of the municipalities (a total number of 199 from 213 in Estonia during that time, in 2018, there are 79 local municipalities in total in Estonia as a result of the administrative reform) submitted the plan, of which were 53 in a cooperation group.

The first results of the additional financing to hobby education and activities are brought out on a website [Noorte Huvi Heaks](#).

Learning to swim

The programme is designed to support primary school students in swimming lessons. Main objectives are connected with healthy lifestyle promotion and prevention of accidents and death connected with poor swimming skills. In 2017, the programme was reformed and since 2018 the amount of state funding is 1.230.082 euros.

School Olympic Games

School Olympic Games is an educational activity, encouraging useful sports that unite students, teachers and parents, and follows the principles of the Olympic Charter in its mentality, essence and rituals.

According to the School Olympic Games idea proposed by the Estonian Olympic Academy, it is not simply sports competitions that are held under the Olympic flag. A very important aspect of School Olympic Games is the relevance of the Olympic education period that precedes the competitions and during which, in different subject classes, children are given different knowledge about the idea and history of the Olympic movement and have a chance to use this knowledge in different contests. The aim of the School Olympic Games is to introduce the Olympic idea and popularize sports by making sports life in schools more colourful. At the same time, the School Olympic Games is not a national event in which only the best that have been selected in previous competitions can participate.

The amount of public funding is not available.

[TV 10 Olümpiastarti](#)

The Estonian Athletic Association has organised for more than 45 years a competition for general education students, TV 10 Olümpiastarti, wherein around 10 000 children and

young people participate. As the event is connected with the Estonian National Broadcaster, the programme supports the promotion of youth sports.

There are no specific mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation established for the programmes listed.

The connection to EU Physical Activity Guidelines is not specified in the programmes listed.

Physical education in schools

The national curriculum for upper secondary schools defines „physical education“ as compulsory. The purpose of teaching physical education in upper secondary school is to develop students' physical education competence, i.e., the ability to recognise the value of physical activity and healthy living as a part of one's lifestyle; the ability to assess one's physical fitness level in an objective manner and to use suitable means and methods for developing physical abilities; to practice suitable sports or form exercise; to recognise the value of cooperation in sports/exercise and of knowledge about Estonian and world sports events.

Teaching physical education is aimed at the upper secondary school graduate having developed the capability to:

- value life, understand the importance of the physical activity to people's health and enjoy exercising/practising sports,
- master knowledge, skills and experience to practice recreational sports/exercise independently both indoors and outdoors,
- follow regulations and personal safety and hygiene requirements while exercising/practising sports and know how to act in emergency situations that may occur while practising sports,
- be able to objectively assess their level of physical ability and to use proper means and methods for improving it,
- exercise/practise sports respecting fellow students and preserving the environment,
- be cooperative and able to guide fellow students to perform simple physical exercises,
- know about the sports and dance events held in Estonia and around the world,
- master knowledge about the development of physical culture in Estonia and in the world and understand the role of physical culture in modern society,
- know the necessary physical fitness regime for service in the Defence Forces.

Physical education is taught in five compulsory courses and two elective courses. Compulsory courses include gymnastics, athletics, games (basketball, volleyball and football) of which the school has to select at least two, dance movement, navigation and winter sports (skiing and skating) of which the school has to select at least one.

The elective courses are "Physical abilities and exercise skills" and "Exercising outdoors". The passing of compulsory and elective courses helps to develop the competences of the subject field, while also preparing students for the physical readiness test of the Defence Forces (this applies in particular to male students, supporting their individual development, while female students can opt for this on a voluntary basis). The volume of presentation of different sports in the courses and the number of lessons dedicated to particular sports are specified in the school curriculum.

In 2015, a manual for teachers of physical education was published and is distributed free of charge to all the schools.

The initiative [Movement Laboratory](#) is a research group of physical activity for health at the Institute of Sport Sciences and Physiotherapy in the University of Tartu, which designs school-based interventions, and their aim is to promote physical activity in the whole community, as sufficient physical activity supports mental, physical and social well-being.

The research group is a permanent research unit in the structure of the University of Tartu. The unit develops several tools and ideas to be used in schools both in and outside of classrooms.

Collaboration and partnerships

There is no obligatory or policy framework for partnerships between formal education providers, youth workers and health professionals in order to promote youth fitness and physical activity among young people. Cooperation between different stakeholders may occur at the local, regional or national level; however, it is not guided centrally.

7.4 Healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition

National strategy(ies)

[National Health Plan 2009–2020](#) (Rahvatervise arengukava 2009-2020) was approved by the Government in 2008 and renewed in 20.12.2012. As the strategy ends in 2020, a [new development plan](#) has been compiled and sent to the Parliament to be confirmed by the end of 2020.

The general objectives of the new (yet unconfirmed) National Health Plan 2020-2030 are as following:

1. The average life expectancy increases amongst both men and women.
2. The years while living healthily will increase faster than the life expectancy and people live most of their lives without health-related limitations.
3. Health inequality decreases (within genders, areas, and education levels).

The sub-goals in order to achieve the general objectives are divided into three main areas:

1. Options supporting health.
2. Environment supporting health.
3. Human-centred healthcare.

Concerning young people, there are also several aspects and goals brought out. For example, mental health and drug use of young people are big concerns and some prevention activities will be taken in order to solve the issues.

The youth-specific target groups identified in the plan are children and young people in general (i.e. from 0 to 26 years old), children up to 18 years old, students in general education, young people with special needs and young people with behaviour that puts their health at risk.

The Ministry of Social Affairs is the main responsible authority for the implementation of the Plan.

The document will be confirmed by the Parliament by the end of 2020.

Encouraging healthy lifestyles and healthy nutrition for young people

The Network of Health Promoting Kindergartens and Schools

Estonia is a member of the [Schools for Health in Europe network](#) since 1993. In Estonia, the health-promoting schools' movement started in 1993, when 16 schools became members of the [European Network of Health Promoting Schools](#). Since 2000, the movement was broadened to kindergartens. By the end of 2020, more than 500 educational institutions are members of the Health Promoting Kindergartens and Schools network in Estonia. The network is coordinated by the National Institute for Health Development.

Health-promoting educational institutions are defined as institutions that implement a structured and systematic plan for the health and well-being of all children and of teaching and non-teaching staff. This is characterised as a whole school approach and contains - healthy policies, physical and social environment, individual health skills and action competencies, links within the community and health and well-being services.

At the county level, there is a network of coordinators, who usually work in school or kindergarten and the coordination is additional work for them. There are coordinators in all 15 counties and also the 4 largest cities.

The coordination in state and county level was financed by the state through the National Health Plan 2009-2020 and Estonian Health Insurance Fund. Kindertartens and schools finance their activities itself and/or through different projects. In the new national health plan for the years 2020-2030 the programme is not mentioned, but as the available document is still not confirmed and the implementation programme as well, then this might be one action to be funded through the new development plan as well.

[The PAX Good Behaviour Game \(GBG\) \(in Estonian *VEPA Käitumisoskuste mäng*\)](#)

VEPA is an environmental intervention used in the classroom to create a nurturing environment that is conducive to learning. The intervention is designed to reduce off-task behaviour; increase attentiveness; decrease aggressive and disruptive behaviour, as well as shy and withdrawn behaviour. PAX GBG has also shown improvements with academic success, and mental health well-being and reduces substance abuse later in life.

Since 2014, more than 11.000 students and 600 teachers have participated from more than 160 schools all over Estonia.

PAX game is implemented by the National Institute for Health Development in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior and funded by the European Social Fund.

During the years 2016-2018, a [2-year-research](#) was conducted in Estonian schools in order to assess the impact of VEPA methodology. 42 schools and 708 first grade students participated in the research. The data was collected three times - before intervention in the beginning of a school year and at the end of first and second school years from teachers, parents, and children. The study showed that in the classes where VEPA was used, there was a decrease of difficulties with children's behaviour, attention, and attention. Also, there was a trend in improving emotional difficulties (such as feeling worried or scared) and communication with peers. The VEPA methodology was most useful for children who had more mental health issues in the beginning of the first grade.

[KiVa](#)

KiVa is a research-based anti-bullying program that has been developed in the University of Turku, Finland. The effectiveness of KiVa has been shown in a large randomized controlled trial. Since 2014, 77 schools have been implemented KIVA in Estonia. The programme in Estonia is supported by the Ministry of Education and Research. In Spring 2020, [a report](#) was published, which shows that the methodology is more effective in schools that use it regularly than in the schools that just begun participating in the program. In the schools that use KiVa during a longer period, there is much less long-time bullying.

[The school invites to move](#)

The research group of physical activity for health in Institute of Sport Sciences and Physiotherapy in the University of Tartu is designing school-based interventions and their aim is to promote physical activity in the whole community, as sufficient physical activity supports mental, physical and social well-being.

Current shortcomings in promoting active lifestyle lie in the lack of focus on environmental factors and the over-concentration on sports. The objective measurements show that children involved in organised sports activities do not necessarily have higher physical

activity. The pilot project by Tartu University showed that it is far too frequent in Estonian schools to discourage the physical activity of children during the school day.

The research group is a permanent research unit in the structure of the University of Tartu.

[Good School and Good Preschool](#)

The “Good school, good preschool” is an ongoing project by [Centre for Ethics, University of Tartu](#), which is supported by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

The aim of the good school model is to describe different aspects of a good school and to find the criteria that indicate that a school actually deals with these aspects.

The focus of the model is on evaluation. The ultimate aim of the project is to achieve a situation where all schools are evaluated fairly and feel motivated to improve.

[Free of Bullying](#)

The Estonian Union for Child Welfare has been leading a project called “Kiusamisest vaba lasteaed ja kool” (Kindergartens and schools free of bullying) since 2010, currently ongoing.

The mission of Free of Bullying is:

- To reduce the number of children subjected to bullying in preschools and primary schools
- To create a safe, positive and healthy environment for children attending preschool or primary school

The mission is to be achieved by:

- Teaching children how to be a good friend
- Giving children the courage to say no if they experience bullying
- Supporting the children to act based on the values of tolerance, respect, care and courage
- Strengthening group spirit among children and thus preventing bullying

Programme is supported by the Ministry of Education and Research.

[Education and Youth Board](#) (until 31.07.2020 Estonian Youth Work Centre) supports annually the participation of young people in [summer camps](#). In 2020, more than 27.000 young people participated.

Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools

Health education

Health education and healthy lifestyles education in schools is part of national curricula subject Human Study in Basic school and in addition, the subject Personal, Social and Health Education in upper secondary school. Human studies were included in all levels of the school curriculum as a compulsory subject in 1996. The main topics are physical activity, nutrition, social and life skills training (preventing risky behaviour and substance (e.g. drug, tobacco and alcohol abuse), injury prevention and safety skills, mental health, etc.

One of eight cross-curricular topics is *health and safety* – the aim is for the pupil to develop into a mentally, emotionally, socially and physically healthy member of society who is capable of following healthful lifestyles, act in a safe manner and take part in developing a health-promoting environment.

There is a different kind of supporting materials and training for teachers both in Estonian and Russian languages (teacher or trainer guidelines; web resources such as [Toitumine](#), [Tubakainfo](#); [Alkoinfo](#); [Narko](#), etc.; films at the [Terviseinfo website](#) etc.

Sex education and personal relationships education

In Estonia, human studies were included in all levels of the school curriculum as a compulsory subject in 1996 and sex education and personal relationships education is part of it.

Sexual education and personal relationships education are based on „Standards for Sexuality Education in Europe. A framework for policymakers, educational and health authorities and specialists“. These standards are translated to Estonian language and are [freely available](#).

Apart from the standards, there are different kind of tools and training in sexual health field created and available for teachers both in Estonian and Russian language (teacher or trainer guidelines; web resources: [Amor](#), [HIV](#); films: [Räägi Asjast website](#) etc.

Peer-to-peer education approaches

There is no central framework policy or guidelines established to develop peer-to-peer educational approaches aiming to enhance young people's knowledge and understanding of factors related to their health and well-being.

[TORE](#) is a youth organisation that promotes movement of support students in general education schools and vocational education schools. The organisation developing the programme in Estonia started in 1996 and is ongoing.

The main goal of the organisation is to increase the number of schools and people in schools, who support and develop a friendly learning atmosphere, social skills and the anti-bullying standpoint. The network is based on training students to be support-students for peers and training adults in schools to be able to cooperate better with youth. TORE is also a member of the anti-bullying coalition (see below). TORE targets general education and vocational education school students and adults in schools. The organisation is supported by the state budget through the Ministry of Education and Research. Mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of the activities in the organisation are not available.

Collaboration and partnerships

There is no obligatory or policy framework for partnerships between formal education providers, youth workers and health professionals. Cooperation between different stakeholders may occur at the local, regional or national level, however, it is not guided centrally.

Local governments are obliged to analyse the public health and security situation and prepare health and well-being profile, and the format of the profile analyses foresees cooperation between the specialists in different areas. This cooperation is however not formed as a permanent cooperation body in general.

In 2014, a Bullying Free Education Coalition was created. This coalition has been recognised and supported by the Ministry of Education and Research. The number of partners has been increased and in 2016 the coalition under the leadership of the Ministry of Education and Research developed a "[Concept for education path without bullying](#)" – a document stating the main understanding of bullying, its prevention and interventions in Estonia. It lists the main programmes available to address bullying through all levels of education. The concept does not ensure public funding for the programmes.

Raising awareness on healthy lifestyles and on factors affecting the health and well-being of young people

Youth information

In general, well-being and healthy lifestyle issues are considered to be part of youth information, youth information is defined as one area of youth work in Estonia. The

Ministry of Education and Research is the responsible governmental authority in charge of youth information.

There are 16 centralised public regional youth guidance and information centres, called Pathfinder centres (Rajaleidja), which provide studying counselling, psychological, socio-pedagogical, special education counselling and speech therapy. Please see [chapter 3.4.](#) for more information on guidance and counselling in Rajaleidja Centres.

Estonian Youth Work Centre (starting from 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Board](#)) organised yearly for 24 years an information fair for youth called [Teeviit](#), which was attended by thousands of young people in Estonia. Teeviit 2017 was the last youth information fair. Now the brand "Teeviit" is being used only web-based as a youth information platform that gives young people different kind of information, including health-related, created by young people targeted to young people.

In addition, local and regional information for youth is available through local youth information portals such as:

- [Põlva Noored](#)
- [Noorteinfo](#)
- [Tallinna noorteinfo](#)

Health counselling

[Estonian Union for Sexual Health](#) coordinates the work of centres for youth counselling on sexual health, relationships and violence issues. The target group for the centres is young people up to 24 years of age. There is also a web-portal [Amor](#) to provide online information and counselling on sexual health issues. There are 17 centres in the network and most of them are based in clinics or medical centres.

The service is financed by the Health Board and National Institute for Health Development
Youth information campaigns

There are different kind of web and social media-based materials in campaigns for youth:

- [Tobacco prevention](#)
- [Alcohol prevention](#)
- [Sexual health](#)
- [Mental health](#)
- [Drug prevention](#)
- [HIV prevention](#)
- Nutrition - [Fiidikaru](#), [Toitumine](#)
- [Traffic Safety Education](#)

Regular national campaigns have been held in the areas of safe sex, nutrition, tobacco and alcohol prevention, oral health etc. In general, the target group of the youth campaign is general youth age 7-26.

The programme "Protect yourself and help the other" for 6-8 class year students and 15 youth camps (one in each county). The aim of the camp is to develop a way of thinking that would support and promote the health of children. In the camps, specialists in their fields teach how to foresee risks and cope with emergency situations. The programme is organised by cooperation of the Estonian Road Administration, Rescue Board, Estonian Health Insurance Fund, Police and Border Guard Board, county governments, local governments etc.

7.5 Mental health

National strategy(ies)

The main policy document in relation to health, including mental health, is the [National Health Plan 2009–2020](#) (Rahvatervise arengukava 2009-2020). A new National Health Plan for the years 2020-2030 is sent by the Government to the Parliament to be confirmed.

Please see [chapter 7.4](#). for detailed information on the plan.

Improving the mental health of young people

In the framework of the [Public Health Initiatives](#) coordinated by the Ministry of Social Affairs, several projects on children and youth mental health were initiated during the period 2011-2016 supported by Norway Grants.

Most notably:

- **Establishing the Children’s Mental Health Centre** Tallinn Children’s Hospital Total Grant Amount (EUR): 4 165 000. This project provides North-Estonia with the children’s mental health centres par excellence and by coordinating, training and supervising the network of mental health centres it will also improve mental health services in other regions of Estonia.
- **Developing and providing/piloting the rehabilitation services for children with severe mental health problems in the community residential setting** Estonian National Social Insurance Board. Total Grant Amount (EUR): 1 045 462. The objective of the project was to design innovative service(s) for children with mental health and behavioural problems, which will provide integrated social, educational and health services to support children and youth suitable life and education environment.
- **Developing a concept for integrated services to improve children’s mental health** Ministry of Social Affairs, The Department of Children and Families. Total Grant Amount (EUR): 200 000. The objective of the project was to develop [a concept paper](#) to build up a system of children’s mental health services and interventions with reduced fragmentation in service provision and improved regional coverage with integrated health and social care services for children and families.
- Support for a service network for the provision of integrated social education and health services for children with mental problems in Tartu University Hospital „[South-Estonian Mental Health Centre for children and youngsters](#)”, Pärnu Hospital „[Mental Health Centre for Children and Youth of Pärnu region](#)” and Tartu University Hospital „[Ida-Viru county Mental Health Centre for Children and youngsters](#)”. The grant was 425 000 euros per institution.
- Web-based information sources and counselling services on mental health [Peaasjad](#) - mental health e-counselling, web platform and online solutions for young people in Estonia. Grant: 218 159 EUR and Estonian- Swedish Mental Health and Suicidology Institute "[AppsTerv - web-based applications for mental health](#)". Grant: 204 860, 73 EUR

In total under the Public Health Initiative 2011-2016, the following results were achieved:

- Integrated services concept for children’s mental health
- 4 mental health centres
- 4 mental health counselling offices
- 3 web portals - [Peaasi](#), [Enesetunne](#), [Amor](#)
- 4 smartphone apps were developed for preventing [self-harm](#) and [suicidal behaviour](#), [depression](#) and [sleeping problems](#).
- 958 people received training on public health topics

- 1 015 youth attended mental health lectures
- 6 535 e-counselling
- 2 social campaigns were carried out about alcohol harms and tolerance about heavy alcohol drinking - [Uncle Alco](#) and [Passive drinking](#)
- 2 rehabilitation programs for providing long-term rehabilitation service for children with severe mental health problems

Another project "[Improving the Support System for Children and Youth at Risk](#)" developed a cross-sectoral support system to alleviate risks affecting children and youth and improved the well-being of children and youth. Two evidence-based programs - positive parenting program „Incredible Years“ and family-based intervention program MDFT were adapted and are now implemented in Estonia. The Concept for Improving the Support System for Children and Youth at Risk was compiled by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The document describes the main challenges in establishing the cross-sectoral (healthcare, legal protection, education, welfare system, etc.) support system for children and youth at risk, and recommends the most vital courses of action to the state for the purposes of ensuring the more streamlined operation and smoother co-operation.

Two evidence-based programmes supporting the mental health of young people are also implemented in Estonian schools:

- [KiVa](#) programme is a bullying prevention programme developed in Finland that uses a whole-school approach. Its components aim to affect skills, behaviour and classroom and school climate and have a positive impact on children's social and emotional well-being.
- [The PAX Good Behaviour Game](#) (PAX GBG) is a universal classroom-based programme that reduces behavioural and emotional problems, prevents the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs and improves educational attainment. In addition, several initiatives and science-based programmes are used at schools and curricula-based activities carried out to support students mental health.

Another important initiative to highlight is [Estonian Mental Health and Well-Being Coalition \(VATEK\)](#), which was established in 2012 by the initiative of the Estonian-Swedish Mental Health and Suicidology Institute (ERSI) and the support of the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs. It is an independent public interest foundation, which brings together mental health organisations across Estonia. VATEK has grown to a network of 38 organizations related to mental health (non-governmental organisations, public sector organisations, professional organisations and trade companies). The main objectives of VATEK are to promote the Estonian population's mental health and well-being and enhance the development of mental health policy and legislation.

7.6 Mechanisms of early detection and signposting of young people facing health risks

Policy framework

The [Child Protection Act](#) defines early detection and prevention of risks as important areas. Prevention is specifically addressed in the act, which stipulates that:

1. In order to ensure the rights and well-being of the child, the risks threatening the well-being and development of the child must be prevented. Prevention includes the detection of situations and events which threaten the child as early as possible and the reaction thereto, including the identification of the child's development and behaviour problems, problems occurring in the family environment, identification of abuse and the increase of protective measures promoting the child's well-being and development.

2. State and local government agencies shall, according to their possibilities, develop measures in order to prevent the child's need for assistance and to decrease existing problems. The measures must be based on the child's needs, support the relationships between the child and the persons raising the child, support the social performance skills and they must be accessible, timely, effective and have a long-term positive effect.

The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for developing a legal and policy framework in the area of child protection, however, the implementation is ensured at the local level by local governments.

The [Development Plan for Children and Families 2012–2020](#), approved by the Government in 2011 and renewed 24 October 2013, sets strategic objectives aimed at guaranteeing an improvement in the well-being of children and families and in their quality of life. This plan is the basis for improving the lives of children and families and achieving an increase in population. One of the five strategic objectives is "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 were 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.

In the document, a line of action „Early intervention system for noticing the developmental needs of a child“ is planned including the following measures:

1. Development of a system for evaluation of the developmental needs of a child and early intervention
2. Analysis and development of a system of home visits by family nurses
3. Development of guidelines and the provision of training for specialists who work with small children
4. Organising the provision of information to a broader target group that helps identify the developmental needs of a child early
5. Community-based development of a system for early noting of and intervention in the risk behaviour of children.

The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for ensuring the implementation of the plan, which ends in 2020. There is no information available whether there will be a new plan or not.

In 2014, the Ministry of Social Affairs also developed [a Concept for Improving the Support System for Children and Youth at Risk](#), which states grounding principles and a need for improving the support system in Estonia. The document defines as the main goal of improving the support system achievement of a situation in which help for ensuring the well-being of children, youth and families are timely, appropriate, high-quality and sufficient, all over Estonia. In order to achieve this, the support system must be improved so that it guarantees (among other aims) „emphasis on prevention and effective intervention“.

The [Social Insurance Board](#) is responsible for providing support and training for local governments responsible for the implementation of the early detection and prevention work.

Stakeholders

The [Child Protection Act](#) defines the functions of local governments and among them the obligation to “develop programmes and projects ensuring the rights and well-being of children and the application thereof in its administrative territory to prevent and decrease the risks that endanger children”. The local government can also establish a committee of children and families at local governments as an advisory body, if necessary.

However, in Estonia, local governments are autonomous by the constitution and may develop their own approach to providing services, networking and ensuring that their functions are fulfilled. Therefore, there is no standard model for early detection and prevention network, its members and stakeholders.

Guidance to stakeholders

Please see chapters [7.4.](#) and [7.5.](#) for information on awareness-raising campaigns, specific websites, guidelines, handbooks and other material and tools supporting local stakeholders and raise their awareness about health risks faced by young people.

The training centre of [the National Institute for Health Development](#) offers professional development courses to specialists working to support health, such as kindergarten and school employees, youth workers, child adopters, foster care families, employees of social welfare services and rehabilitation centres, county and local municipality employees, counsellors, psychologists, health care workers and health promoters, social workers and NGOs. Main areas of training are:

- HIV/AIDS and substance abuse
- Health promotion and health counselling
- The network of Healthy Workplaces
- Health promotion for school and kindergarten staff
- Social work and pedagogics for residential home employees
- PRIDE-training courses for child adopters and foster families
- Courses for employees of social welfare services and rehabilitation centres

In addition, the centre also carries out an analysis of training needs and provides support to trainers in training methodology.

Target groups

The [Development Plan for Children and Families](#) underlines the need to pay attention to “noticing and helping maltreated children” as a specific target group under the policy goal „Increasing the efficiency of early intervention and the child protection system”.

Funding

In Estonia, there is in force a solidary [health insurance system](#). Solidarity in health insurance means that someone's health insurance payments or contribution to the system or access to the necessary assistance do not depend on age, income or health risks. All medically insured people in Estonia are entitled to the same quality of health care, regardless of whether or not they pay the health insurance tax. According to the Health Insurance Act, persons for whom no social tax is paid are considered as having equal status to the insured person and all persons under 19 years of age have had equal status.

Local government is responsible for financing its functions from the local budget.

7.7 Making health facilities more youth friendly

Youth-friendly sexual and reproductive health (YFSRH) services for young people

The first YFSRH services clinic in Estonia was started in 1991. The youth clinics network was created simultaneously with Estonian school-based sexuality education programme, web-based counselling and national campaigns.

The youth clinics (YC) are departments of larger healthcare institutions, private gynaecological practices, or private healthcare companies. All the clinics offer free services to young people up to the age of 25 years of age in Estonian and Russian. Most of the clinics are open daily and serve exclusively young people. All the clinics must comply with the quality requirements and operational principles of the youth clinics network, which define: 1) objectives of YCs, 2) operational principles, 3) sexual and reproductive health (SRH) services provided, 4) target groups, 5) quality requirements, and 6) monitoring and evaluation indicators. YCs' service package included the following SRH services:

1. STI consultations; STI testing, treatment and follow-up consultations, HIV services; voluntary confidential counselling and testing and in case of an HIV positive result referral for specialist consultation.
2. Contraceptive consultations; information and counselling about contraceptives, prescription and renewal of contraceptive prescriptions, and insertion of contraceptive devices.
3. SRH counselling; counselling, pregnancy diagnostics and referral for antenatal care or safe abortion, psychological counselling, human papillomavirus vaccination and counselling, and a range of other SRH services.
4. Sexuality education lessons at schools or YCs.

Youth clinics services have been financed by Estonian Health Insurance Fund and educational lessons by projects or local governments. The Estonian Sexual Health Association is a non-governmental organisation, which coordinates and represents the YCN.

Children's mental health centres

Four regional children's mental health centres have been founded with the support of the Norwegian Financial Mechanism in 2014 (see [chapter 7.5](#) for further information). From April 2016, the centres' services are partly financed by Estonian Health Insurance Fund.

The main task of centres is the organisation of diagnostics and treatment of mental health disorders by complying with modern principles of treatment and evidence-based practice. Inpatient and outpatient treatment is provided in Tallinn, Tartu and Viljandi, outpatient treatment is provided in Pärnu and Ida-Viru County.

7.8 Current debates and reforms

Estonia has undergone a major administrative reform, which changed the number of municipalities in Estonia drastically starting from 01.01.2018. It is both a risk and an opportunity for public health. While many municipalities have adopted health promotion as part of their core activities, some have not. During the reform, it was important to support current health-friendly local governments to maintain their positions in the merging municipalities, as well as to encourage others to review their agenda and adopt health and well-being as one of the core issues. The final impacts of the reform are still unknown for all services.

Priority areas in youth health are obesity prevention, tobacco, alcohol and drug prevention, mental health, injury prevention, and a safe environment.

A new National Health Plan for the years 2020-2030 has been sent by the Government to the Parliament to be confirmed by the end of 2020. See more in [Chapter 7.4](#).

8. CREATIVITY AND CULTURE

In general, the situation with cultural consumption is excellent in Estonia, when we look at event participation. The overall level of cultural consumption is remarkably high. [The Eurobarometer](#) cultural consumption index reveals that 30% of Estonians belonged to the group with a very high or high level of cultural consumption in 2013. No new data from the Eurobarometer is available, but based on the [data](#) of Statistics Estonia, the percentage of people (from age 15) participating in cultural life was 78.7% in 2017. Read more about the main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation from [Chapter 8.1](#).

There is no single body responsible for the creativity and culture of young people as the domain covers several policy areas, which have established different divisions of tasks between different Ministries and between the local and central levels. The main Governmental authority responsible for the creativity and culture of young people in Estonia according to the [Government of the Republic Act](#) is the [Ministry of Culture](#), where there are two departments relevant to the culture and creativity of youth: the Arts Department and the Cultural Diversity Department. Read more about the main actors and cooperation in the field from [Chapter 8.2](#).

There is no single document that could be considered a national strategy on creativity and culture for young people, but a set of official documents integrating major directions to be followed in the organization of policymaking and implementation in relation to creativity and culture for young people. You can read more about the national strategies that are connected to creativity and culture from [Chapter 8.3](#).

The main policy connected with ensuring young people access to culture is formulated in the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) described in more detail in [Chapter 8.3](#). Under this policy document, the most important governmental initiative concerned with the culture and creativity of young people has been supporting hobby education and hobby activities, including removing obstacles of their access. This initiative is described in detail under [Chapter 8.5](#). The promotion of culture and cultural participation is addressed more in [Chapter 8.4](#) and the development of entrepreneurial skills through culture in [Chapter 8.6](#).

The fostering of the creative use of new technologies is addressed in [Chapter 8.7](#). You can read more regarding cooperation on the topic between different parties from [Chapter 8.8](#). The main new initiative to foster equality and involvement through participation in cultural activities is the Additional financing for hobby education and activities since 2017. The program is described in [chapter 8.5](#). However, many of the initiatives described in [Chapter 8.9](#) directly support this aim as well.

8.1 General context

Main trends in young people's creativity and cultural participation

Cultural consumption of young people in Estonia

In general, the situation with cultural consumption is excellent in Estonia, when we look at event participation. The overall level of cultural consumption is remarkably high. [The Eurobarometer](#) cultural consumption index reveals that 30% of Estonians belonged to the group with a very high or high level of cultural consumption in 2013. No new data from the Eurobarometer is available, but based on the [data](#) of Statistics Estonia, the percentage of people (from age 15) participating in cultural life was 78.7% in 2017. In 2016, Triinu

Lukas of the Statistics Estonia compiled an [analysis](#) that showed that Estonian residents are active culture consumers. In 2015, 84.4% of Estonian residents of at least 15 years of age were active cultural consumers, i.e. they attended at least one cultural event in the past year.

In 2017, within the youngest age group of 15-24, the most popular ways of consuming culture were visiting the cinemas (86.5%), libraries (67.6%), and concerts (59.2%). The overall preferences have remained the same compared to the data of 2015. There is a visible trend of cinemas getting more popular amongst young people (in 2015, the percentage of consumption was 82.8%). Within the age group of 25-44, the most popular cultural activities were visiting the cinemas (73.8%), concerts (58.3%), and cultural heritage (46.8). Similar to the youngest age group, the overall preferences have remained the same, and visiting the cinemas is getting more popular. Within the age group of 45-64, the most popular cultural activities were visiting the concerts (49.9%), theatres (44.0%), and cinemas (39.8%). Compared to the data of 2015, visiting cultural heritage was more popular in 2015 (58.8%), than in 2017 (38.4%). Amongst the oldest age group (65+), the most popular ways of consuming culture were visiting the concerts (32.1%), theatres (26.2%), and libraries (24.7%). Visiting cultural heritage was also more popular in 2015 (30.9%) like with the previous age group than it was in 2017 (21.1%).

The most popular ways of cultural consumption are visiting the cinemas and concerts (excluding the 65+ age group). Visiting the theatres is more popular starting from age 45. Libraries are popular amongst the age groups of 15-24 and 65+, and cultural heritage amongst age group 25-44. Also, there is a tendency that the younger the person is the more they participate in cultural activities. Compared to the data of 2015, the tendency remains the same. Within the age group of 15-24, the cultural consumption was 95.9% in 2015 and 94.5% in 2017. Within the age group of 25-44, the cultural consumption was 94.4% in 2015 and 90.9% in 2017. Within the age group of 45-64, the cultural consumption was 87.5% in 2015 and 78.5% in 2017. Within the age group of 65+, the cultural consumption was 58.6% in 2015 and 53.7% in 2017. The same tendency is brought out in the next paragraph and figures.

While the oldest age group (60+) had the largest percentage of people who had attended events in only one cultural area (14%), the youngest age group (15-19) only included 4% of people who had attended events in only one cultural area. The share of the most active persons was greatest in the youngest age group (2%) and smallest in the oldest age group (0.1%). Consequently, when younger people consume culture, they are likely to attend events in many cultural areas ([see Figure 1](#)) or more than in other age groups.

Lukas argues that the great impact of age can be explained by the Estonian context. As great social changes (such as restoration of Estonia's independence) shake existing social values and the level of cultural consumption is linked with different values, Estonian older and younger generations have different cultural consumption habits. The younger age groups often partake in a wider scope of culture, because they tend to participate in popular culture in addition to classical high culture genres. [Figure 1](#) provides a broad division between the generation of the period after the restoration of independence (20–29-year-olds), the generation immediately preceding it (30–49-year-olds) and the generation following it (15–19-year-olds) as well as those who have lived at least half of their lives in the closed society of the Soviet Union (at least 50-year-olds).

According to [the analysis of young people time usage and cultural consumption](#) by Kutt Kommel of Statistics Estonia (called "Noore inimese päev") in 2017, the most actively used cultural institution used by young people (15-24) is the cinema (83% of young people visit at least once a year), 72% visit libraries, 64% concerts, and 62% visited cultural heritage site. Approximately half of the young people visit the museum and theatre at least once a year. 10-14 years old spend on average 4 minutes per day on entertainment and culture, which increases to 13 minutes per day in the age group 15-24 years old. 20 minutes per day is spent on reading by younger youth (10-14) and 11 minutes by those aged 15-24.

Time spent on reading has decreased compared to the year 2000, especially in the older group (decreased by 18 minutes).

Challenges to young people's cultural consumption

Based on the [data of Statistics Estonia](#) from 2013 (no newer data available), according to those young people (15-24) who have not visited a cultural institution, the most significant reason is the lack of free time. Lack of interest in both the type of offer also plays a role, especially concerning the area of museums, art exhibitions, or cultural heritage sites ([See Table 1](#)).

Table 1. The obstacles to participating in culture, 2013. Data by Statistics Estonia, compiled by the author.

(% of 15-24 years old persons, who have not visited cultural institutions by reason and type of cultural event*)

	Theatre, opera, ballet or dance event	Concert	Cinema	Museum, art exhibition or cultural heritage site	Other cultural events
No free time	52,2	58,1	44,3	49,6	53,3
Culture events are not interesting	18,8	9,4	12,1	20	19,2
No cultural institutions nearby	9,1	10,5	21,5	11,5	7,9
The offer is not interesting	17,4	18,7	18,1	20,9	16
Need to take care of family	3,9	3,9	..	..	..
Tickets are too expensive	12,1	9,9	..	..	..
No or bad transportation opportunities	2,8	..	..	2,5	..
No company to go with	4,7	4,4	..	..	..
There is too little information about the cultural events	..	..	..	..	4,9

*multiple reasons possible per respondent.

Young people, especially at a younger age, are dependent on their parents. The parent-related impact factors of cultural consumption among 5–14-year-old children have been analyzed by Triinu Lukas of the Statistics Estonia in 2016 ([7. Sotsiaaltrendid. Social Trends](#)). The analysis revealed that, even though children are more active participants in culture compared to adults (probably owing to school), in current Estonian society, the parents' social background has a significant impact on the cultural consumption activity of their children. Thus, the children of parents with more cultural capital have a greater potential to attain a good life through a high level of cultural consumption activity. The strongest impact factors for children's cultural consumption include the cultural activity of

the parents, the number of children in the parent's household, the age of the parent, and the parents' employment status. The settlement type had no impact on the level of children's cultural consumption, which means that there is no evidence that children living in a city or a town are more active participants in culture than children living in a small town or a village. See [Table 2](#), which summarises the results of the regression analysis of children's cultural consumption and the respective impact factors, showing the relative significance of different characteristics of the parents' socioeconomic background.

Regression coefficients are significant at the 0.005 level, except in the case of the tertiary education level of a parent ($p = .014$), the income of household member ($p = .016$), and parent's settlement type ($p = .248$).

Table 2 shows that the most significant is the impact of the parent's cultural activity, next is the number of children in the family, and age of the parent. In conclusion, it shows that children are much impacted by their parents' cultural behavior and if parents are active and young, there is a higher likelihood that the children also participate in culture.

The analysis shows that children's cultural consumption was also influenced by the parent's ethnic origin (see [Figure 2](#)). Like in the case of adults, Estonian children were more likely to be active participants in culture compared to the children of parents who identified themselves as Russians, partially because Estonians are often financially in a better position ([Statistics Estonia, poverty data, 2018](#)). As household income divided by the number of household members, or monthly income per household member, only had a limited impact on cultural consumption in children – the impact was much weaker than in the analysis concerning parents – Lukas ([7. Sotsiaaltrendid. Social Trends](#)) concludes that culture is more available to children than to their parents and the financially inferior position of Russians should not play such a great role. In addition, children have a considerably higher level of participation in culture, irrespective of ethnic origin, and there is greater equality between the observed ethnic groups in children compared to their parents.

Main concepts

Culture plays a huge role in Estonia's life. According to the [Constitution of the Republic of Estonia](#), the state of Estonia shall "guarantee the preservation of the Estonian people, language, and culture through the ages". The viability of the Estonian cultural space is the first goal set in the [Sustainable Estonia 21](#) strategy, which guides all policy areas until the year 2030. As the main task of this strategy is to show what should be done to ensure the successful functioning of the Estonian society in the long term, it is clear that culture has a major role in the whole society, and the sustainability of the Estonian nation and culture is defined as the cornerstone of sustainable development of the state.

The cultural policy in Estonia is set in the document "[The General Principles of the Cultural Policy up to 2020](#)" ([Kultuuripoliitika põhialused aastani 2020](#)). The aim of cultural policy is to develop a society that values creativity, preserving and promoting the national identity, studying, preserving, and carrying forward the cultural memory and creating favorable conditions for developing a viable, open, and diverse cultural space and participating in culture. According to the fundamentals document of cultural policy, all residents of Estonia must be ensured with the possibility to create the culture and participate in it, regardless of their religious, social, cultural, ethnic, age, sex, or other individual special features and needs. Each cultural field (architecture, audiovisual area, digital cultural heritage, design, performance arts, literature, arts, creative industries, music, heritage protection, museums, libraries, folk culture, cultural diversity, sports) has its own legislation and concepts.

The term "digital cultural heritage" is being used in Estonia. The state administrates over 900 million culturally important heritage objects and only 1/10 is digitalized. Digitalization is seen as one of the best and in some cases the only way to ensure that the legacy is preserved in the most suitable way and made available for as many people as possible. The action plan for digitalizing cultural heritage ([Kultuuripärandi digiteerimise](#)

[tegevuskava](#)) is created by the [Ministry of Culture](#) and by the year 2023, they intend to digitalize 30% of the heritage. In 2020, the project includes heritage from the Estonian National Museum, National Archives of Estonia, and Estonian Literary Museum.

The year 2020 is called as "[Year of Digital Culture](#)" ([Digikultuuriaasta](#)). The activities of the theme year consist of 4 topics:

1. Conceptualization - understanding, what is going on in the digital culture and creating a report on that, several activities connected to events or writing articles.
2. Development - creating programs, digital residency, future libraries, virtual contests, and festivals, etc.
3. Implementation - digitalization of the cultural heritage, including digitalization of books into audio versions, TV shows and movies into a free online platform, online radios, etc.
4. Communication - calendar for digital culture events, other means of communication of the theme year.

8.2 Administration and governance

Governance

There is no single body responsible for the creativity and culture of young people as the domain covers several policy areas, which have established different division of tasks between different ministries, and between local and central levels.

The main Governmental authority responsible for the creativity and culture of young people in Estonia according to the [Government of the Republic Act](#) (passed 13.12.1995) is the [Ministry of Culture](#), where there are two departments relevant to the culture and creativity of youth: the Arts Department and the Cultural Diversity Department.

Other main public actors and foundations of policy fields relevant to creativity and culture:

- [Ministry of Education and Research](#), responsible for youth policy and education policy, where the creativity of young people is one of the goals of the [Youth Field Development Plan](#) 2014-2020.
- the [Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications](#), responsible for supporting creative industries and technological development.
- [Education and Youth Board](#), a governmental organization responsible for the implementation of education and youth policy.
- [Integration Foundation](#), an independent body established by the government under the Ministry of Culture, responsible for supporting the integration of national minorities in Estonia and cultural diversity.
- [Estonian Song and Dance Celebration Foundation](#), an independent body established by the government under the Ministry of Culture, responsible for the development and organization of national song and dance celebrations, which is a great part of the culture in Estonia.
- [Estonian Folk Culture Centre](#), an independent body established by the government under the Ministry of Culture, responsible for the survival and evolution of Estonian folk culture and intangible heritage.
- [The Cultural Endowment of Estonia](#), a legal person in public law the objective of which is to finance the arts, folk culture, physical fitness and sport, and the construction and renovation of cultural buildings.

The main non-public actors, who represent different interest fields that are tightly connected with culture and creativity:

- [Estonian Arts School Union](#), an umbrella organization for art schools in Estonia;

- [Estonian Music Schools Union](#), an umbrella organization for music schools in Estonia;
- [Estonian Dance Hobby Education Union](#), an umbrella organization for dance schools in Estonia;
- [Estonian Science Hobby Education Union](#), an umbrella organization for science hobby schools in Estonia;
- [Estonian Hobby Schools Union](#), an umbrella organization uniting hobby schools in Estonia;
- [Estonian Private Hobby Schools Union](#), an umbrella organization uniting private hobby schools in Estonia;
- [Estonian Amateur Theatre Association](#), an umbrella organization uniting amateur theaters.

In the means of governance, the listed representative non-public actors represent the voice of their members in the development of each of these fields separately that are connected to culture and creativity. They are all included in the youth policy development process through the Hobby Education Representative Body called [HUVE](#), which mainly cooperates with the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and gives input to different youth policy related topics and documents.

Other NGOs that are connected to the field of culture and creativity and develop their concrete field:

- [Union of Dance Education and Arts](#), an organization uniting educators and artists in the area of dance;
- [Estonian Choral Association](#), an umbrella organization for all choirs and wind orchestras in Estonia;
- [Estonian Music Council](#), a non-governmental organization that serves as a representative body of Estonian musicians.

The distribution of responsibilities between the national and local level

In general, the [Ministry of Culture](#) is responsible for the development of policy in the area of culture (including culture and creativity of youth) and for forming the principles of financing culture. Local authorities are responsible for municipal cultural and educational institutions (including hobby schools) and are also financing local activities, initiatives, and non-governmental organizations.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policy-making and implementation, which also covers the area of culture and creativity of youth. 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, monitoring the cooperation and in case of need initiating the cooperation - is granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#) based on the [State Budget Act](#) (see a more detailed description of the mechanisms in [Chapter 1.5](#)). The [Ministry of Finance](#) also plays a coordinating role in planning, monitoring, and ensuring the division of resources of different financial instruments including the state budget, among all the policy fields.

8.3 National strategy on creativity and culture for young people

Existence of a national strategy

There is no single document that could be considered a national strategy on creativity and culture for young people, but a set of official documents integrating major directions to be followed in the organization of policymaking and implementation in relation to creativity and culture for young people.

The following strategies are most relevant forming a national policy of creativity and culture for young people:

- [The general principles of the cultural policy up to 2020 \(Kultuuripoliitika põhialused aastani 2020\)](#), approved by Parliament 12. February 2014).
- The [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 \(Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020\)](#), approved by the Government 19. December 2013).
- The Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035 eelnõu](#)), which by November 2020 was not confirmed by the Parliament yet, but will be by the end of the year.

As the general principles of the cultural policy will end with 2020, the implementation will be continued under the culture programme up to 2023 ([Kultuuriprogramm 2020-2023](#)).

Scope and contents

The general principles of the cultural policy up to 2020

The general principles of the cultural policy adopted by the Riigikogu (the parliament) are the basis for the state's decisions in the field of culture up until 2020.

The document defines the main objective, the principles of shaping and realizing the cultural policy and the priorities in specific areas such as architecture, design, performing arts, filmmaking, music, literature, and publishing, visual arts, cultural journalism and media, cultural diversity, heritage conservation, museums, libraries, folk culture.

The main objective of the cultural policy is to form a society that values creativity by maintaining and improving the national identity of Estonia, researching, storing, and transferring cultural memory, and creating favorable conditions for the development of a vital, open, and versatile cultural space and for participating in culture.

The target group of the policy document is the whole population; children and young people are only highlighted under some of the priorities in specific areas. Within the youth population, no specific target groups are identified.

The Youth Field Development Plan 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 new youth field development plan for the years 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035 eelnõu](#)) has 4 strategic goals:

1. Young people are the creative and constructive power of the society - they are the leaders of education, culture, economy, environment, and other fields.
2. The protection of the rights of young people is consistent and the young people's active citizenship is supported.
3. Quality youth work (including Hobby Education) is available all over Estonia and creates the possibilities to all young people to develop, success experiences, enrichment of experience baggage and being independent.
4. Young people's loneliness and withdrawal are noticed and prevented through a support network that increases confidence.

Responsible authority for the implementation of the strategy

The responsible authority for the coordination of the implementation of the general principles of the cultural policy up to 2020 is the Government of Estonia, specifically the [Ministry of Culture](#).

The responsible authority for the coordination of the implementation of the [Youth Field Development Plan](#) is the [Ministry of Education and Research](#).

No evidence-based assessment or evaluation of the implementation of both policy documents has been conducted.

Revisions/updates

[The general principles of the cultural policy up to 2020](#) were not preceded by other policy documents since 2000 as the earlier version of the general principles of the cultural policy was adopted in 1998. There have been no revisions or updates to this document.

[The Youth Field Development Plan](#) was preceded by other policy documents since 2000. 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 analysis and the policy objectives were about young people not about the system and services of youth work or youth policy.

[The Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) will have a follow-up as the development plan ends in 2020. The process of a new development plan started in 2018 with the VI Youth Work Forum [NOORUM](#) and the consultation process with stakeholders continued during several events. By May 2020, the consultation for the new Youth Field Development Plan 2035 was ended. The new development plan is a part of the [Education and Research Strategy for the years 2021-2035](#) managed by the [Ministry of Education and Research](#). In November 2020, the Government sent the development plan to the Parliament to be confirmed, which will happen by the end of the year.

8.4 Promoting culture and cultural participation

Reducing obstacles to young people's access to culture

The main policy connected with ensuring young people access to culture is formulated in the [Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020](#) described in more detail in [chapter 8.3](#). Under this policy document, the most important governmental initiative concerned with culture and creativity of young people has been supporting hobby education and hobby activities, including removing obstacles of their access. This initiative is described in detail under [chapter 8.5](#).

Two most prominent top-level projects that aimed to increase access to culture specifically young people are:

1. "An Instrument for Every Child";
2. „The HUKK-AP project“.

An Instrument for Every Child

Under the framework of celebrating [a hundred years of the Republic of Estonia](#), coordinated by the Government Office, an initiative „[An Instrument for Every Child](#)“ was created in 2015. The programme ended at 1. October 2018, on the international music day with concerts all over Estonia.

The idea of the initiative is to encourage youth involvement in music by increasing access of young people to music instruments so that the fact of owning a music instrument would not limit access to be involved in music education.

The aim of the initiative "An Instrument for Every Child" is to upgrade, in cooperation with the private sector, the instrument collections of the institutions that offer musical education to children and young people. The mapping of the instrument collections of musical education institutions revealed a great need for new instruments.

The target group of the initiative includes any institutions offering musical education, such as traditional music schools and youth orchestras, as well as youth centres, culture centres and music groups in general education schools. There are no limitations in terms of musical styles. The initiative enables musical and hobby education institutions to apply for funding of the purchase of musical instruments. All acquired instruments will remain in shared use in the particular group.

There were 4 annual application rounds (2015, 2016, 2017, 2018):

1. In 2015, support was given to 121 institutions to purchase 268 music instruments. A total sum of the support: 196,869 €
2. In 2016, support was given to 208 institutions to purchase 726 music instruments. A total sum of the support: 232,990 €
3. In 2017, support was given to 220 institutions to purchase 688 music instruments. A total sum of the support: 332,290 €
4. In 2018, support was given to 254 institutions to purchase 1,031 music instruments. A total sum of the support: 312,617 €.

The HUKK-AP project

[The HUKK-AP Project](#) - Involvement of Organisations Working in Area of Hobby Education for Young People – was initiated by the Ministry of Education and Research and implemented by Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency (since 01.01.2021 the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#)). The aim of the programme was to support the variety of hobby activities, their efficiency and suitability for youngsters` needs. The objective is to create prerequisites and working solutions in order to involve disadvantaged youngsters

in hobby education. It is important to support opportunities for participating, introduce new methods and increase competencies of educators that enable to increase access of disadvantaged young people to hobby education, mostly in the area of culture and art education.

The main directions of activities:

1. increasing the capability of hobby schools to involve young people with fewer opportunities systematically;
2. promoting hobby activities in new priority target groups;
3. involving young people with fewer opportunities into hobby activities;
4. monitoring and assessing the impact of the project and hobby education.

The following most important results were achieved through the project ([Summary of the HUKK-AP Project. Anything is Possible, 2016](#)):

- 3,231 young people with fewer opportunities participated in hobby activities, 1,806 of them doing so regularly. The participants showed a change in their attitudes, knowledge, skills and behaviour. They became more confident, took initiative more likely, and learned to concentrate, communicate and cooperate more successfully. The skills related to their hobby improved and they became academically more successful.
- 69 new regional hobby groups were established that focused especially on the needs of this particular target group: football training, a painting group, a theatre studio, a nature group, car modelling group, dance lessons, a photography group, guitar lessons, motorcycle training, a poetry group, a pool club, a sailors' club, a handbell group, et al.
- New hobby activity models were established and approaches were tested that had not been previously implemented in the project areas at all or to such an extent. For example, young people with special educational needs were included in regular hobby groups and they were able to participate in smaller groups or individual lessons created especially for them. Young people living in areas that are more secluded were reached via a mobile hobby school.
- 442 parents were involved and advised, which turned out to be of great importance in youth work. Parents play an important role in whether a young person finds a hobby activity and whether they start participating regularly.
- 1,647 specialists working with young people participated in training and mentoring, which has helped to change the way of thinking in the hobby activity system and including young people with fewer opportunities has become a more natural part of everyday work.

The budget of the project was 453,412.57 euros, which was mostly covered by Iceland, Liechtenstein, and Norway through the EEA Grants. The duration of the project was 01.02.2014-30.04.2016.

Disseminating information on cultural opportunities

Starting from the year 2000, the [Ministry of Culture announces a theme for the year](#), which is different each year. The year 2017 was [Children and Youth Year of Culture](#), which was one of the most prominent youth-specific initiatives to raise awareness of young people about the culture and the participation in culture by the top-level authority.

The theme year is organised at the initiative of the Estonian [Ministry of Culture](#), and its implementation is coordinated by the [Estonian Children's Literature Centre](#).

The goals of Children and Youth Year of Culture 2017 were:

- to inspire children and youngsters to become the creators of culture
- to value children and youngsters as an audience for culture

The motto of Children and Youth Year of Culture, “Me too!” and keywords independence and collaboration invited children and youngsters to participate in culture as well as to create experiences themselves. Supporting and encouraging the young as creators as well as an audience helps us ensure a continuous and abundant cultural life for the coming generations. Public funding in 2017 for that initiative was 40,000 €.

The information on cultural opportunities is available on many levels, depending on the scale of the event or opportunity - either with big activities nationwide media coverage or with smaller ones, the dissemination is done on the local level. On the local level, hobby education and activities that are connected with both culture and creativity, the information is disseminated by either youth workers or schools themselves, and the information is targeted to youth specifically.

[The general principles of the cultural policy up to 2020](#) show that disseminating information on cultural opportunities is one of the recurring topics throughout the strategy and each field has to provide the dissemination of their specific information. The programme for culture for the years 2020-2023 ([Kultuuriprogramm 2020-2023](#)) states that the budget for the whole programme for 2020 is more than 201 million euros, from which more than 65 million euros go to preserving the cultural heritage and making it available, and more than 116 million euros go to supporting and developing versatile and available cultural life.

Knowledge of cultural heritage amongst young people

The most important nation-wide top-level programme to support young people's discovery and appreciation of the cultural and artistic heritage of Estonia is [The Youth Song and Dance Celebrations](#).

The Youth Song and Dance celebrations are targeted to youth (7-26, mostly young people in school-age 7-17) and take place every five years in a dedicated area (Song Festival Ground) in Tallinn. Even though the event itself only lasts for few days in, the actual programme is covering also the period between the events as it includes the regular meetings (weekly in general) of dance groups, choirs, folk groups and orchestras in schools, cultural centres etc. throughout the years.

The celebrations focal point is Estonian folk culture with traditional songs and dances, however, also new work is commissioned for every event. Participants mostly wear national costumes.

In addition to youth celebration, also a general song and dance celebration is held, where young people take part. According to the established tradition, every 2nd and 7th year of the decade a youth song and dance celebration and every 4th and 9th year of the decade a general song and dance celebration takes place. The tradition of Estonian Song and Dance Celebrations tradition began with the first Song Celebration in 1869. The celebrations have taken place regardless of the political situation and have been part of building Estonian identity that has united the nation in its struggle for national independence before 1918 and during the period of the Soviet occupation (1941-1991). The [“Singing Revolution”](#) began in 1988, based on the Song Celebration tradition, when hundreds of thousands of people gathered in the Song Festival Grounds to demand Estonia’s independence and sing patriotic songs. Estonia regained its independence in 1991. In November 2003, [UNESCO declared Estonia’s Song and Dance Celebration](#) tradition a masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity.

According to the research by Lauristin & Vihalemm ([Minu laulu- ja tantsupidu. Sotsioloogilise uuringu aruanne](#), Eesti Laulu- ja Tantsupeo Sihtasutus, 2013), the tradition to hold celebrations is very viable, also among young people. The number of participants has not dropped in spite of the general decrease of the youth population and the number of groups taking part in the selection process before the event is increasingly larger than the number selected to participate. The Register of Estonian Song and Dance Celebration Foundation has in 2016 a record of 50,196 members of groups (dance, groups, choirs, orchestras, folk music groups), aged 7 to 26; the number of individuals of the same age

group is 37,722, which means that the Register has a record of 13% of Estonian young people. In the age group from 7 to 19, the Register has a record of 21% of all Estonian young people ("[Hobby education, hobby activity, and youth workers in local municipalities](#)", the Centre for Applied Social Sciences of the University of Tartu, 2016).

In 2017, the [12th Youth Song and Dance Celebrations](#) were held, in which 797 collectives took part in Song Celebrations, that makes about 24,000 singers. Dance Celebrations had 585 collectives, with about 9,000 dancers. In 2019, the [27th General Song and Dance Celebrations](#) were held. The year 2019 was also the anniversary year of 150 years of song celebrations. During the previous general song and dance celebrations, 1,020 singing collectives (more than 32,000 singers) and 713 dancing collectives (11,500 dancers) participated. The [next](#) Youth Song and Dance Celebrations will take place in the year 2022 and General Song and Dance Celebrations in the year 2024.

The event is funded from the state budget and ticket revenue. In 2019, the [Ministry of Culture](#) designated more than 2,4 million euros for the [Estonian Song and Dance Celebration Foundation](#) who is the responsible body for organisation of the celebrations. Additional 200,000 euros was given in order to organize the theme year of 2019, which was designated to the 150 anniversary described in the previous paragraph. The [Ministry of Culture](#) also supported the collectives participating in the celebrations with 1 million euros that were distributed by the [Estonian Song and Dance Celebration Foundation](#).

8.5 Developing cultural and creative competences

Acquiring cultural and creative competences through education and training

Formal learning

The standard for basic education is established by the [national curriculum for basic schools](#). General secondary education is a set of requirements established with the [national curriculum for upper secondary schools](#). At the core of the national curriculum are general competencies, the development of which must be supported by the entire learning process. In addition to teaching and learning objectives of subject areas, the development of general competencies is supported also by the integration of subjects and study of cross-curricular topics.

Basic school: 1st-9th grades

The national curriculum for basic schools defines among the 8 general competencies a cultural and value competence. This is described as an ability to evaluate human relations and activities from the standpoint of generally accepted moral norms; to sense and value one's ties with other people, the society, nature, the cultural heritage of one's own country and nation and those of others, and events in contemporary culture; to value creation and shape the sense of aesthetics; to value general human and societal values, to value human, cultural and natural diversity; to acknowledge one's values.

Among the compulsory subject fields is a subject field „Art“. The objective of teaching subjects of the art field in basic school is to develop in students age-appropriate art competence: the ability to understand the diversity of arts, to reflect on issues of art and music; to value the artistic heritage of the local region, Estonia and the world; to see the relationship between the culture of different eras and modern culture; to use means of artistic and musical expression in personal and collective creative efforts, to appreciate their own artistic creations and those of their peers.

It is expected that, through art education, basic school graduates will:

1. have acquired experience of creative activities and self-expression, recognize their creative abilities and value individual and environmentally-friendly approaches;

2. use various visual and musical means of expression in creative work, discuss age-appropriate cultural messages and value judgments and are able to shape their opinions and express emotions through art;
3. value culture and human creativity, participate in individual and collaborative art projects and appreciate solution-seeking and creative thinking;
4. notice cultural traditions and global cultural diversity, understand the relative importance of music and art in present-day society, accept different cultural phenomena;
5. value and maintain Estonian culture and the culture of ethnic minorities living here, feel responsible for the preservation of cultural traditions, see connections between the development of art and culture and science and technology in the past and present-day; and
6. have an overview of the professions, occupations and further education opportunities associated with the art field.

The subject field of art subjects comprises art and music, compulsory at all stages of basic education. Art and music are taught from the 1st-9th grades. The design of required learning outcomes and contents in the subjects of the art field is based on the following division of weekly lessons between study stages and subjects:

- 1st Stage of Study Art: – 4.5 lessons Music: – 6 lessons
- 2nd Stage of Study Art: – 3 lessons Music: – 4 lessons
- 3rd Stage of Study Art: – 3 lessons Music: – 3 lessons

The compulsory subject „Music” aims that by the end of the basic school, the student would:

1. derive joy from music and discern, realise and develop their abilities through making music;
2. become interested in music as an art form and shape their personal aesthetic tastes;
3. think and act creatively and also express themselves creatively through musical activities;
4. apply the acquired basics of musical literacy skill in musical activities;
5. value music and musical activities as they enrich people, culture and daily life;
6. know and maintain the traditions of national culture, participate in the process of transmitting the tradition of song festivals and understand and respect different national cultures;
7. comprehend and value the creation of pieces of music and take a critical attitude to the information technology and media-based environment;
8. know prominent Estonian and local composers and musicians and value cultural traditions; and
9. understand how interest in the field, musical abilities and knowledge can lead to the formation of a hobby or choice of a profitable profession.

The compulsory subject „Art” aims that by the end of the basic school, the student would:

1. be able to use the skills of creative and critical thinking and problem-solving in creative activities, assignments, research and reflection;
2. perceive and develop their creative potential, appreciate originality and different solutions;
3. learn about the means of expression in visual arts and be able to create different works of art, using acquired knowledge and skills;
4. experiment with ideas, concepts, tools, materials and techniques;
5. work independently and in cooperation with peers;
6. apply acquired skills in other school subjects and in daily life;
7. learn about and value both art heritage and contemporary art;

8. make connections between the development of art, culture, science and technology;
9. regard art as a language of intercultural communication and comprehend cultural diversity and the role of art in society;
10. express their opinions and knowledge in oral and written forms using specific (art) vocabulary;
11. act in an ethical and safe manner in actual and virtual cultural environments;
12. comprehend aesthetic, ethical, functional and ecological aspects of examples material and spatial environments and design;
13. have an overview of the professions and occupations associated with the field of arts, design and architecture.

In addition, eight cross-curricular topics are defined in the curriculum, including cultural identity. The aim of the learning under this topic is for the pupil to develop into a person who is culturally aware, who understands the role of culture in shaping people's thought and behaviour and who knows how cultures have changed over history, who has acquired an idea of the versatility of cultures and particularities of lifestyles determined by culture and who values native culture and cultural diversity and is culturally tolerant and prepared for cooperation.

Upper secondary school: 10th to 12th grade

The national curriculum for upper secondary schools defines among the eight general competences, cultural and value competence. This is described as an ability to evaluate human relations and activities from the standpoint of generally accepted moral norms and ethics; to sense and value one's ties with other people, the society, nature, the cultural heritage of one's own country and nation and those of others, and events in contemporary culture; to value art and creation, and shape the sense of aesthetics; to value general human and societal values, to value human, cultural and natural diversity; to acknowledge one's values and take them into consideration when making decisions; be tolerant and cooperative and to contribute for achieving joint objectives.

Among the compulsory subject fields is a subject field „Art“. The objective of teaching art subjects in upper secondary school is to develop students' art competence, i.e., cultural awareness, understanding of the variety of arts and cultural diversity of the world; basic knowledge of Estonian, European and global cultural heritage; appreciation of creative achievements in visual arts and music; the ability of critical and creative thinking; high regard for versatile self-expression skills, originality and readiness to find fresh solutions in changing circumstances; ability to use the means of art and music for individual and collective creative activities.

Upper secondary school graduates:

1. see art and music as natural parts of life and understand the significance of aesthetic factors of these art forms in modern society and everyday life;
2. explore and value the diversity of arts and their changes over time and in different places and cultures, see the connections between the development of art, culture, science and technology in the past and today;
3. think and act in an informed and critical manner in the cultural landscape and express their opinions and emotions;
4. are aware of their creative potential, realise their creative ideas confidently and competently and value their peers' different ideas and solutions;
5. know the diversity of cultural traditions, compare and value similarities and differences between cultural phenomena;
6. value and maintain Estonian culture and the culture of ethnic minorities living here, perceive themselves as bearers of cultural tradition and;
7. have an overview of the occupations, professions and continuing education opportunities in the fields of music and arts.

The compulsory subjects in the field of art subjects include music and art. The compulsory courses by subject are the following:

- Art – 2 courses: “Art and art history” and “Art and visual culture in the 20th and 21st centuries”;
- Music – 3 courses: “Development of modern musical expression”, “Patriotism in music”, “Music of the 20th and 21st centuries”. All courses include modules of “Musical self-expression: singing, instrument playing, original creation”.

The compulsory subject „Music“ in upper secondary school seeks to ensure that students:

1. realise the possibilities of music and see its potential applications as a means to elaborate on, to influence and shape personal life and actions, as well as communication and the surrounding world;
2. value music as an important part of human culture and perceive themselves as bearers of native culture; understand and value the social and political nature and educational meaning of the choir singing movement and song festivals;
3. participate in musical life and have acquired readiness for musical performance and lifelong music activities;
4. can critically listen to, analyse and interpret music and discuss it, use creativity in musical self-expression;
5. are aware of and follow the rights and obligations associated with intellectual property and use modern information technology.
6. take their peers into account and value cooperation; and
7. have an overview of the professions and further education opportunities related to composition, interpretation, musical education, etc.

The compulsory subject „Art“ in upper secondary school seeks to ensure that students:

1. perceive the potential of art and see its applications as a means of interpreting, influencing and designing their personal lives and actions as well as the world around them;
2. are familiar with the basic concepts and stages in the history of art;
3. describe and compare diverse ideas and means of expression used in modern art;
4. understand that art and visual culture are connected to social processes and other spheres of life;
5. apply different artistic means of expression and techniques in creative self-expression, interpret and solve various problem assignments;
6. value the surrounding living environment and visual cultural heritage, understand the innovative, human-friendly and ecological way of thinking; and
7. have an overview of the professions and further education opportunities associated with the fields of art, architecture, design, etc.

In addition, eight cross-curricular topics are defined in the curriculum, including cultural identity. The aim of the learning under this topic is for the student to develop into a person who is culturally aware, who understands the role of culture in shaping people’s thought and behaviour and who knows how cultures have changed over history, who has acquired an idea of the versatility of cultures and particularities of lifestyles determined by culture and who values native culture and cultural diversity and is culturally tolerant and prepared for cooperation.

Non-formal learning

A large number of young people in Estonia develop their cultural and creative competencies taking part in hobby education and hobby activities.

Youth [hobby education](#) and [hobby activities](#) are long-term and curricula-based (hobby education) or short-term with no demand for curriculum (hobby activities) systematic and

supervised engagements with one's hobbies at one's will outside formal education or job for acquiring intensive knowledge and skills in the selected hobby.

Both hobby education and hobby activity play an important role in the Estonian social and cultural context by promoting the cultural development and socialisation process of children and young people.

Hobby education is non-formal learning based on clear learning aims taking place in hobby schools. Each hobby school has its own curricula. According to the [Standard for Hobby Education](#) (passed 21.03.2007), the purpose of hobby education is to provide opportunities for the comprehensive development of personality and to support young persons in their development into members of society with good coping skills. A hobby school, as defined in the [Hobby Schools Act \(passed 21.12.2006, amended 01.09.2017\)](#), is an educational establishment operating in the area of youth work which creates an opportunity for the acquisition of hobby education and for the diverse development of the personality, including cultivation of one's own language and culture, in different areas of hobby education.

Hobby activities can take place in various locations (mostly general education schools, youth centres, culture institutions).

Hobby education and hobby activity can take place in the following fields:

1. sports;
2. technology;
3. nature;
4. general culture;
5. music and arts.

According to the most recent research on hobby education and hobby activity ("[Hobby education, hobby activity, and youth workers in local municipalities](#)", the Centre for Applied Social Sciences of the University of Tartu, 2016), an estimated 40% of all the Estonian young people from age 7 to 26 (total number of 106 658 people) were involved in the hobby activity and hobby education in 2016.

It is estimated that the number of institutions providing hobby education and hobby activity to young people is approximately 3500 including altogether 711 institutions that are providing hobby education. According to the research, every Estonian school has some kind of hobby activity opportunities for young people. Young people can also participate in hobby education or hobby activity in 571 culture centres and 924 civil or youth associations. The number of young people connected to some kind of hobby education and hobby activity is the biggest in the case of general education schools, namely 33.7%. 25% practises hobby activity in a youth centre, 15% practises hobby education or hobby activity in a hobby school, and 11% practises hobby activity in another cultural or social institution. Less than 10% of the young people practise hobby education or hobby activity in an association, culture centre and club. In terms of field of hobbies, 42% of the institutions are active in the field of culture and arts education: 15% music, 15% arts, 12% dance.

In Estonia, there are no guidelines for the recognition of specific cultural and creative competencies acquired through non-formal and informal learning.

Additional financing for hobby education and activities since 2017

In general, the hobby education and hobby activities are financed by local governments and parents' contribution, the state budget supported until 2017 only priority-based projects.

In 2017, the Government proposed and the Parliament [decided to finance additionally hobby education and hobby activities](#) (amendment in the [Youth Work Act](#), in force from 01.01.2018) from state budget with an aim to increase access to, variety and quality of hobby education and activities for young people between 7-19 years old. The annual

support is 15 million euros. It is divided to local government budgets based on the number of young people taking into account the problems young people are facing in the municipality (the formula includes the number of young people with special needs, the financial capability of local government and the ratio of the number hobby opportunities and a number of young people). In order to use the support, a local government (or a group of local governments together) has to draw up a plan on how to increase the access to and variety of hobby education and activities provided. The first deadline to submit the plans was 1.09.2017. A vast majority of all the municipalities (a total number of 199 from 213 in Estonia) submitted the plan, of which 53 in a group. Now the deadline for submitting results and new plans is 15.01 annually and all municipalities have to present their plan. A web-based environment called [Digilahendus](#) was launched in 2019. [During the years 2017-2018](#), almost 20 million euros was distributed to the municipalities. See more in [Chapter 10.4](#).

Specialised training for professionals in the education, culture and youth fields

Specialised training organised or funded by top-level authorities is available for fostering the acquisition of cultural and creative skills amongst young people to relevant professionals in Estonia.

There is a vast amount of formal education and addition training opportunities concerned with culture and creativity.

Most important higher education institutions, that provide formal education connected with culture and arts, but also additional training for professionals already working in the area (including teachers in formal education, educators and youth workers, professionals in the cultural sector) are the following:

- [Estonian Academy of Arts](#) – public university providing opportunities for higher education in fine arts, design, architecture, media, visual studies, art culture, and conservation.
- [Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre](#) - a public university of music and drama, offering higher education in all major fields of music and theatre through bachelor, master and doctoral programmes.
- The [University of Tartu](#) – a public university offering a large number of study programmes under the Faculty of Arts and Humanities and has a collage [Viljandi Culture Academy](#) specialising on education in different areas of culture.
- [Tallinn University](#)- a public university that offers studies in different areas of culture such as cultural theory, Estonian language and culture, cross-media in film and television, audio-visual media, film arts etc.
- [Tartu Higher Art College](#) Pallas (University of Applied Sciences) - applied higher education institution that educates professional applied artists and artists-restorers who value and preserve cultural heritage

There is also a vocational education provider such as the [Tallinn Music School of Georg Ots](#) and [Tartu Music School of Heino Eller](#).

In 2015, the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) initiated a specific programme "Development of youth workers training" with an aim to raise the competencies of youth workers working in different areas. The programme reached its end in 2019 and it was supported by the European Social Fund. At the end of 2019, the [Foundation Archimedes Youth agency](#) (since 01.01.2021 the the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#)) commissioned a study that was conducted by [Civitta Estonia](#) on the impact of the programme ([ESF koolitusprogrammi "Noorsootöötajate koolituste arendamine" koolituste mõju-uuring](#)). During the period 2015-2019, 249 different training activities were held and 5,157 youth

workers participated (unique participants). Based on the research results, approximately 55% of the people working in the youth field have participated in the training activities.

The whole [programme during the period of 2015-2019](#) cost 2,004,750 euros, from which 1,704,037.50 euros was financed by the European Social Fund and 300,712.50 euros by the state budget.

Providing quality access to creative environments

There are no very recent large initiatives with the aim of widening the access of young people specifically to the creative environment. The significant theme-year of [Children and Youth Year of Culture](#) was held in 2017, organised at the initiative of the [Ministry of Culture](#) and coordinated by the [Estonian Children's Literature Centre](#).

The year 2020 is called theme-year of [Digital Culture](#) and some activities are also directed to youth specifically. There is an initiative called Creative Tiger ([Loometiiger](#)), a digital creativity programme for children, which will be worked out in cooperation with HITSA ([Information Technology Foundation for Education](#), starting from 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Department](#)) that will give a digital programme for children and young people that schools will be able to use in order to teach creative fields in digital ways. No updates of the process are available in May 2020, so it is unclear when the programme will be available. Other activities held within the Digital Culture theme-year are targeted to all residents in Estonia, and not specific to young people. Read more about the theme-year from [Chapter 8.1](#).

8.6 Developing entrepreneurial skills through culture

Developing entrepreneurial skills through cultural activities

Formal Education

Entrepreneurship education is explicitly referred to in the [curricula](#) as follows:

- In ISCED 1-3, new national curricula explicitly recognise EE as a general competence and a cross-curricular objective. It is also included as the cross-curricular topic 'Civic Initiative and Entrepreneurship'
- In ISCED 2-3, it is taught in the optional separate subjects 'Entrepreneurial Studies' (ISCED 2) and 'Economic and Entrepreneurship Studies' (ISCED 3), and in the compulsory subject 'Civics and Citizenship Education' (ISCED 2-3).

Central level recommendations for teaching methods are available through the new curricula for basic schools and upper secondary schools.

Learning outcomes for EE are defined in the general part of the National Curricula for Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools as well in subject syllabi. Some examples are:

- in ISCED 1, students are expected, for example, to understand that money pays for things and is earned by working and to know how to cooperate with others;
- in ISCED 2, students are expected, for example, to have an understanding of labour market opportunities for those with different educational levels, as well as know what it means to be an owner, entrepreneur, employer, employee or unemployed person;
- in ISCED 3, students are expected, for example, to understand entrepreneurship as a career choice and understand that it is possible for them to become entrepreneurs.

Entrepreneurship education is explicitly referred to in the national curricula, which is described in detail in [chapter 3.8](#).

In higher education, culture management can be studied (BA, MA) in the [Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre](#) and [University of Tartu](#) including in its collage [Viljandi Culture Academy](#).

Non-formal Education

The recognition and validation of the learning, including entrepreneurial learning, in non-formal and informal learning environments, is been an important topic in education and youth policies for a long time. There is a legal framework allowing prior learning and work experience to be recognized and validated in the formal education system. The entrepreneurship of young people has an important place in youth work, described in more detail in [chapter 3.8](#).

Support young entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors

The initiative "[Creative Estonia](#)" is in the heart of developing and supporting entrepreneurs in the cultural and creative sectors.

Creative Estonia was established in 2009 by Enterprise Estonia, funded by the European Social Fund in order to increase awareness about the potential of creative industries in the Estonian economy. The larger aim is to present the content, unique characteristics, economic, social, and regional value of creative industries and to create a platform for the discussion of creative industry problems and solutions. In addition, to support beginning and established creative businesses with much-needed information and advice, increasing the business and exportability of creative businesses. Creative Estonia has contributed to forming cooperation networks, and the exchange of expertise and information nationally and internationally.

The [Creative Estonia](#) portal gathers a lot of information and support material about creative industries in Estonia. It functions as a news portal for the sector in cooperation with partner organizations, offering up-to-date information about events, studies, support measures, and also featuring interviews and articles with outstanding people in the sector. The most visited pages focus on starting and developing a creative business.

As the role of starting and existing creative businesses is vital, Creative Estonia launched the virtual product and service development environment [PESA](#) in 2011. PESA is Estonia's first web-based development program. Each year, 20 companies with great export potential from different parts of Estonia are taking part in the 1-year support program. Businesses and cultural organizations are also invited to free regional marketing seminars taking place once a year in five different towns in Estonia. The [2018 PESA](#) graduates catalog illustrates the activities of these projects and which enterprises graduated from the PESA program.

[TeamLab](#) product development days take place twice a year. TeamLab aims to connect designers, engineers, and managers in order to create new products. The first TeamUp was held in 2010 autumn as a one-day-event. The next events have already been a two-day event – during the first day teams are formed who will prepare a product project. On the second day, the teams will present their business plan to the jury. The last event took place in 2019 Autumn.

To encourage contact between businesses and creative people, Creative Estonia organizes various events and seminars, open-coffee style meetings, and short lectures where creative businesses and potential investors are brought together. To promote the idea of creative industries, Creative Estonia participates in conferences to do with management, business, and innovation as well as other areas and seeks solutions to problems in the creative industries with input from key figures from local government level right up to the parliament.

8.7 Fostering the creative use of new technologies

New technologies in support of creativity and innovation

Infrastructure support for schools

In 2020, Estonia is one of the most digitized societies in the world, with a large number of public services available to citizens online, broadband internet coverage across the majority of the country, WiFi available almost everywhere, etc. In order to provide all schools with computers and internet access, the Tiger Leap Foundation was launched in 1997. Tiger Leap Plus, which followed the Tiger Leap program, focused mainly on the ICT competences of students, teachers and educational staff. Its main activities included the creation of electronic educational materials, in-service training, and support of teacher cooperation and experience exchanges. Under the Tiger Leap Plus program the Learning Tiger program was launched, the main focus of which was to make e-learning a natural part of daily tutorial work, curricula, and teacher training. The Estonian Education and Research Network (EENet) established in 1993, which in 2013 was transferred to be part of the [Information Technology Foundation for Education](#) has been providing high-quality national network infrastructure for Estonia's research, educational and cultural communities. All schools have free internet, including via WIFI, available for their students. The Information Technology Foundation for Education was joint amongst other institutions, and starting from 01.08.2020, a governmental institution called [Education and Youth Board](#).

HITSA

[The Information Technology Foundation for Education \(HITSA\)](#) was a non-profit association established by the Republic of Estonia, the University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Technology, Eesti Telekom, and the Estonian Association of Information Technology and Telecommunications. The role of the HITSA was to ensure that the graduates at all levels of education have obtained digital skills necessary for the development of economy and society and the possibilities offered by ICT are skilfully used in teaching and learning, which helps improve the quality of learning and teaching at all levels of education. HITSA initiated and guided innovation and development in our area of activities and introduced the best practices.

The activities of the educational programs were targeted at advancing and intensifying the cooperation between ICT industry, universities, other educational institutions, and the state. HITSA also offered [a training portal](#) for educators, youth workers, etc. in the area of digital technologies, including on how to support the creativity of young people.

Starting from 01.08.2020, HITSA is a part of the new organization called [Education and Youth Board](#), which fills in the tasks and goals of the previous organization.

PROGETIGER

With the view of arousing young people's interest in IT and introducing to them the future possibilities in the area, the activities of the program ProgeTiger are aimed at encouraging preschool, general, and vocational education teachers to use technology (including programming and robotics) more widely in teaching.

To support this goal, [Education and Youth Board](#) (up to 31.07.2020 HITSA) implements the ProgeTiger technology education program, which offers varied opportunities for integrating technology into studies, including basic and in-service training courses, subject-based model lessons and tasks, learning and teaching materials and examples of curricula that integrate technology.

Program ProgeTiger was launched in Estonia in 2012 when the idea of teaching programming and robotics was introduced to our schools.

In primary education, there is a national cross-curricular theme called "Technology and Innovation" which requires all teachers to implement technology in their teaching. That

means that teachers have to integrate technology in their subjects in different fields (for example using Scratch in mathematics, music programs in music lessons, and so on). It does not say what to use or how to use technology specifically. Teachers can choose themselves how they want to do this. Also, there are different national optional curricula and schools own subjects in technology education (programming, robotics, 3D graphics, computer science, informatics, etc.) which schools can choose to add into their school program (approximately 67% of Estonian schools have one or more optional lesson in their program). Some examples of what the teachers do in schools:

- In preschool, teachers teach and use LEGO WeDo (in order to enhance students' curiosity and science skills), Kodu Game Lab (building, playing, and sharing games), tablets (apps), programs to make animations, etc.
- In primary school, teachers teach and use Kodu Game Lab, Logo MSW (programming), Scratch (programming), LEGO Mindstorms EV3 (robotics), mobile app making programs and environments, many different programs and environments which are used for teaching various subjects (music, mathematics, physics, biology), e-labs, etc.
- In high school and vocational education, teachers teach and use different programming languages (Python, JavaScript, etc), Codecademy.com courses, 3D graphics, robotics, programs to make games, web-pages, and apps, etc.

ProgeTiger program is supported and funded by the Estonian government through the Estonian Ministry of Education and Research.

[Look@World](#)

[Look@World](#) Foundation (Vaata Maailma SA) was founded in 2001. The goal of the foundation is to serve the public interest by supporting education, science, and culture via encouraging and popularizing the use of the Internet and ICT.

The Foundation launched a [SmartLab project](#) in 2012. The project aims to promote ICT related after school hobby education that will contribute to the IT awareness of the youth. During the first season, it gave more than 500 young people the opportunity to engage in activities related to ICT (programming, web design, app development, etc.). Since then the number of kids and clubs has constantly risen.

The Foundation also implemented the Project „[Theatre on the Internet](#)“. The target group of the performance comprised of young people aged 12-16. However, the performance also addressed teachers and parents and made them see that in today's world there is no line between the virtual and the real world. The topic is approached in an unusual way and the threats of the online world are explored through theatre. The material for the play was collected through the methods of forum theatre where young people could share stories of the things that had happened to them online. The web-police and Estonian Child welfare Union also provided stories.

[For real though?](#) is a project of the foundation initiated in 2013. 10 440 young people aged 10-15 were advised during the active phase of the project. Additionally, an interactive web-environment "[Päriselt ka või](#)" was developed. The page provides access to information materials for youth and adults alike. One can also find lesson plans for teachers. The information regarding the safe use of mobile and smart devices is available on the project web page "[Päriselt ka või](#)".

Smart youth work

In 2017, a [concept of smart youth work](#) was introduced with an aim to support and develop better usage of technological advancement in youth work. It aims to create more opportunities for young people to explore and develop their full potential and in order to do so, among other approaches, states the need to develop a [concept for smart youth work](#):

1. to make greater use of information technology in working with youth, including raising the digital literacy of young people by offering ICT-related hobby activities;
2. developing youth work using new means;
3. raising the competencies of young people and youth workers.

See more information regarding Smart Youth Work from [Chapter 10.4](#).

Facilitating access to culture through new technologies

In Estonia, there are several initiatives aiming at access to culture through technologies, however, there are none specifically targeting young people as the only or main target group. The programmes or initiatives may also be targeted to teachers, parents, etc.

8.8 Synergies and partnerships

Synergies between public policies and programmes

In Estonia, there is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policy-making and implementation, which also covers the area of promoting young people's creativity and capacity for innovation. 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, monitoring the cooperation and in case of need initiating the cooperation - is granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#). Based on the [State Budget Act](#), the [Ministry of Finance](#) also plays a coordinating role in planning, monitoring and ensuring division of resources of different financial instruments including the state budget, among all the policy fields.

As an example, the Government Office coordinated the division of tasks to create the opportunity for additional funding of hobby education and hobby activities (see in more detail in [chapter 8.5](#)). In 2017, the Government proposed and the Parliament [decided to finance additionally hobby education and hobby activities](#) from state budget with an aim to increase access to, variety and quality of hobby education and activities for young people between 7-19 years old. The initiative was developed under the responsibility of the Ministry of Culture and the implementation is under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research. See more about the results of this programme from [Chapter 10.4](#).

Partnerships between the culture and creative sectors, youth organisations and youth workers

There is no established regular policy/programme/initiative by national authorities to foster partnerships between stakeholders of the cultural sector (professionals, entrepreneurs, cultural institutions, associations...) and youth organisations and youth workers. As both the cultural sector and youth sector has a number of active umbrella organisations representing different areas of culture or youth field, and also active formats of cooperation between those organisations, the dialogue and partnerships are created based on their aims and objectives and by them.

8.9 Enhancing social inclusion through culture

Fostering equality and young people involvement through cultural activities

The main new initiative to foster equality and young people involvement through participation in cultural activities (including youth work) is the Additional financing for hobby education and activities since 2017. The programme is described in [chapter 8.5](#). This programme is specifically designed to target young people.

According to the programme "[Culture 2020](#)", the involvement of young people in cultural activities is a recurring topic in different cultural fields. The responsible body for this is the

[Ministry of Culture](#). This programme is not targeted to young people only, but young people as one possible target group.

However, many of the initiatives described in the [next section](#) directly support this aim as well.

Combating discrimination and poverty through cultural activities

Integrating Estonia 2020

“Integrating Estonia 2020” is a strategy of the Government to ensure integration and social cohesion in Estonia in the period 2014-2020. The Ministry of Culture is in charge of the coordination of the strategy.

The general objective of the development plan “Integrating Estonia 2020” is a socially cohesive society where individuals with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds actively participate in society and share democratic values. The new development plan serves as the basis for integration policy that is carried out during 2014–2020, and it aims at:

- increasing the cohesion of society;
- increasing the competitiveness of the Republic of Estonia;
- ensuring security;
- preserving the Estonian language and culture;
- preserving the culture and language of the ethnic minorities;
- ensuring increasing tolerance towards different groups of society;
- ensuring a stronger civic identity.

In the framework of the strategy, several objectives are defined relevant to social inclusion of young people and intercultural awareness. The youth-specific objective of the strategy is “Students with a native language different from Estonian actively participate in youth work and have close contacts with Estonian-speaking peers”. The objective shall be achieved through increasing opportunities for initiatives, joint activities and increasing the involvement of young people in youth work.

The [report about the implementation of the strategy in 2019](#) states the following outcomes under the indicators concerned with young people:

- The participation of young people in youth work in municipalities, where the majority of the population has not Estonian ethnic origin has risen from 44.3% in 2018 to 44.8% in 2019.
- The percentage of young people, who are not in employment, education or training (the NEET) is 10.2% in 2019 and the difference between Estonians and young people with other ethnic origin has decreased from 1.0% in 2018 to 1.2% in 2019.

The youth specific target groups addressed in this document are young people in general (i.e. 7-26 years old) and young people with an ethnic minority background.

The estimated total cost of the development plan from 2014–2020 is 73,52 million euros.

National minorities’ Sunday schools

The [Integration Foundation](#) provided up to 2018 annual funding for national minorities’ [Sunday schools and their development](#), including training leaders and teachers of Sunday schools. National minorities’ Sunday schools are a form of hobby schools that provide children aged 3-18 opportunity to develop their National language and culture studies. The aim is to support National and cultural identity of young people.

The annual funding was available to Sunday schools, which offered to learn at least 100 academic hours per year in which at least 10 children or young people participate.

Caring Values

In 2016, [Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency](#) (since 01.01.2021 the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#)) started to implement the Activity Plan for Caring Values, aimed at the field of youth in Estonia.

The aim of the Activity Plan for Caring Values is to highlight positive values, such as compassion, respect, kindness, diversity, in the field of youth. The aim is to advance understanding and deepening of these values among youth in Estonia, as well as in the larger society, through the means of youth work. The basis of the Activity Plan has been developed and stipulated from November 2015 under the framework of a joint think tank 'The Role of Youth Work in Shaping Friendly Estonia', co-organised by the Youth Agency alongside with the Estonian Youth Work Centre (both are a part of the [Education and Youth Board](#) in 2021).

Main Activities for 2016 and 2017 included:

- Organising youth workers' basic training on human rights education, cultural diversity, marginalized and vulnerable target groups, prevention of hate speech, and enhancing value-based youth work. Basic training is provided in Estonian and in Russian. A Value Forum of Youth Work will be organised, based on the outcomes of the training
- Organising Value campaign for youth that comprises of cultural cooking action 'Culture to the Jar' in youth centres and in schools all over Estonia; a social media campaign advancing media critical competence in youth; idea competition for artistic gifts, and various workshops for youth
- Translation and mapping of human rights education study material

The main target group of the activity plan are young people (7-26) and youth workers.

The Activity Plan is financed by the [Estonian Ministry of Education and Research](#).

"I dare to think, to do, to stand up, to understand"

The Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency (since 01.01.2021 the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the Education and Youth Board) established a central theme "I dare to think, to do, to stand up, to understand" for all the youth projects in 2017. The central theme highlights the range of topics that are important in society today. The Youth Agency had established this theme in order to encourage people to write projects that significantly add to the relevant debates. The central theme focuses on socially critical projects on the following issues (the list is not final):

- Migration and refugees
- Human rights, including gender equality and LGBT projects
- Intercultural dialogue, including challenging cultural stereotypes
- Dialogue between youth and their peers in socially vulnerable positions
- Creative projects (art as a medium for social messages)
- Advancing media literacy and critical analysis (skills) in youth

Under the central theme, focus consultations are provided for applicants. During the consultation, there is an opportunity to obtain thorough feedback on the quality of the project. Applicants pondering how to set the focus of the project are offered the opportunity to register for a consultation on issues concerning the content of the project.

The central theme was valid until the end of 2017, after that the theme ended.

Youth Meetings

Youth Meetings is a programme established to increase interactions between young people from a different ethnic background and thus increase their mutual understanding and development but also to enhance their cultural awareness, openness and tolerance. Through the programme, organisers promote positive contacts between young people (11 to 16 years-of-age) living in Estonia but speaking different mother tongues (mainly Estonian and Russian) by giving them an opportunity to carry out projects together. These projects detail the goals and targets they expect to achieve.

“Youth Meetings” has been very popular since its creation in 2015 with approximately 1,700 Estonian and Russian speaking young people participating annually in the project. Altogether, “Youth Meetings” has brought together more than 7,600 young people to cooperate in youth meetings and trainings since the project started.

The “Youth Meetings” programme is financed through the Ministry of Education and Research. The budget for the programme in 2021 is 234,022 euros. The programme is being implemented by the [Education and Youth Board](#).

In addition, Estonian Youth Work magazine MIHUS has focused on issues such as inclusion and solidarity among young people:

- [Youth work with young people with fewer opportunities](#) (2010),
- [Youth work and sensitivity towards different cultures](#) (2016).

Additionally, a manual for inclusive youth work has been created and published in Estonian and Russian languages: “[Inclusive youth work](#)” (2012).

8.10 Current debates and reforms

In 2017, a new financial instrument was introduced in Estonia from the state budget to support young people’s participation in hobby education and hobby activities ([see chapter 8.5](#)). The impact of this instrument on its main aims: greater access of young people to hobby education, enlarged variability of the offer, and better quality of hobby education and hobby activities. The first [results](#) were published in August 2019. Almost 20 million euros enabled to create 1,800 different activities for 59,000 young people.

The year 2020 is the year of Digital Culture. See more in [Chapter 8.5](#) and [8.1](#). Therefore, there are many activities connected to digital culture and making culture more available to all age groups, not only young people.

Because of the Covid-19 crisis in 2020, the [Ministry of Culture](#) has given out financial support to all cultural fields and institutions in order to help them through these difficult periods. The whole [culture help package](#) is 25 million euros, from which:

- 6 million euros go to museums;
- 4 million euros go to theatres;
- 4 million euros go to music;
- 2.3 million euros go to sports;
- 1.3 million euros go to movies;
- 0.6 million euros go to arts;
- 0.5 million euros go to design;
- 4.2 million euros go to creative support;
- 0.6 million euros go to choir and dance leaders;
- 0.4 million euros go to sports coaches.

9. YOUTH AND THE WORLD

In the [Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2016–2020](#) the main objective of Estonian development cooperation is defined as follows: to contribute to the eradication of poverty and the attaining of the other Sustainable Development Goals. The document states, that Estonian development cooperation has always focused on safeguarding human rights and environmental friendliness. Estonia considers it important to observe the principles of empowering women and gender equality in all activities of development cooperation and humanitarian aid, to ensure the performance and sustainability of development cooperation. Read more about the general context of the topic in [Chapter 9.1](#). Young people are also rather interested in global issues, especially climate change.

The main governmental authority responsible for youth policy, including the youth contribution to global processes of policy-making, implementation and follow-up, including youth cooperation at the global level is [the Ministry of Education and Research](#), Youth Affairs Department (starting from 01.01.2021 the Youth and Talent Department). The main function of the Ministry of Education and Research is to ensure targeted and effective development of education, research, youth and language policy. More information on the administration and cooperation can be found in [Chapter 9.2](#).

In Estonia, there are no additional specific top-level policies, programmes, projects or initiatives aimed at allowing young people to exchange views at home with regional, national or international policy-makers, which are not described in [Chapter 5](#) as youth participation and consultation mechanisms.

Raising awareness about global issues is addressed in [Chapter 9.4](#), green volunteering, production and consumption in [Chapter 9.5](#).

Under the Japanese International Youth Development Exchange Programme youth exchanges between Estonia and Japan have taken place since 2007. The aim is to support the development of friendship and understanding between young people, intercultural learning and international cooperation. See more in [Chapter 9.6](#).

9.1 General context

Main concepts

In the [Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2016–2020](#) the main objective of Estonian development cooperation is defined as follows: to contribute to the eradication of poverty and to attaining the other Sustainable Development Goals.

The goals of Estonian development cooperation across the areas of activities are follows:

- supporting the quality of education,
- supporting the development of health care,
- guaranteeing peace and stability,
- supporting the development of democracy, the introduction of good governance practices and guaranteeing human rights,
- promoting economic development,
- fostering environmentally friendly development,
- raising the awareness of the Estonian public, particularly younger people, concerning development cooperation and humanitarian aid, as well as global development problems.

The document states that Estonian development cooperation has always focused on safeguarding human rights and environmental friendliness. Estonia considers it important to observe the principles of empowering women and gender equality in all activities of development cooperation and humanitarian aid, to ensure the performance and sustainability of development cooperation.

Although the strategy ends in 2020, according to the [programme document](#), the activities are to be implemented until 2023.

Youth interest in global issues

According to [the study about global issues and values in schools](#), young people were most aware of two global issues in 2016: poverty and refugees. The number of students claiming that it is important to put Estonian issues in a global context in order to understand them has dropped significantly. In 2020, the OECD published the last part of the PISA research of 2018, which was called "Are students ready to thrive in an interconnected world?". Based on these results, the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) in cooperation with the [Education and Youth Board](#) published a report "Is the Estonian young person a world citizen?" ([Kas Eesti noor on maailmakodanik?](#)) revealing that young people are quite aware of global issues. The most prominent topics were the equality of men and women and climate change. Compared to the study conducted in 2016, poverty also came out in the top 7 topics.

The Ministry of Environment has commissioned regular surveys on the environmental awareness of the population, which are representative of population aged 15-74 years old. The [most recent survey](#) (2018) indicates that young people (15-19 years old) gave the highest evaluation to the condition of the environment in Estonia, assess their environmental awareness to be somewhat lower and are more active in activities connected with environmental issues compared to other age groups. The previous study was conducted in 2016 showed the same results.

In 2020, the Ministry of Education and Research and Ministry of Foreign Affairs in cooperation with Estonian and foreign experts introduced a report "[Global Education in Estonia](#)", which also showed a growing trend towards young people being interested in climate change. There are more and more groups of young people protesting against the lack of national efforts in combating climate change.

Summary research on youth work and global issues in Estonia indicates that youth organizations have a positive interest in global issues. Respondents to the online survey claimed that the most interesting topics in global issues were intercultural dialogue (79% of the respondents), access to education (75%), sustainable development (70%) and human rights and discrimination (62%). According to the study, organizations show a high level of interest in developing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes connected with global education, however; Estonian youth and youth organization members are not accustomed to think about global issues or link local issues to global problems.

9.2 Administration and governance

Governance

The main governmental authority responsible for youth policy, including the youth contribution to global processes of policy-making, implementation and follow-up, including youth cooperation at the global level, is [the Ministry of Education and Research](#), the Youth Affairs Department (starting from 01.01.2021 the Youth and Talent Department). The main function of the Ministry of Education and Research is to ensure targeted and effective development of education, research, youth and language policy.

The main other Governmental authorities are:

- the [Government Office](#): responsible for the coordination of cooperation in the area of sustainable development,

- the [Ministry of Environment](#): responsible for the environment and sustainable development issues,
- the [Ministry of Foreign Affairs](#): responsible for global cooperation,
- the [Ministry of Social Affairs](#): responsible for labour market policy, but also for social protection and services including child and family policy,
- the [Environmental Board](#): responsible for fostering a sense of responsibility and economy in the people of Estonia – particularly young people – in regard to nature.

Main public actors and foundations:

- [The Foundation Environmental Investments Centre](#) (EIC) is an independent body established by the government under the Ministry of Finance, responsible for mediating state budget funds, EU funds, funds from foreign aid programmes and the Green Investment Scheme, and granting loans for the implementation of environmental projects,
- [Education and Youth Board](#), a governmental body responsible for implementing youth and education policy,
- education institutions of Estonia.

The main non-public actors

- [Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation](#), the umbrella organisation for organisations active in the field of development co-operation and global education;
- [Mondo](#), a non-governmental organisation, devoted to development cooperation, global education and humanitarian aid;
- [National Youth Council](#), the umbrella organization of youth associations and youth organisations;
- the [Estonian Green Movement](#): a non-profit organisation for environmental protection, the aim of which is to improve the environmental situation in Estonia and guide our society towards sustainable, green thinking.

The general distribution of responsibilities

Responsibility for the youth contribution to global processes of policy-making, implementation and follow-up, including youth cooperation at the global level, is divided between central government and non-governmental organizations.

Local governments are vested with the primary responsibility for youth work provision, which might include activities on global issues; however, it is not obligatory. The regional (county) governments were abolished on 1 January 2018.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

There is a mechanism established to ensure harmonized policy-making and implementation, which also covers the area of youth and global issues. 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, monitoring the cooperation and in case of need initiating the cooperation - is granted to the [Government](#) and the [Government Office](#).

9.3 Exchanges between young people and policy-makers on global issues

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the domestic level

In Estonia, there are no additional specific top-level policies, programmes, projects or initiatives aimed at allowing young people to exchange views at home with regional,

national or international policy-makers, which are not described in [Chapter 5](#) as youth participation and consultation mechanisms.

Starting from 2013, an annual event "Opinion Festival" ([Arvamusfestival](#)) has taken place, which is one platform for young people to exchange views at the domestic level on different topics. Occasionally, there have been topics that are connected with global issues (e.g., human rights), but the form in which the topic is handled might not always include the exchange of views. Also, the Opinion Festival is not directly targeted to young people, but usually has a section targeted at the youth field in general.

Global issues exchanges with policy-makers at the international level

In Estonia, there are no additional specific top-level policies, programmes, projects or initiatives aimed at allowing young people to exchange views abroad with policy-makers, which are not described in [Chapter 5](#) as youth participation and consultation mechanisms.

9.4 Raising awareness about global issues

Formal, non-formal and informal learning

Formal learning

[National curricula for upper secondary schools](#) defines two general competences that are related to global issues:

- cultural and value competence - the ability to evaluate human relations and activities from the standpoint of generally accepted moral norms and ethics; to sense and value one's ties with other people, the society, nature, the cultural heritage of one's own country and nation and those of others, and events in contemporary culture; to value art and creativity, and shape a sense of aesthetics; to value general human and societal values, to value human, cultural and natural diversity; to acknowledge one's values and take them into consideration when making decisions; be tolerant and cooperative and to contribute for achieving joint objectives;
- social and citizenship competence – the ability to become self-actualized; to function as an active, aware, helpful and responsible citizen and to support the democratic development of society; to know and follow values and moral standards in society; to respect the rules of various environments, including communication environments and societal diversity, human rights, the particularities of religions and nations; to engage in cooperation with other people in different situations; to accept differences in people and their values and to take them into account in interacting with people; the ability to understand global problems, take responsibility for solving them; value and follow the principles of sustainable development: feel like a member of society capable of dialogue in the context of Estonia, Europe and the whole world.

General competences are shaped through learning outcomes expected in all subjects, but also through discussing cross-curricular subjects in lessons, extracurricular and out of school activities.

The relevant subjects in this field are History; Civics and citizenship education; Personal, social and health education and Geography (Human Geography). The subjects are divided into compulsory and optional courses.

The compulsory courses by subject are the following:

- History 6 courses: General History; Estonian History I (until the sixteenth and turn of the seventeenth centuries); Estonian History II (until the end of the nineteenth century); Contemporary History I – Estonia and the world in the first half of the twentieth century; Contemporary History II – Estonia and the world in the second half

of the twentieth century; and Modern History III – Main characteristics of 2 the developments of the twentieth century: Estonia and the world.

- Human Studies 1 course: Family Studies
- Civics and citizenship education 2 courses: „Development of the society and democracy“, „Economy and world politics“.

The optional courses in the subject field are:

- History 2 courses: General History – World History: Civilization outside Europe; and General History – History of European countries and the United States of America.
- Human Studies 1 course: Psychology.
- Civics and citizenship education 1 course: Everyday law.

The field of social studies includes the compulsory course on 'Population and economy', which is described in the field of natural sciences under human geography, and the optional course on 'The globalizing world'.

Non-formal learning

Youth participation in non-formal learning is supported mostly in youth work. There are a large variety of opportunities provided for youth to participate in youth organisations, youth centre activities and hobby schools. All of these formats may provide a non-formal learning experience for youth also related to the promotion of knowledge or understanding of global issues. There are hobby schools with dedicated activities on nature and environment, and a lot of activities in youth organisations and youth centres are based on self-initiative and volunteerism of young people, which is also encouraged.

There are a number of youth work programmes initiated by the top-level authority and many of them support the awareness and understanding of global issues among youth, however, there are none specifically addressed to them.

In addition, the Erasmus+ programme has opportunities for youth, including European Voluntary Service, which provides a considerable number of opportunities for youth in Estonia in relation to global issues.

Educators' support

The non-governmental organisation [Mondo](#) has created a portal for educators called [Maailmakool](#), where training materials and information, including about training courses, is available. The materials for educators are presented by age group, subject and possible subject field in school curricula. The materials are available in Estonian and Russian.

There are training courses offered for teachers and youth workers on subjects connected with youth and global issues. For example, [Mondo](#) provided a [training course "Digital learning through global education for secondary schools"](#) targeted to teachers.

The Department of Youth Programmes of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#) (until 31.12.2020, the [Youth Agency of the Foundation Archimedes](#)) is providing materials for youth workers mostly in a dedicated portal [Mitteformaalne](#). Until 2019, they also provided training activities. They have also publicised [the special issue on intercultural topics](#) in youth work in youth work magazine [MIHUS](#).

Mondo had a network of film clubs targeted to young (16-30) people, who were interested in showing documentary films in their schools, community, networks on global issues. In 2019, there were a variety of educational films available for free on their [website](#).

[Keskkonnaharidus](#) mediates information on environmental education opportunities in Estonia. The portal aims to support teachers and nature enthusiasts by providing information on nature centres, educational programmes and educational materials.

Informal learning

[HeaTeoTöö päev](#)

The HeaTeoTöö päev (HTT) is a new innovative activity for young people, local communities and enterprises. Young people are encouraged to work for a day and the money earned is donated to the development cooperation causes. Young people can also initiate joint activities to raise money. The programme started in 2014 and is ongoing. The organisation in charge - the non-governmental organisation [Mondo](#) – is partly supported by public funding, however much of the funding comes also from fundraising activities, private support, etc.

Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues

The non-governmental organisation [Mondo](#) is supported by public funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and has created a portal for educators [Maailmakool](#), which is also developing and promoting campaigns and information activities targeted at youth, specifically in schools.

The portal encourages youth workers and teachers to initiate [campaigns](#), [competitions](#), [theme days](#) and [exhibitions](#) for youth in order to support awareness-raising about global issues.

Most prominent campaigns have, since 2005, been the World Day celebration. There is [support available](#) for local celebrations by organisation [Mondo](#).

In 2015, [the youth climate campaign](#) was held with the aim of youth taking part in shaping climate policy in Estonia.

[Grass-root campaigns](#) – the non-governmental organisation [Mondo](#) has implemented the project “Grass-root Campaigns” in 2013-2014 aimed at raising youth awareness about basic rights and active citizenship through encouraging local youth-led campaigns and helping young people with the creation of films, materials, etc. Young people receive also training about social campaigns.

Information providers

Public authorities

Youth information belongs to the area of responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research. A central organisation responsible for the system of Rajaleidja centres is the [Education and Youth Board](#), which also implements youth policy, including developing the provision of youth information in Estonia.

Contact points for youth and youth information and counselling structures

Youth information has been recognized as a specific field in youth work since 2001. There was a separate system of youth information centres, which in 2014 were merged with career guidance centres. In 2016 there were 16 centralised publicly financed centres in all counties. The regional youth guidance centres, called [Pathfinder centres](#) (Rajaleidja), provide information and counselling for young people up to 26 years old.

There are also dedicated websites available for the provision of youth information:

- [National portal](#)
- Web-sites providing information for youth, e.g. [Rajaleidja](#) or [Teeviit](#)
- Regional youth information portals such as [Põlva Noored](#) or [Noorteinfo](#)

The centres and youth information activities are receiving annual public funding.

Key initiatives

There have been no additional key initiatives to specifically disseminate information on global issues among young people besides the campaigns noted in section *Youth-targeted information campaigns on global issues* in Estonia.

9.5 Green volunteering, production and consumption

Green volunteering

Junior Ranger

The objective of Junior Ranger courses is to increase the awareness of the environment and nature among youngsters and to create and develop the cooperation network around national parks. In Estonia, the courses have been organised since 2004 and are ongoing.

The objective of the summer course and the continuing seminars of Junior Ranger is to increase the awareness of the environment and nature among youngsters. Junior Rangers are shown the practical work of nature conservation, they acquire knowledge of flora and fauna of the national park and discuss how to make the world a better place. In the camps, several necessary works are performed which can help endangered species and conserve cultural heritage.

The target group is young people from 6 to 12 grade who are interested in nature, live in the territory of a national park or nearby, have participated in natural science quizzes, subject Olympics and/or are interested in nature. In the summer courses, up to 20 youngsters can participate in each national park; in the autumn and spring continuing seminars, up to 15 young people interested in nature can participate.

The responsible authority is the [Environmental Board](#). The programme is funded from the state budget.

Green production and consumption

The Ministry of Environment initiated [the environmental awareness programme](#) in 2006 and the programme is ongoing. The aim is to support the development of environmentally friendly consumption habits by the Estonian people and create an awareness of ecological balance.

Four action lines are supported under the programme, of which one explicitly targets young people in general education schools: „Activities supporting the development of environmentally friendly consumption habits and learning about the ecological balance by students in the general educational system.“

The activities supported under this line of action:

- study trips with active learning programmes in nature or environment education centres,
- outdoor camps for young people,
- local school project to support environmentally friendly consumption and the richness of the ecological environment,
- development of study materials to support trips, camps and projects.

The responsible authority for the implementation is [The Foundation Environmental Investments Centre](#) (EIC). The programme is funded from the state budget.

9.6 Intercontinental youth work and development cooperation

Intercontinental youth work cooperation

[Youth exchanges with Japan](#)

Under the Japanese International Youth Development Exchange Programme youth exchanges between Estonia and Japan have taken place since 2007.

The aim is to support the development of friendship and understanding between young people, intercultural learning and international cooperation.

The target group of the programme in Estonia is young people aged 18-30 years old.

The organization in charge of topic Estonia is the [Education and Youth Board](#) (until 31.07.2020 [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#)). The programme is funded from the Japan and Estonia state budgets.

Development cooperation activities

[GLEN Estonia](#)

Global Education Network of Young Europeans (GLEN) was a network (up to 2019) of non-governmental and governmental organizations as well as committed young people who were involved in global education. GLEN's core activity was an annual training and experience programme for young Europeans consisting of three seminars, a three-month project-based internship in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Caucasus or Southeast Europe as well as awareness-raising and global education activities. GLEN Estonia sent annually 5-10 volunteers to participate in the programme during 2004-2019.

The target group was young people in the age group 21-30. The programme was supported by private funding. The organisation in charge of topic Estonia is the [Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation](#).

9.7 Current debates and reforms

In the end of 2020, there are no current debates and reforms ongoing.

10. YOUTH WORK

Youth work in Estonia has a history of more than 100 years, going back to the 19th century with the creation of forerunners of youth work. The first act regarding youth work was accepted in 1936 (Youth Organization Act). By today, youth work is defined by law: *"Youth work is the creation of conditions to promote the diverse development of young persons, which enable them to be active outside their families, formal education and work, on the basis of their free will."* See [Chapter 10.1](#).

In Estonia, the youth sector is considered to encompass both youth work and youth policy, tightly connected to each other. According to the [Local Government Organization Act](#), local governments have a key role in organizing youth work. Most of the financing comes from the budget and own income of local municipalities. See [Chapter 10.2](#).

The main top-level policies and regulations on youth work are:

- [Youth Work Act](#) – adopted in 1999, provides a legal basis for the organization and financing of youth work; see [Chapter 1.2](#).

- Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)), adopted 12.08.2021; see [Chapter 1.3](#).

The quality of youth work is assessed diversely depending on the operational/funding mechanism, project, or programme. For example, an occupational standard of youth workers has been adopted (first version since 2016), also a quality assessment model for local municipalities exists and Estonia has also participated in an international project "[Developing and Communicating the Impact of Youth Work in Europe](#)", which aimed to identify the impact of open youth work in the UK (England), Finland, Estonian, Italy, and France. One of the recent additions for data informed policy making include a youth specific data tool called [Noorteseire Juhtimislaud](#) and [minuomavalitsus.ee](#), a [web-based systematised overview of the state of local governments' services](#), incl. services in youth sector. In 2016 Estonia adopted a [concept of smart youth work](#), see [Chapter 10.4](#).

[Youth work as a professional area](#) is not defined in the [Youth Work Act](#), however it is defined in Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) (and before that in previous youth field strategies on national level). The competences and ethical principles of youth work are defined in [Occupational standards of youth workers](#) (on different qualifications levels), amended in 2017. Youth work can be studied in three academic institutions in Estonia, Tallinn University, Tartu University Narva College and Tartu University Viljandi Culture Academy, on different levels - higher applied sciences degree, bachelor's degree, master's degree. Youth work can be realised either as work on paid position or as volunteer commitments. Read more about youth workers, their training and study possibilities, and mobility, from [Chapter 10.5](#).

Information regarding youth work, also youth information is disseminated by a wide range of partners involved in the youth sector, incl. youth organisations, open youth centres etc. Youth information provides young people information regarding different spheres of their lives, supports their independency, increases their knowledge of different opportunities and choices to organize their life better, and increases the meaningful participation in the society. Youth information in Estonia is targeted to young people aged 7-26 and is based on the needs and interests of young people. The key initiatives in this respect are the national youth information portal [teeviit.ee](#) (available in Estonian and russian languages), the National Youth Work Week (held annually in the end of November) and International Youth Day (celebrated annually on 11th of August). Read more about national youth information and respective key initiatives from [Chapter 10.7](#).

Regarding the coordination of youth sector on national level, since 01.08.2020 the [Education and Youth Board](#) is responsible for that in cooperation with the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), Youth and Talent Department. The latter has been responsible for developing the national youth strategy in co-creation with wide range of partners and stakeholders at national level. The Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) was adopted 12.08.2021.

10.1 General context

Historical developments

Youth work in Estonia has a history of more than 100 years, it's roots going back to the 19th century with the creation of forerunners of youth work. The first act regarding youth work was accepted in 1936 ([Youth Organization Act](#)), which included the age group of young people (all students and other citizens under the age of 20 years old), tasks for the Ministry of Education regarding youth, the definition of youth organizations, and funding of youth work. During the first Estonian Republic, 1918-1940, specific structures were created in order to support socialisation young people, e.g., pupil's leisure time activities as organized by schools, associations created by young people, etc.

After the first independent republic, starting from 1940, Estonia was under the occupation of different countries. During World War II, Estonia was under the occupation of Germany,

and young people were engaged in helping with agricultural work. During the occupation of the Soviet Union, only one youth organization called *Comsomol* was allowed, with all the activities targeted to youth being ideological, followed by the idea of raising a good Soviet person with the correct ideology. However, it has to be noted that a wide range of activities were available for youth, for example, there were hobby activities, hobby schools, sports, summer camps, working camps, etc. In addition, the first steps were made in order to create youth policy and national programmes, there was also international co-operation of youth programmes within the Soviet Union republics.

In 1990, in the Ministry of Education, a department called Youth Service was created, which aimed to create the basis of youth policy and national programmes that would ensure young people had more possibilities to develop themselves. The process of figuring out the structures and system of youth work as well as the creation of laws, documents and programmes needed for implementing the policy was started.

Estonia restored its independence in 1991 and after that, lots of youth organizations were created or re-created based on the experiences of the times of the first republic of Estonia. The national system was re-organized and a new foundation for youth work was set. In 1991, the Estonian Students Association was created, being one of the oldest youth organizations in the history of second independent Estonia. In 1992, the [Child Protection Act](#) was accepted (put in force in 1993), which was the first step in child protection. In 1993, the [Local Government Organization Act](#) was accepted, which put the responsibility of the organization of hobby schools and hobby activities to the local municipalities. In 1999, when the first [Youth Work Act](#) was accepted, the local municipalities got the responsibility for organizing youth work in their areas. The same year, the first Youth Work Forum was held, aimed at discussing youth work organization with young people, youth organizations and people working with youth, and the [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) (EYWC) was founded. EYWC was a legal successor of numerous forerunners, e.g. the ESSR Children's Excursion and Tourism Centre (1965-1980), ESSR House of Young Tourists (1980-1990), Estonian Youth Tourism House (1990-1994), and Estonian Youth Initiative Centre (1994-1999). The Youth Policy Council was established in 1999 and its aim was to consult the minister of education in issues concerning youth work. Since 1 August 2020, the Estonian Youth Work Centre, along with other organizations under the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) that were reorganized into a state level institution called the [Education and Youth Board](#).

National definition or understanding of Youth Work

In Estonia, the youth work is defined in the [Youth Work Act](#) as follows:

"Youth work is the creation of conditions to promote the diverse development of young persons, which enable them to be active outside their families, formal education and work, on the basis of their free will."

This means that youth work is done outside the family, work and formal education, is based on free will and promotes the development and self-realisation of a young person. Youth work is targeted at young people at the age of 7-26 years.

10.2 Administration and governance of youth work

Governance

In Estonia, the youth sector is considered to encompass both youth work and youth policy.

The ministry in charge of youth sector is the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), the department responsible is the Department of [Youth and Talent Policy](#). The operational management of youth sector has been the responsibility of the national youth work agency, up to 31.07.2020 known as the [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#). Since 1 August, there is a new governmental body under the administration of the Ministry of Education and Research called the [Education and Youth Board](#). The joint institution was established

on the basis of the previous services of Foundation Innove, Foundation Archimedes, Information Technology Foundation for Education and Estonian Youth Work Centre. The main objective of the new organization is to implement the education and youth policies.

According to the [Local Government Organization Act](#), the local governments have a key role in organizing youth work. Most of the financing of youth work comes also from the budget and own income of the local municipalities. The municipalities have the obligation to have a general development plan for the local level according to the aforementioned act. The [Youth Work Act](#) states that a local government council has to determine their youth work priorities and set out the tasks in the local development plan. Hence there are municipalities that have a separate youth work development plan and others who have a paragraph on youth work in their general development plan.

Cross-sectorial cooperation

The cross-sectorial cooperation on state level is strongly emphasised in the current national youth strategy, the Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) which defines the role of different ministries and other stakeholders from various policy fields in management of the youth sector development plan, in line with the idea of cross-sectorial youth policy that integrates all main spheres of lives of youth population.

The plan foresees that the implementation of the development plan and relevant reporting is supported by a steering committee. The work of the committee is led by the Ministry of Education and Research and the committee includes representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Finance and the Government Office. Additionally, an important role is taken by youth representatives; strategic partners of the Ministry of Education and Research and experts of relevant areas are also included.

The development plan is implemented through the youth sector programme and if necessary, through a joint programme. The programme specifies a time-scheme and specific activities per each area, plus the costs for the four years (1+3). The programmes are prepared while planning the State Budget Strategy (SBS) and are reviewed annually in order to ensure coordination with the changing external circumstances and the SBS. The programme outlines the political instruments, activities, indicators and the financial plan used to achieve the sub-goals. The content of the programmes is discussed at the management committee before the approval of the SBS. The programme is enhanced after the approval of the state budget, if necessary. The programme is approved by the Minister of Education and Research. In case of a joint programme, it is approved by all participating ministers. More information about cooperation between the main public actors is described in [Chapter 1.5. Cross-sectorial approach with other ministries](#).

In addition to programmes developed as follow-up of the national youth strategy, there are some other programmes managed in cross-sectorial cooperation, like the [Local Development Programme with Estonia](#), described in [Chapter 4.4](#).

Some interesting initiatives to increase cross-sectorial approach are in place in Estonia, e.g. stronger ties between youth and talent policy, policy research on better recognition of NLF and youth work in formal education, cooperation in the area of restorative justice with the Ministry of Justice, e-participation developments, implementation of joint programs together with different ministries to increase social inclusion, cooperation to help NEETs, co-operation to help Ukrainian refugees etc.

10.3 Support to youth work

Policy/legal framework

In Estonia, the youth sector encompasses both youth work and youth policy which determines the direction of legislation as well. The key top-level policies and regulations are the:

- [Youth Work Act](#) - provides core definitions, a legal basis for the organization and financing of youth work. It also defines the main target group of youth work, a young person between 7 and 26 years of age. See [Chapter 1.2](#).
- Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) – as national youth strategy, addresses main challenges and strategic objectives for the years until 2035. See [Chapter 1.3](#).
- The youth field programme for the years 2020-2023 ([Noortevaldkonna programm 2020-2023](#)) is a follow-up operational programme from the previous national youth strategy for the years 2014-2020 targeting more specifically young people at risk of exclusion.

The main structures that provide youth work activities are:

- Youth centre – a youth work establishment that is managed by the local municipalities or non-governmental organizations. A youth centre has the widest range of youth work services and is the main youth work executor on the local level. Youth centres might act in different forms, but most of the centres use the open youth work method. The purpose of open youth work is to provide young people with opportunities for voluntary participation to support the activity of young people and their ability to cope in society. Keywords here are 'openness' and the 'free will' of young people. The implementation of the open youth work method in youth centres offers all young people a growth-oriented and meaningful activities on a voluntary basis and according to individual capabilities and preferences.

In 2019, there were 281 open youth centres in Estonia, a majority of them situated and accessible in rural areas. The activities organised in youth centres guide young people to acquire and use important life skills and competences, facilitate initiative and entrepreneurship, support the search for one's identity and socialisation and shape values.

- Hobby school – provides hobby education by qualified hobby teachers and instructors on the basis of curricula registered in the Estonian Education Information System. Hobby education for young people can be considered to be the most formal part of youth work and is provided in accordance with the Hobby Schools Act. The main goal of hobby education is to offer systematic education in their field of interest and to develop special skills, thereby creating opportunities for diverse development and supporting the growth of young people into successful members of the society. Hobby education in Estonia also supports Estonian culture and sports traditions, technological development, sustainability of the environment as well as the development of local traditions. See in [Glossary](#).

According to the Estonian Education Information System, there were 782 registered hobby schools (that is approximately 2.8 hobby schools per one thousand young people) and 5,777 hobby school teachers offering hobby education for young people on the basis of 3,908 curricula in Estonia in 2019. More than 100,000 learners participate in the work of hobby schools, acquiring hobby education in the fields of sport, music, art, dance, natural and exact sciences and technology and in many other fields.

- Youth association – a non-profitable organization, in which at least two-thirds of the members are young people and which objectives covers the organization and performance of youth work.

- Youth work association – non-profit association, a union of non-profit associations or a foundation the objective of which is the integration of youth workers, youth work agencies or other exercisers and organizers of youth work and representation of their interests.
- Youth council – an advisory participation council consisting of young people. Youth councils enable young people to participate in the decision-making process and to protect their interests in the areas concerning them on local as well as national level.

Youth associations, participation groups and student councils are the main actors through which youth participation is empowered and realised. In 2019, there was an active youth participation group (either a youth council or action group) in 72 local governments. An estimated 10% of young people belong to a youth association. Youth participation and the achievement of the area's goals is supported by national defence-oriented youth organisations – Home Daughters (Kodutütred) and Young Eagles (Noored Kotkad) who in 2019 offered activities for at least 8,000 young people.

In addition, youth advisory boards have been created at some ministries to provide youth input in policy-development and support youth participation on state level. For example, in 2020 the youth boards were operating in the Ministry of Education and Research and in the Ministry of the Environment. The national youth strategy adopted 12.08.2020, the Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035, introduced two new formats for youth counselling bodies stating that youth councils would also be set up at the Prime Ministers Office and the Presidents Office. Student councils operating across Estonia in educational institutions of different levels are also an important participation format.

- Youth camps – enable young people to participate in healthy and developing activities. The duration of a youth camp is at least six work days, it is generally organised away from the young person's place of residence and helps the youth to gain experience in independent living, communication, coping etc.

In 2019, there were 27 youth and 65 project camps in Estonia with 30,782 young people participating. The organisation of youth camps and project camps is regulated with the Youth Work Act, a regulation of the Minister of Education and Research and health protection requirements established by the Ministry of Social Affairs. The organisation of a camp requires an activity licence and the presence of a professional youth worker.

- Work Camps for Young People and employability - versatile work education methods are implemented according to target group needs in order to prepare young people for their entry into the labour market. The most common are work camps which are mainly held in summertime and which combine youth work and practical work. In 2019, there were 49 work camp organisers in Estonia with 4,224 young people participating.
- Youth work in schools – youth work that is done in formal education and vocational education schools that supports the school's curricula' goals, is based on extracurricular activities and is organized by school youth workers, pupils unions and activity leaders. Each year, more than 70 000 young people participate in formal education hobby activities.

The [Youth Work Act](#) defines youth permanent and project camps, youth work associations, youth councils, youth associations, and mentions the financing of hobby education and recreational activities.

Funding

There is a specific budget for youth sector - including both youth policy and youth work - development at the national level, see more in [Chapter 1.7.](#)

The [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#) states that the funding for the youth sector for the overall implementation period, ie for the years 2021-2035 is 356,29 million euros.

The funding is aimed at covering the achievement of strategic goals as defined in the strategy, to be further specified at operational programme level (tbc). In very general terms, it could be stated that the funding covers the capacity building of service providers in youth work, including training; implementing of specific measures and provision of the youth work services, analysis and monitoring.

Since 2019, a new approach to funding of youth organisations was introduced on the state level, through so-called [strategic partnerships between organisations and the Ministry of Education and Research](#), for the period of 3 years. Strategic partnership aimed at targeting the organisations that:

- have operated at least 3 years (or less in justified cases) and contributes to policy, legislation and strategic development (incl. participation in state level thematic working groups) of the work areas of the Ministry of Education and Research;
- or is an umbrella organisation uniting field organisations in the area of work of the Ministry of Education and Research and contributes to strategic aims of the field;
- or is an organisation that is actively working on implementation of strategic goals of education, youth, language policy and research policy areas.

Before the new period is about to be launched since 2022, evaluation of the pilot initiative takes place to identify the needs for further changes in such partnership practice.

As local municipalities are the key actors to organize youth work, funding comes mainly from municipal budgets and the amounts and priorities vary diversely. Throughout the years there have been additional funds dedicated to local level from the state budget or EU funds to address certain priority fields like inclusion of young people at risk of exclusion, additional support to hobby education and hobby activities, innovation of youth services etc. Additional funds have also been allocated since 2020 in order to reduce the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic to the youth sector and opportunities of young people consequently.

Cooperation

Cross-sectorial cooperation is an overall approach in policy planning and delivery in Estonia in the field of youth. See more in [Chapter 1.5](#).

For example, the implementation of the [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#) is foreseen to be supported by a steering committee, coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research and including the representatives from the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Finance and the Government Office. Additionally, an important role is taken by youth representatives; strategic partners of the Ministry of Education and Research and experts of relevant areas are also included. See more about the management of the national youth strategy in [Chapter 1.3](#) and the system of strategic partnerships in [Chapter 1.7](#).

Over the years there have been funds dedicated to nudging further partnerships and cooperation, for example funding youth sector stakeholders cooperation groups of several municipalities on local level; also for cooperation actions between the formal and non-formal education; open youth work and partners from the technology sector to empower further development of smart youth work etc.

Furthermore, there have been tools developed to support data-informed solutions and better awareness among stakeholders from different policy fields as basis for cooperation in youth related issues. As an example there is [Youth Monitor](#) (Noorteseire) promoting the cooperation between researchers, policymakers and practitioners in the youth field. [Youth monitoring dashboard \(Noorteseire juhtimislaud\)](#) is another tool in this respect, providing up-to-date data on various issues and target groups related to youth work and youth policy, like youth (un-)employment, entrepreneurship, education attendance, participation etc. See more in [Chapter 1.6](#).

10.4 Quality and innovation in youth work

Quality assurance

The quality of youth work is assessed depending on the exact mechanism and context, a project or programme, local or state level etc. In following, two examples are highlighted to illustrate some approaches to quality assurance in youth sector in Estonia.

Competences of youth workers

[Occupational standard of youth workers](#) exists for levels 4, 6 and 7, integrating a diverse set of competences that vary slightly on different levels. For example, the focus on the level 4 is on organizing youth work, interacting and cooperation with the public, providing a safe environment and other tasks related to practical organisation of youth work and its services. In levels 6 and 7 additional competences like management, youth field development etc are integrated.

Until 31.07.2020 the structure responsible for awarding the youth worker professional certificates was the [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#). Starting from 01.08.2020, the Estonian Youth Work Centre was reorganised into an organization called [Education and Youth Board](#) that has taken over the responsibilities related to awarding professional occupational certificates in youth sector.

In order to apply for a professional occupational standard certificate, youth workers have to go through a self-assessment process by filling in a portfolio based on the occupational standard. After that, an interview is conducted with an expert panel, which is the basis for the decision if the qualification would be awarded or not (in justified cases). Besides a professional qualification of youth workers, there is also a partial qualification certificate for youth personnel, which is mandatory for working in a youth camp. Such competences are assessed through a written exam. In the end of 2020, there were more than 300 valid youth worker certificates and more than 2 600 partial professional certificates awarded for camp counsellors or camp directors.

Quality assessment model for local municipalities

A specific tool has been developed for local municipalities to support them in mapping the strengths and weaknesses of youth work on local level as basis for planning the future developments. There are four main indicators that have sub-indicators:

- there are versatile possibilities for non-formal learning for young people;
- there are possibilities of gaining participation experience;
- there are conditions created of receiving youth information, prevention and counseling activities;
- the environment needed for quality youth work has been created.

First, the local municipality conducts a self-assessment after which external evaluation is carried out. During the assessments, different youth work stakeholders have to be involved. The outcomes are based on the self- and external assessment results and shows the municipality their weak and strong points. After that, the municipality can plan future developments in order to reach their goals. The assessment process is not mandatory for the local municipalities, but helps the municipality to improve the quality of youth work done in their area. By the end of 2019, 62 local municipalities out of 79 had gone through the assessment process.

Research and evidence supporting Youth Work

Support to better knowledge and understanding of youth and measuring the effectiveness of related services is one of the priorities in youth sector in Estonia. The national youth strategy, the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035](#), sets out that a broad-based knowledge, based on the outcomes of analyses and scientific researches well as the practical knowhow acquired in daily work and the input and contribution of young people

as the experts of their lives, forms an important focus for development and implementation of youth sector activities. It emphasises that comprehensive and reliable knowledge must form the basis of decision-making on all levels and in all areas of the youth sector, highlighting the important parts of the youth monitoring and analysis system such as:

- data management of the sector, i.e. data creation and collection, data availability and analysis of the status of young people and the services provided to them;
- monitoring the execution of youth services and activities; analysis of quality, outcomes and impact;
- youth sector research and development activity for the development of youth-oriented services and policies.

Such systematic approach is operated through a variety of implementation measures. On state level, for example, in the ESF-funded programme “Inclusion of young people at risk of exclusion and improvement of youth employability” (“Tõrjutusriskis noorte kaasamine ja noorte tööhõivevalmiduse parandamine”), an activityarea called “Increasing knowledge of young people and the impact of activities aimed to young people” has been defined with the aim to get better knowledge of the reasons why young people are at the risk of exclusion and assessing the impact of activities targeted to young people (including young people at the risk of exclusion). The budget for 2020 was more than 2.3 million euros.

In the frame of that budgetary measure there are data collected regarding the current situation of young people; disseminated via youth monitoring tools like [Noorteseire](#) and [Juhtimislauad](#). In addition, there are different analyses conducted yearly, also seminars on data awareness and usage in youth sector organised for youth workers etc.

During the years 2016-2018, Estonia participated in an international project “[Developing and Communicating the Impact of Youth Work in Europe](#)”, which aimed to identify the impact of open youth work in the UK (England), Finland, Estonian, Italy, and France. The results of the projects show that participation in open youth work in Estonia has enabled to broaden the developmental possibilities of young people and it affects significantly the development of social skills of young people. After the end of the project, Estonia has used this method of measuring impact as one of the official measures to measure and show the impact of youth work.

Read more regarding evidence-based youth policy and youth work from [Chapter 1.6](#).

Participative youth work

In Estonia, the participation of youth is one of the fundamental principles of youth sector. In the national youth sector development plan for 2021-2035, the youth participation is also defined as one of the strategic goals, aiming to guarantee that the protection of youth rights in the state is consistent and active youth participation is supported. In youth work practice, the participation is mostly implemented through local youth councils, youth organisations and other youth representative structures on local and state level. Read more in [Chapter 10.3](#) and [5.4](#)

Smart youth work: youth work in the digital world

The current national youth sector development plan of Estonia - Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035 ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) – recognises that the young people are the creative momentum driving the society onwards – the drivers and leaders in the fields of education, culture, economy, the environment etc. In order to take young people and the solutions offered by them seriously, the strategy highlights that in service development, consistent innovation and the development of smart solutions based on the needs and challenges of young people has to be ensured. Smart youth work is also seen to have great potential in diversifying the formats and methods of youth work (including hobby education for young people) as well as for their impact on economy and regional development.

Estonia was the first country in the world to develop a national concept on youth sector innovation with regards to the tech and digital developments, known as the Concept of Smart Youth Work. In 2016, the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) commissioned a study “[The use and possibilities of using digital solutions in youth work](#)” and later during the same year, the national concept paper on [Smart Youth Work](#) was adopted as a result of the national working group. The concept paper was further supported by the respective action plan until 2020, which translated the ambition for the development of smart youth work into specific activities on the national level.

In 2017, Estonia held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union with smart youth work as one of its working priorities in the youth field, resulting in the adoption of the [Council conclusions on smart youth work](#) in November 2017.

The concept of smart youth work describes the main principles and strategic objectives in three key areas:

- activities aimed at young people;
- development needs of youth workers for implementing smart youth work;
- developing quality of youth work and a better knowledge of youth using digital means.

All of these three key areas are respectively supported via relevant trainings, various measures aimed at further development of digital and technological infrastructure as well as facilitating diverse cross-sectoral cooperation and partnerships.

Examples include a:

- Specific call for tenders with the aim to inspire and support the development of smart youth work, especially the new practices and digi-technological solutions in youth work practice. Such specific funds are allocated to support smart solutions for example in open youth centers as well as in hobby education, and the results show increased opportunities for youth for digital content creation (e.g., programming and gaming), communication and collaboration as well as raising their competences in information and data literacy, safety and problem solving, etc. In all of these projects, also the cooperation with technology field experts on the local level is required.
- In order to support the competence development of youth workers, specific competencies related to smart youth work are addressed both in the youth work curricula as well as through non-formal education targeted at youth workers on various levels, on national level specifically by the [Education and Youth Board](#) (both through the activities that have previously been managed by the [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) and the [Foundation Archimedes youth agency](#), the National Agency for Erasmus+). Some examples of topics include new digital tools and the use of these in youth work settings; digital behavior of young people and communication trends in the digital era, development of the network of digital ambassadors in the youth field, etc.
- Compilation of educational materials in the field of smart youth work is also under attention, for example, a publication “[Digitalization and youth work](#)” has been developed in cooperation between [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) (since 01 August 2020 the Education and Youth Board) and [Verke](#), an e-course on [digital youth work](#) by Tartu University Narva College, etc.
- Estonia is dedicated to continually developing new approaches and tools to support the further quality of youth field and as one of the innovative tools, a [youth statistics dashboard](#) (Noorteseire juhtimislaud) has been launched to support data evident and informed youth policy decisions on all levels.

10.5 Youth workers

Status in national legislation

The [Youth Work Act](#) in Estonia provides the legal basis for the organisation of youth work. In relation to youth workers, it does not define the youth worker profession as such as there are other strategic documents on state level for this purpose (see below) but it does set the requirements for youth and project camp manager, defines the youth work and main environments for its practices and some other key elements for youth workers field of activities and responsibilities.

The Occupational standard of youth workers (see more in [Chapter 10.4.](#)) is the key document to define the role, the minimum requirements and competences of youth workers, including the code of ethics. The standard is build up on levels 4, 6 and 7, which have a bit different competences, f. ex level 4 has focus on organizing youth work, interacting with the public and cooperation, providing a safe environment, professional personal development, and youth worker recurring competence; while levels 6 and 7 have additional competences like management, youth field development etc.

Obtaining professional qualification has not not obligatory so far (see next paragraph) but there are more and more local municipalities that are requiring youth work formal education and/or professional certificate as pre-requisite for funding certain youth work activities and/or when recruiting youth sector staff on local level, for example for the posts of youth field responsible in local municipality, director of local youth centre etc. In some cases the occupational standard certificate has also been used as reference for salary system in youth sector on local level.

The national youth strategy, [the Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#), adopted in 2020, dedicates one of its strategic goals (nr 3) to quality youth work (including hobby education for young people), aiming at ensuring that it is available across Estonia and provides all young people with opportunities for versatile self-development, experiencing success, acquiring experience and gaining independence. In order to do so, there are several ambitions defined for facilitating the development of competences and the training of new youth workers (specialists, managers, volunteers) sustainably across all Estonian regions:

- ensuring regional opportunities to receive bachelor and masters level higher education in the field of youth work;
- initiating the transfer to compulsory professional qualification in the youth field professional qualification in youth sector;
- ensuring high-quality and impactful in-service training opportunities (including the offer of in-service training opportunities by employers);
- creating more relevant training opportunities for professional growth of hobby school staff;
- supporting the development of professional community, professional identity and career models in theyouth sector;
- initiating support measures for starting youth workers;
- developing training and professional development programmes for specialists starting work in hobbyschools;
- ensuring the systematic and consistent acknowledgement of youth workers;
- ensuring a working environment that fosters happiness at work;
- ensuring adequate salary equal with the salary level of specialists on similar positions (such as in the field of education).

Education, training and skills recognition

Youth work can be studied in three academic institutions in Estonia:

1. Tallinn University – higher applied sciences degree in youth work and a master's degree in youth work organization;
2. Tartu University Narva college – bachelor's degree in youth work;
3. Tartu University Viljandi cultural academy – higher applied sciences degree in community education and hobby activities.

Over the years, trainings and non-formal education in the field of youth have been one of the priorities in Estonia receiving attention in strategic development as well as through financial investments. For example, training of youth workers was one of the focuses of the European Social Fund programme "Development of youth workers training" ("[Noorsootöötajate koolituste arendamine](#)") operated until 2020. The programme aimed at training activities targeted at youth field workers as well as providing support of the development and quality of the training system. There have also been several research initiatives conducted in order to gain better understanding of training needs of youth workers, f.ex by the [Institute of Baltic Studies](#) in 2017. The [impact assessment of the programme „Development of youth workers training”](#) conducted in 2019 highlights that all main competences defined in Occupational standard of youth workers on level 4 were developed during the trainings, according to the feedback from the participants. 22% of participants declared that changes in their organisations have been primarily initiated as impact from some training activity and the new competences gained. 95% of participants stated that their expectations for trainings were fulfilled.

The programme was implemented by the [Foundation Archimedes youth agency](#) (since 01.01.2021, the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#)) in cooperation with the [Ministry of Education and Research](#) and [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) (starting from 01.08.2020 [Education and Youth Board](#)). All the trainings in the programme supported the competence development as defined in the occupational standard for youth workers.

The validation of competencies gained by youth workers through non-formal, informal and formal education and trainings is carried out as part of the process of youth worker's professional qualification. The assessment is based only on the competences, regardless of how they were obtained. See more in [Chapter 10.4](#).

Mobility of youth workers

Mobility of youth workers is mainly organized by the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#) (until 31.12.2020 the [Foundation Archimedes Youth agency](#)), and it supports the professional development of youth workers through international seminars, trainings, study visits, etc. Additionally, job-shadowing possibilities in youth work organizations are offered. Erasmus+ funds the mobility of youth workers on the international level.

In addition, it is possible to participate in various international training activities that are mediated through [SALTO-YOUTH](#) or the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#). The last one also organized national level trainings up to 2019 through the programme "Development of youth workers training" co-funded by ESF.

It is possible to read more about the cross-border mobility programmes in [Chapter 2.5](#).

There are some regional-level initiatives as well. For example, the Tartu County Youth Workers Association ([Tartumaa Noorsootöötajate Ühendus](#)) has visited all the Tartu County youth field organizations, organized seminars where there are presented best practices, organized training programmes in order to raise the competences in the field of ICT, organized study visits abroad, etc. The activities are funded from the national LEADER

programme within the Tartu County measure through the project “Developing and empowering of the Tartu county youth work cooperation network”.

Also the national programme [Noortekohtumised \(Youth meetings\)](#) that supports 11-19 years old young people living in Estonia from diverse ethnic backgrounds to develop and undertake common projects, enables meaningful professional contacts and cooperation between youth workers supporting youth in their initiatives. See more in [Chapter 4.4](#).

The main objective of all mobility activities is professional development, capacity building, sharing experiences, etc.

10.6 Recognition and validation of skills acquired through youth work

Existing arrangements

The [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#) defines youth work (including hobby education for young people) to have an important role in the development of young people with providing versatile knowledge, skills and attitudes. Hence, the recognition of competences gained through diverse variety of youth work activities available to young people in Estonia, is of utmost important.

In earlier years, young people have been able to assess and document their experiences with the support of a specific tool on the national portal of youth information called [Teeviit](#). It included the possibility to add the learning experience (formal education, student/pupil exchanges, trainings, seminars and conferences, voluntary activities, youth camps, youth exchanges, and hobby activities) and working experience (jobs, practice, working camps, belonging to organizations, tutoring) and analyze the outcomes by yourself. As a result of the process, it was possible to combine it into a CV and forward it to potential employers by e-mail.

Alternatively to that, there have been some other initiatives offering the possibility to reflect the voluntary experiences and the obtained competences. For example, Tankla volunteer pass ([Tankla vabatahtliku pass](#)) on regional level in Estonia and [YouthPass](#) enabling to issue a certificate of participation in youth work activities of the European youth programmes.

In recent years, more emphasis is targeted at better integration of non-formal and formal education. For example, a national portal [NOPIK](#) for dissemination of good practices has been set up. Better integration of different learning paths is also one of the priorities in the [draft of the Education Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#) (adoption in progress). Depending on a school and teachers, also co-operation practices developed at local level, there are practices where competences gained in youth work are recognized in formal education. For example, if a young person participates regularly in some kind of sports hobby activity, s/he will be able to have this accepted as alternative to physical education lessons in school. [NOPIK](#) also features some initiatives that have been developed in close co-operation between general education institution and youth work organisation in order to enrich the subjects in formal curricula with more diverse and flexible ways of learning in youth work, f.ex realising self-initiated projects in local hobby school as part of the curricula.

At the national level, there is the recognition system of prior learning and working experience ([VÕTA](#)), which helps in validating the prior experiences for formal education, no matter how well you studied. VÕTA can also be used in the applying process of a professional qualifications certificate (also for youth worker certificates). This is something young people aged 18-26 years old can use as it is targeted mainly at adult education. See Chapters [3.5](#). and [6.4](#).

Skills

The [Youth Sector Development Plan 2021-2035](#) defines youth work (including hobby education for young people) to have an important role in the development of young people with versatile knowledge, skills and attitudes, incl.

- empowering the youth and creating prerequisites for efficient gaining of independence,
- acquiring work experience, becoming more aware of changes on the labour market,
- empowering young people as the carriers and spokespeople for values.

The national youth strategy declares that youth work allows the young people to enjoy their youth, get to know themselves and others and thereby learn to better navigate the surrounding world. Youth work supports the development of future skills, general competencies and special skills, strengthens social networks and social capital and has a positive effect on behaviour, including the development into an entrepreneurial citizen who shows initiative.

Following this, the recognition of competencies gained through diverse variety of youth work activities available to young people in Estonia, is of utmost important. As the national youth strategy highlights, the talents, interests and creativity of young people must be consistently encouraged, considering the knowledge, skills and experience acquired in non-formal studies within their formal studies as well as the labour market.

10.7 Raising awareness about youth work

Information providers

All main actors in youth sector - youth work institutions, youth organizations, youth workers and local municipalities - are disseminating information regarding youth work. Hence there is a diversity of channels and information actions on different levels.

On national level, together with the [Ministry of Education and Research](#), its Youth and Talent Department with the main responsibility, and the [Education and Youth Board](#) are focusing to provide key information on youth work and youth policy. Starting from 2021, a national initiative called Education Portal ([Haridusportaal](#)) also provides information on youth work (its mission and main formats; services; youth information; youth monitoring; recognition of youth work etc). [Education and Youth Board](#) also manages the youth information portal [Teeviit](#) which represents a modern channel with diverse sets of topics and formats like articles, podcasts, challenges etc for youth, available both in Estonian and Russian languages.

As youth work is the task of a local municipality by law in Estonia, most have information regarding youth work on their websites. In some cases, the youth work is organized through a subordinate establishment that offers information on youth work possibilities. For example, [Tartu city](#) has created an institution called Tartu Youth Work Centre ([Tartu Noorsootöö Keskus](#)) coordinating youth work services and respective information. Some regions have their own youth websites that offer youth work information, e.g. Youth Information Portal of Valga County called [TANKLA](#). Some regions are cooperating to provide youth information through a portal called [INFOHUNT](#). Open youth centers have a major role in disseminating information on youth work possibilities and do it through websites, social media, and direct contacts with young people.

National Youth Information

Youth information provides young people with information regarding life, supporting their independence, increasing their knowledge of different opportunities and choices to organize their lives better, and increases their meaningful participation in the society. Youth information in Estonia is targeted to young people aged 7-26 years old and is based on the needs and interests of young people.

The youth information service is provided by youth work institutions and workers of the youth sector.

The leading youth information developer in Estonia is the [Education and Youth Board](#) that has the role of developing youth information at the national level, and also representing Estonia in the network of [ERYICA](#) (European Youth Information and Counselling Agency).

Starting from 2021, a national initiative called Education Portal ([Haridusportaal](#)) also provides information on youth work (its mission and main formats; services; youth information; youth monitoring; recognition of youth work etc). [Education and Youth Board](#) also manages the youth information portal [Teeviit](#) which represents a modern channel with diverse sets of topics and formats like articles, podcasts, challenges etc for youth, available both in Estonian and Russian languages.

A national development group for youth information has been created in order to advance the systematic and quality approach to youth information at national level. The development group involves representatives of the [Estonian Youth Workers Association](#), [Association of Estonian Open Youth Centres](#), the Department of Youth Programs of the Agency of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps of the [Education and Youth Board](#), [Estonian National Youth Council](#), [Ministry of Education and Research](#), [Youth Council of Viimsi](#), youth delegates of ERYICA and ERYICA trainer. The work of the development group is coordinated by the youth department of the [Education and Youth Board](#).

Key initiatives

National Youth Work Week

The [Education and Youth Board](#) organizes the [national Youth Work Week](#) annually since 2011 (up to 31 July 2020 it was organized by its predecessor Estonian Youth Work Centre). The national Youth Work Week aims at raising awareness on the youth sector and diversity of youth work opportunities offered all over Estonia, hence promoting also the occupation of youth worker consequently.

Each year, there is a certain topic set as a key focus for activities run during the week. In [2021](#), the topic is „Doing good for myself“ inviting to acknowledge the importance of mental health and wellbeing, especially in relation to digital era. Youth Work Week is targeted at a very diverse community of people, including young people, professional communities, youth workers, local municipalities, parents etc.

International Youth Day

The International Youth Day has been celebrated in Estonia since 2003. Through it, different activities are organized for young people in order to promote youth work and possibilities available for self-development for young people. Similar to national [Youth Work Week](#), a specific topic is being set for each year, based on the priorities and focus topics as accounted by UNESCO. In Estonia, the [Education and Youth Board](#) organizes the International Youth Day through different activities, campaigns, etc (including social media).

Developing and Communicating the Impact of Youth Work across Europe

2016-2018, the [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#) (starting from 01.08.2020 being reorganised together with some other institutions in the fields of education and youth and operating as [Education and Youth Board](#)) with the [Estonian Youth Workers Association](#) and the [Association of Estonian Open Youth Centres](#) participated in the Erasmus+ project “[Developing and Communicating the Impact of Youth Work across Europe](#)” in cooperation with Finland, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom. The project was piloted in open youth centers using transformative evaluation based on storytelling. The main results showed that young people participating in open youth work had four key changes – broadening of the spectrum of experiences, new friends, development of pro-social behavior, and improvement of social and communication skills.

The pilot has been followed up by a further project on a national level, with local municipalities participating to assess the impact and aiming at collecting up to 400 stories from young people to illustrate and highlight the changes that occur as a result of participating in open youth work. The project is now funded by the [Education and Youth Board](#) and implemented by the [Estonian Youth Workers Association](#) and the [Association of Estonian Open Youth Centres](#).

Thorough monitoring and analyzing system for youth work quality and impact

The Youth Work Programme 2019-2022 ([Noortevaldkonna programm 2019-2022](#)) includes an activity 4.2. called "Improvement of youth work quality and promoting youth work impact" with a sub-activity "Improvement of youth work impact and visibility of results of youth work", aiming at raising awareness of youth work impact and results. As part of it, a thorough monitoring and analyzing system for youth work quality and impact is developed and managed. The programme is funded by the European Social Fund. A diverse set of tools like [Youth Monitoring Dashboard](#) (Noorteseire juhtimislaud), blog, podcasts, seminars etc are being developed. More information about the systematic approach developed at national level with regards to youth monitoring, incl. its core principles and main tools can be found in the national [Education Portal](#).

10.8 Current debates and reforms

Forthcoming policy developments

Estonia has implemented some major changes in relation to youth work and youth policy in recent years, incl.:

1. Diverse and long-term process with debates and developments of the national youth strategy for the period 2021-2035 in synergy with the national umbrella strategy „Estonia 2035“. As result, the [Youth Field Development Plan 2021-2035](#) ([Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035](#)) was adopted 12.08.2021.

As result, the main changes to be highlighted are:

- Development of a youth talent policy
 - Systematic implementation of a youth sector monitoring and analysis system
 - Introducing the transfer to compulsory professional qualification
 - Strengthening youth-oriented solutions (including support and safety networks)
2. Forming the state level operational institution, as of 1 August 2020 the [Education and Youth Board](#). In 2019, the Ministry of Education and Research commissioned [a study](#) on the administrative agencies under the ministry, services offered and finding solutions to reorganize the services and functions. As there were numerous institutions implementing the same or similar policies (however according to the study was not the case for the youth field), it was proposed that the institutions would be merged into one joint agency, on the basis of the services of former [Innovate Foundation](#), [Archimedes Foundation](#), [Information Technology Foundation for Education](#) and [Estonian Youth Work Centre](#).

It is evident that such major changes provoke further attention and development work on the operational level to design the implementation measures as well as to build up new approaches, cooperation networks, etc. These also form an important part of ongoing debates.

Ongoing debates

As elaborated above, as the next steps, operational programs are to be developed as a follow-up of the national youth strategy (tbc), also some further developments are under attention related to public sector priorities in Estonia, such as innovation initiatives to further develop the client-centered design of services, e-services etc. Some interesting initiatives to increase cross-sectoral approach are in place in Estonia, e.g. stronger ties between youth and talent policy, policy research on better recognition of NLF and youth work in formal education, cooperation in the area of restorative justice with the Ministry of Justice, e-participation developments, implementation of joint programs together with different ministries to increase social inclusion, cooperation to help NEETs, co-operation to help Ukrainian refugees, etc. These initiatives led always to debate on what is the role of youth work and the level of partnership on this topic. Youth work is an equal partner and own best experience provider rather than an operational tool for others.

According to COVID19 impact on young people issues of mental health and youth workers' competencies arose. The question of qualification of youth workers is on the table and renewal of the professional standard has started to approve new version in 2022. Approaching National Parliament elections in 2023 many organizations in the youth field discussed their expectations of politicians. So the Estonian Association of Youth Workers issued its own platform for Parliament election and claims for better involvement of young people and co-ordination of youth policy including lowering the voting age to 16 on national and European elections, bringing co-ordination of youth policy to prime-minister's office. Claim for better financing of youth work and social guarantees of youth workers. Association initiated social guarantee negotiations with local municipalities.

GLOSSARY

H

Hobby activities: short-term with no demand for curriculum systematic and supervised engagements with one's hobbies at one's will outside formal education or job for acquiring intensive knowledge and skills in the selected hobby.

Hobby education: long-term and curricula-based systematic and supervised engagements with one's hobbies at one's will outside formal education or job for acquiring intensive knowledge and skills in the selected hobby.

Hobby school: an educational establishment operating in the area of youth work which creates an opportunity for the acquisition of hobby education and for the diverse development of the personality, including cultivation of one's own language and culture, in different areas of hobby education ([Hobby Schools Act](#)).

J

Juvenile committee: an institution that coordinates work in the field of crime prevention carried out with minors within its administrative territory ([Juvenile Sanctions Act](#)).

W

Work camp: the camp of work training, which aims to enhance the situation of young people in the labor market and to increase their employment readiness ([Estonian Youth Work Strategy](#)).

Y

Youth camp: a general term for two types of camps – a [youth project camp](#) and a [youth permanent camp](#) ([Youth Work Act](#)).

Youth permanent camp: a camp of a person entered in the commercial register, the non-profit associations and foundations register or the register of religious associations,

or a camp of an agency entered in state register of state and local government agencies, or a camp of a legal person in public law, which is conducted on the basis of youth camp statutes and activity license issued by the minister responsible for the area and the duration of one camp period of which is at least six twenty-four hour periods and which operates more than sixty days in a year ([Youth Work Act](#)).

Youth participation council: an advisory participation council consisting of young people who operate in rural municipality or city council ([Youth Work Act](#)).

Youth project camp: a camp of a person entered in the commercial register, the non-profit associations and foundations register or the register of religious associations, or a camp of an agency entered in state register of state and local government agencies, or a camp of a legal person in public law, which is conducted with the permission of rural municipality or city government and the duration of one camp period of which is at least six twenty-four hour periods and which operates up to sixty days in a year ([Youth Work Act](#)).

REFERENCES

Legislation and official policy documents

1. Aliens Act (2010). Parliament act.
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/521072020002/consolide/current>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
2. Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act (2010). Parliamentary bill, passed 09.06.2010, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/521062016007/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
3. Child Protection Act. (2014). State Gazette,
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/506052015001/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
4. Civil Society Development Plan 2015–2020. Kodanikuühiskonna arengukava 2015–2020. Approved by the Government 19. February 2015.
https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/kodar_2015-2020.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
5. Country fiche ESTONIA Implementation of the Council Recommendation on a Quality Framework for Traineeships (2014/C 88/01).
<https://ec.europa.eu/social/ajax/BlobServlet?docId=16546&langId=en>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
6. Council of the European Union (2017). Council conclusions on smart youth work.
<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/abac1aee-dadd-11e7-a506-01aa75ed71a1>. Accessed 15.11.2019.
7. The Constitution of the Republic of Estonia (1992). Government Act, passed 13.08.2015. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/521052015001/consolide/current>. Accessed: 18.06.2020.
8. Development Plan for Children and Families for 2012–2020 (Laste ja perede arengukava 2012–2020). Approved by the Government in 2011, renewed 24 October 2013, https://www.valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/lpa_2012-2020_taiendatud_2013.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
9. Development Plan of Internal Security 2015–2020. Siseturvalisuse arengukava 2015–2020, renewed by the Government 17.11.2016,
https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/taiendatud_siseturvalisuse_arengukava_2015-2020.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
10. Haridus- ja teadusministri 29. juuni 2015. a käskkirja nr 278 „Toetuse andmise tingimuste kehtestamine tegevuse „Noorsootöötajate koolituste arendamine“

- elluviimiseks" muutmine. <https://dok.hm.ee/et/document.html?id=cb81bab3-8c42-4396-80a0-b4d9a7e40e79>. Accessed: 17.06.2020.
11. Hobby Schools Act. (2006). State Gazette. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/501072015008/consolide/current>. Accessed: 30.12.2019.
 12. Eesti Kodanikuühiskonna arengu kontseptsioon. (2002). https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/eesti_kodanikuuhiskonna_arengu_kontseptsioon.pdf. Accessed: 30.12.2019.
 13. Eesti teadus- ja arendustegevuse, innovatsiooni ning ettevõtluse arengukava 2021-2035. https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/taie_arengukava_eelnou_20.10.2020.docx. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
 14. Employment Contracts Act. (2008). <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/512122016002/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 15. Estonia 2020. Konkurentsivõime kava „Eesti 2020“. Updated by the Government 30 May 2019. https://www.riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/eesti2020/ee2020_2019-2020_30.05.2019.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 16. Estonia 2020. Updated by the Government on 30 May 2019. https://www.riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/eesti2020/nrp_estonia_2020_30.05.2019.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 17. Estonian Civil Society Development Concept. (2002) Decision by the Parliament, 12.12.2002. https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/dokumendid/Kodanikuuhiskond/estonian_civil_society_development_concept.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 18. Estonian Civil Society Development Plan 2015-2020. https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/elfinder/article_files/estonian_cs_dev_plan_2015-2020_extract.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
 19. Estonian Digital Agenda 2020. Eesti infoühiskonna arengukava 2020. Approved by the Government 18.11.2013. https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/eesti_infoühiskonna_arengukava_2020_0.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 20. Estonian Entrepreneurship Growth Strategy 2014–2020. Eesti Ettevõtluse kasvustrateegia 2014-2020. Approved by the Government 31. October 2013. https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/eesti_ettevotluse_kasvustrateegia_2020.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 21. Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020. Eesti elukestva õppe strateegia. Approved by the Government 13. February 2014, https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/eesti_elukestva_oppe_strateegia_2020.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 22. Estonian National Regional Development Strategy 2014–2020. Eesti Regionaalarengu Strateegia 2014-2020. Approved by the Government 20. March 2014. https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/eesti_regionaalarengu_strateegia_2014-2020.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 23. Estonian National Strategy on Sustainable Development „Sustainable Estonia 21“ (Eesti säästva arengu riikliku strateegia "Säästev Eesti 21") (2005), approved by the Parliament of Estonia 14.09.2005) https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/estonia_sds_2005.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 24. Estonian Rural Development Plan for 2014–2020. Eesti maaelu arengukava. Approved by the Government 26. May 2014. https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/mak_2014-2020.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 25. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Youth Worker Occupational Standard. https://entk.ee/sites/default/files/N_kutsestandard_2018_ENG.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.

26. Ettevõtlusõppe Edendamise Kava, a cooperation agreement signed by multiple parties 7.10.2010. <https://www.digar.ee/arhiiv/et/raamatud/22212>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
27. European Parliament Election Act (Parliamentary bill, passed 18.12.2002) <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/522012015005/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
28. Fundamentals of Estonian Sports Policy until 2030. Eesti spordipoliitika põhialused aastani 2030. Decision by the Parliament 18. February 2015. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/320022015002>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
29. Fundamentals of Counter-Terrorism in Estonia. Approved by the Government. 14.11.2013. https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/dokumendid/tvv_pohialused_2013_en.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
30. Haridus- ja Noorteameti põhimäärus. (2020). <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/119062020035>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
31. Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act. (1998). Parliamentary bill, passed 10.06.1998, repealed, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/506062016006/consolide>. Accessed 19.12.2016.
32. Integrating Estonia 2020. Lõimuv Eesti 2020. (2016). Approved by the Government in 2014, renewed in 16. May 2016 https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/taiendatud_le2020_arengukava_2016.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
33. "Keskkonnakaitse valdkonna projekti rahastamise taotluse kohta esitatavad nõuded, taotluste hindamise tingimused, kord ja kriteeriumid, otsuse tegemise, lepingu täitmise üle kontrolli teostamise ning aruandluse kord". Regulation by the Minister of Environment. Approved in 17.02.2006, renewed 12.01.2011. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/105042019005?leiaKehtiv>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
34. Kodanikuühiskonna programm "Tugev kodanikuühiskond " 2021-2024. (2020). https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/kodanikuyhiskond/kodanikuuhiskonna_programm_2021-2024.pdf. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
35. Konkurentsivõime kava "Eesti 2020" (2019). https://www.riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/eesti2020/ee2020_2019-2020_30.05.2019.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
36. Labour Market Services and Benefits Act (2005). Parliamentary bill, passed 28.09.2005. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/522032019015/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
37. Local Government Council Election Act. (2002). Parliamentary bill, passed 27.03.2002, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/511072016012/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
38. Local Government Organisation Act. (2019). State Gazette. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/529022016003/consolide/current>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
39. Ministry of Culture. Kultuuriprogramm 2020-2023. https://www.kul.ee/sites/kulminn/files/200123_kultuuriprogramm2020_2023_loplik.pdf. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
40. Ministry of Education and Research. 2019. aasta eelarvete ja kulude jaotuskavad. Ministerial directive. <https://dok.hm.ee/et/document.html?id=ea153543-c6ee-4bc1-906f-04ada291dc2e>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
41. Ministry of Education and Research. Haridus- ja teadusministri 29. juuni 2015 a. käskkirja nr 281 "Toetuse andmise tingimuste kehtestamine tegevuse "Tõrjutusriskis noorte kaasamine ja noorte tööhõivevalmiduse parandamine" elluviimiseks" muutmine. <https://dok.hm.ee/et/document.html?id=4419524b-ff51-43c3-b40a-fbee7855c819>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
42. Ministry of Education and Research. Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi strateegiliste partnerite ja neile 2019. aastaks antava tegevustoetuse suuruse kinnitamine. Ministerial directive. <https://dok.hm.ee/et/document.html?id=2d699d5c-d54a-4e37-a55d-049a3122c392>. Accessed 30.12.2019.

43. Ministry of Education and Research. Kõrgharidusprogramm 2020-2023. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/6_korghar_progr_2020_23_0.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2020.
44. Ministry of Education and Research. Noortevaldkonna programm 2019-2022. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/9_noortevaldkonna_programm_2019-2022_4okt18.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
45. Ministry of Education and Research. Noortevaldkonna programmi 2020-2023 seletuskiri. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/8_noorteprgr_2020-23_seletuskiri_dets19.docx.pdf. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
46. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Arengukoostöö ja humanitaarabi programm 2020-2023. https://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/development-cooperation/arengukoostoo_ja_humanitaarabi_programm_2020-2023.pdf. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
47. Ministry of Justice and Republic of Estonia Government Office. (2012). Guidelines of impact evaluation. http://www.just.ee/sites/www.just.ee/files/elfinder/article_files/mojude_hindamise_metoodika.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
48. Ministry of Social Affairs. Rahvastiku tervise arengukava 2020-2030. <https://www.riigikogu.ee/download/2f1fad06-78c7-4286-89be-47ee3f22ecaf>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
49. National curriculum for basic schools (2014) Regulation by the Government, passed 6 January 2011, amended 29 August 2014, https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/est_basic_school_nat_cur_2014_general_part_1.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
50. National curriculum for upper secondary schools (2014) Regulation by the Government, passed 6 January 2011, amended 29 August 2014, https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/est_upper_secondary_nat_cur_2014_general_part_final.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
51. National Health Plan 2009–2020. Rahvatervise arengukava 2009-2020. Approved by the Government in 2008, renewed in 20.12.2012. https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/rahvastiku_tervise_arengukava_2009-2020_taiendatud_2012.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
52. Noorsoo organiseerimise seadus (1938). <https://www.hm.ee/Haridusseadused-1918-1940/hsscan/1936noorsooseadus1938.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
53. Noorsootöö seaduse, erakooliseaduse ja huvikooli seaduse muutmise seadus. (2017) Parliamentary bill, passed 12.04.2017, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/103052017002>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
54. Noortelaagri ning projektlaagri juhataja ja kasvataja kvalifikatsiooninõuded ning neile vastavuse tõendamise kord. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/106032018004>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
55. Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020. (2013). <https://www.entk.ee/2020/uploads/Arengukava.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
56. Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2021-2035 eelnõu (2020). https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/noortevaldkonna_arengukava_2021-2035_eelnou_13.07.2020.pdf. accessed 16.11.2020.
57. Noorteprogrammide, noorteprojektide, noorsootöö arendamise riiklike programmide, noorsoouuringute ja noorsootööasutuste toetamise tingimused ning kord. (2010). Ministerial Decree, passed 20.09.2010. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/13358336>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
58. Noorteühingute aastatoetuse taotlemise, eraldamise ja eraldamisest keeldumise tingimused ja kord. (2016). Ministerial Decree, passed 08.08.2016. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/105082016002?leiaKehtiv>. Accessed: 30.12.2019.
59. Official Statistics Act. (2015). <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/506012015002/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.

60. President of the Republic Election Act. (1996). Parliamentary bill, passed 10.04.1996, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/512112013006/consolide>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
61. Referendum Act. (2002). Parliamentary bill, passed 13.03.2002, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/527102016002/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
62. Riigikogu Election Act. (2002). Parliamentary bill, passed 12.06.2002 <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/527102016003/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
63. Rules for Good Legislative Practice and Legislative Drafting. (22. December 2011.). Government of the Republic Act Annex 180. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/508012015003/consolide>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
64. Social Welfare Act. Parliamentary bill, 9, December 2015, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/513072016001/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
65. SPIN. Toetuse andmise tingimused noortele arenguvõimaluste pakkumiseks programmi SPIN abil. (2015). Regulation of the Minister of Interior. 3.07.2015. https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/dokumentid/VVO/EL_struktuurivahendid/toetuse_andmise_tingimused_noortele_arenguvoimaluste_pakkumiseks_programmi_spin_abil.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
66. Standard for Hobby Education (2007) Regulation by the Minister of Education and Research, passed 21.03.2007, <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/524092014010/consolide>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
67. State Budget Act. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/529022016004/consolide/current>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
68. Statistikaameti strateegia 2015–2020. (2015). (Statistics Estonia) <https://www.stat.ee/strateegia>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
69. Strateegiliste arengukavade liigid ning nende koostamise, täiendamise, elluviimise, hindamise ja aruandluse kord. Government regulation. Redaction in force 17. October 2014. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/114102014010?leiaKehtiv>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
70. Strategy for Preventing Violence for 2015–2020. Vägivalla ennetamise strateegia 2015-2020. Approved by the Government 27. February 2015. https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/vagivalla_ennetamise_strateegia_2015-2020_kodulehele.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
71. Tegevuste „Praktikasüsteemi arendamine kutse- ja kõrghariduses sh õpetajakoolituse koolituspraktika” ja „Kutsehariduse maine tõstmine, töökohapõhise õppe laiendamine” (PRÖM) toetuse andmise tingimused. (2015) Regulation by the Minister of Education and Research, adopted 5.08.2015. https://www.struktuurifondid.ee/sites/default/files/oigusaktide_lisad/lisa_prom_tat_2016_02_011.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
72. The general Principles of Estonian Sports Policy until 2030. Eesti spordipoliitika põhialused aastani 2030. Decision by the Parliament 18. February 2015. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/320022015002>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
73. The Strategy for Estonian Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid 2016–2020. Regulation by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, (2016) http://vm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/development-cooperation/2016_2020_arengukava_eng_kodulehele_0.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
74. Toetuse andmise tingimused riskikäitumise ennetamiseks, riskis olevate perede toetamiseks ning turvalise elukeskkonna arendamiseks. Regulation of the Minister of Interior. 18.09.2015. <https://www.struktuurifondid.ee/et/toetuse-andmise-tingimused-riskikaitumise-ennetamiseks-riskis-olevate-perede-toetamiseks-ning>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
75. Toetuse andmise tingimused õigusrikkumise taustaga noorte tööturule kaasamiseks. (2016) Regulation of the Minister of Interior. 1.01.2016.

- https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/dokumendid/VVO/oigusrikkumise_ taustaga_ noored_ -_ toetuse_ andmise_ tingimused.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
76. Toetuse andmise tingimuste kehtestamine tegevuse „Ettevõtlikkuse ja ettevõtlusõppe süsteemne arendamine kõigil haridustasemetel“ elluviimiseks. Regulation by the Minister of Education and Research. Adopted 30.09.2015, amended 14.06.2016.
https://www.struktuurifondid.ee/sites/default/files/oigusaktide_lisad/lisa_1_7.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 77. Töökohapõhise õppe rakendamise kord. Regulation adopted by the Minister of Education and Research 20.12.2013.
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/129122013002?leiaKehtiv>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 78. Tõrjutusriskis noorte kaasamine ja noorte tööhõivevalmiduse parandamine. (2016). Regulation of the Minister of Education and Research.
https://www.struktuurifondid.ee/sites/default/files/oigusaktide_lisad/lisa_torjutusriskis_noorte_kasamine_0.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 79. Unemployment Insurance Act. (2001). Parliamentary bill, passed 13.06.2001.
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/509072014020/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 80. Universities Act (1995). Parliamentary bill, passed 12.01.1995, repealed,
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/501072015003/consolide>. Accessed 19.12.2016.
 81. Ühtekuuluvuspoliitika fondide rakenduskava. (2013).
https://www.struktuurifondid.ee/sites/default/files/uhtekuuluvuspoliitika_fondide_rakenduskava_2014-2020_211218.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 82. Vabatahtliku tegevuse arengukava 2007-2010. (2007).
http://www.vabatahtlikud.ee/UserFiles/arengukava/vta_2007_2010_31_jaan_2007.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 83. Vabatahtliku tegevuse valdkonna tegevuskava 2016. (2016).
<https://kodukant.ee/vabatahtlik-tegevus/valdkondlik-tegevuskava/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 84. Vocational Educational Institutions Act. (2013). Parliamentary bill, adopted 12.06.2013. <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/505022014002/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 85. Welfare Development Plan 2016-2023 (Heaolu arengukava 2016-2023, governmental legislative act, 30. June 2016,
https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/heaolu_ arengukava_ 2016-2023.pdf). Accessed 30.12.2019.
 86. Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 (Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020). Approved by the Government 19. December 2013,
https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/arengukavad/noortevaldkonna_ arengukava_ 2014-2020.pdf;
<https://entk.ee/nak-veeb/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Nutika-NT-kontseptsioon-ENG-web.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
 87. Youth Work Act. Parliamentary bill, 17. June 2010,
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/520062016006/consolide/current>. Accessed 30.12.2019.

Data and statistics

1. Eesti Hariduse Infosüsteem. (2019). <http://www.ehis.ee/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
2. Eesti Töötukassa. (2019). Statistics. <https://www.tootukassa.ee/eng/content/about-tootukassa/statistics>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
3. Estonian Research Portal. (2019).
<https://www.etis.ee/Portal/News/Index/?IsLandingPage=true&lang=ENG#>. Accessed 30.12.2019.

4. Estonian Youth Work Centre. (2019). Children and Youth at Risk. <https://entk.ee/toetataavad-tegevused/emp-toetuste-programm-riskilapsed-ja-noored/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
5. Eurostat. Youth unemployment rate by sex. <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tesem140/default/table?lang=en>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
6. Flash Eurobarometer 375. European Youth: Participation in Democratic Life (2013). https://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S1119_375. Accessed 30.12.2019.
7. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. (2013). Euroopa vabatahtlik teenistus. <http://noored.ee/aastaraamat2013/statistika/#euroopa-vabatahtlik-teenistus>. Accessed 9.04.2016.
8. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. (2016). Programmist. <http://noored.ee/rahastus/erasmuspluss/>. Accessed 11.02.2016.
9. Haridussilm. (2019). <http://haridussilm.ee/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
10. Ministry of Justice. (2019). Impact evaluation and quality in legislation. <http://www.just.ee/et/eesmargid-tegevused/oiguspoliitika/mojude-analuus-ja-hea-oigusloome>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
11. Ministry of Social Affairs. (2016). Sotsiaalteenuste ja -toetuste andmeregister STAR. <https://www.sm.ee/et/sotsiaalteenuste-ja-toetuste-andmeregister-star>. Accessed 05.03.2016.
12. Noorteseire aastaraamat 2010. Noored ja tööturg. (2013) SA Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis. Eesti Noorsootöö Keskus. <https://www.noorteseire.ee/et/aastaraamat/noorteseire-aastaraamat-2010-noored-ja-t%C3%B6%C3%B6turg/aastaraamat--2>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
13. Noorteseire aastaraamat 2012. Noored ja sotsiaalne kaasatus. (2013) SA Poliitikauuringute Keskus Praxis. Eesti Noorsootöö Keskus. <https://www.noorteseire.ee/et/aastaraamat/noorteseire-aastaraamat-2012-noored-ja-sotsiaalne-kaasatus/aastaraamat--4>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
14. Noorteseire. (2016). Research. <http://noorteseire.ee/en/publications>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
15. Noorteseire. (2016). Structure of youth monitoring. <http://noorteseire.ee/en/about-youth-monitor/structure-of-youth-monitoring>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
16. Noorteseire. (2016). Yearbook. <http://noorteseire.ee/en/yearbook>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
17. Social Insurance Board. (2019). Sotsiaalteenuste ja -toetuste andmeregister. <https://www.sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/et/kvaliteet-jarelevalve/sotsiaalteenuste-ja-toetuste-andmeregister>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
18. Spordiregister. Treenerite tööjõukulude toetus eurodes kokku. http://www.sport.ee/et/file/4a6e49aee52ace20913eb2b4a3ed27e2/20152020_toetus_kvartalideuro_20200825.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2020.
19. Spordiregister. Tööjõukulude toetuse abil rakendatud treenerid ja noored sportijad. http://www.sport.ee/et/file/904199395f0f2aaddb3c5e82b15d3e3b/20152020_orgtreeneridnoored_kvartalid20200825.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2020.
20. Statistical Yearbook of Estonia 2016. (2016) Statistics Estonia. Tallinn. https://www.stat.ee/publication-2016_statistical-yearbook-of-estonia-2016. Accessed 18.12.2016.
21. Statistics Estonia. (2019). About. <http://www.stat.ee/about>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
22. Statistics Estonia. (2020). Dataset KUT021. http://andmebaas.stat.ee/OECDStat_Metadata/ShowMetadata.ashx?Dataset=KUT021&ShowOnWeb=true&Lang=et. Accessed: 26.06.2020.
23. Statistics Estonia. (2020). Dataset KUT015. http://andmebaas.stat.ee/OECDStat_Metadata/ShowMetadata.ashx?Dataset=KUT015&ShowOnWeb=true&Lang=et. Accessed: 26.06.2020.
24. Statistics Estonia. (2020). Dataset LES010. http://andmebaas.stat.ee/OECDStat_Metadata/ShowMetadata.ashx?Dataset=LES010&ShowOnWeb=true&Lang=et. Accessed: 26.06.2020.

25. Statistics Estonia. (2020). Dataset RAA0012. [https://andmed.stat.ee/et/stat/majandus__rahvamajanduse-arvepidamine__sisemajanduse-koguprodukt-\(skp\)__pehilised-rahvamajanduse-arvepidamise-naitajad/RAA0012/table/tableViewLayout1](https://andmed.stat.ee/et/stat/majandus__rahvamajanduse-arvepidamine__sisemajanduse-koguprodukt-(skp)__pehilised-rahvamajanduse-arvepidamise-naitajad/RAA0012/table/tableViewLayout1). Accessed 16.11.2020.
26. Terviseinfo. (2019). Uuringud. <http://www.tai.ee/et/terviseandmed/uuringud>. Accessed 30.12.2019.

Studies, reports and academic publications

1. Aasvee, K., Liiv, K., Eha, M., Oja, L., Härm, T., Streimann, K. (2016) Eesti kooliõpilaste tervisekäitumine. 2013/2014. õppeaasta uuringu raport. Tervise Arengu Instituut. <http://tai.ee/et/terviseandmed/uuringud/download/371>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
2. Altosaar, K., Aps, J., Koppel, E., Kost, R. (2016) Anything is possible! The Summary of the HUKK-AP Project – the Programme of Involving and Developing Hobby Schools. Experiences, activities and results. Archimedes Foundation Youth Agency. http://mitteformaalne.ee/wp-content/uploads/2014/07/Archimedes_HUKK-AP_210x200_EN_e-raamat.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
3. Aruane arengukava "Lõimuv Eesti 2020" rakendusplaani täitmise kohta 2016. aastal. (2017) Approved by the Government 6.07.2017. https://www.kul.rik.ee/sites/kulminn/files/170330_aruane_arengukava_taitmise_2016._a_aruane_2.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
4. Batueva, V. (2016). Ülevaade muutustest noorte eluolus. Noorteseire aastaraamat 2014/2015. http://www.noorteseire.ee/system/resources/BAhbBlSHOqZmIi0yMDE2LzAyLzE4LzEwXzE5XzE0XzM3Ni9OU0EyMDE0XzIwMTUucGRm/10_19_14_376_NSA20_14_2015.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
5. Cultural access and participation. (2013). European Commission (Report on "Special Eurobarometer 399"). http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_399_en.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
6. Deželan, T. (2015). Young people and democratic life in Europe: what next after the 2014 European elections? European Youth Forum. <https://www.youthforum.org/young-people-and-democratic-life-europe>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
7. Dibou, T. (2015). Estonian experience of implementing the new forms of youth participation in youth policy. Italian Journal of Sociology of Education, 7(1), 176-206. http://ijse.padovauniversitypress.it/system/files/papers/2015_1_8.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
8. Eamets, R. (2013). Labour market and labour market policies during great recession: the case of Estonia, IZA Journal of European Labor Studies 20132: 4. <https://izajoels.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/2193-9012-2-4>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
9. Eesti Sotsiaaluuring. Metoodikakogumik. The Estonian Social Survey. Methodological Report. (2010). Statistics Estonia, Tallinn. <http://www.stat.ee/dokumendid/42770>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
10. Eesti Uuringukeskus (2014). Karjääriõppe mõjususe uuring. <https://www.innove.ee/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Karj%C3%A4%C3%A4ri%C3%B5ppe-m%C3%B5jususe-uuring-2014.pdf>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
11. Espenberg, K. (2013). Inequalities on the labour market in Estonia during the Great Recession, DISSERTATIONES RERUM OECONOMICARUM UNIVERSITATIS TARTUENSIS, 47. <https://dspace.ut.ee/handle/10062/29346>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
12. ET2020.National Report for Estonia. (2014). https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/education/policy/strategic-framework/doc/et2020-national-report-et_en.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.

13. European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2016. Mobility Scoreboard: Higher education background report. Eurydice Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union https://webgate.ec.europa.eu/fpfis/mwikis/eurydice/index.php/Publications:Mobility_Scoreboard:_Higher_Education_Background_Report. Accessed 08.10.2017.
14. European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice, 2015. The European Higher Education Area in 2015: Bologna Process Implementation Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/182EN.pdf. Accessed 07.10.2017.
15. European Commission/EACEA/Eurydice/Cedefop, 2014. Tackling Early Leaving from Education and Training in Europe: Strategies, Policies and Measures. Eurydice and Cedefop Report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/education/eurydice/documents/thematic_reports/175en.pdf. Accessed 08.10.2017.
16. Explanatory note by the Ministry of Social Affairs to the Annual report of 2014. Seletuskiri Vabariigi Valitsuse protokollilise otsuse "Laste ja perede arengukava 2012–2020" 2014. aasta aruanne" eelnõu juurde. (2015) Sotsiaalministeerium. https://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Lapsed_ja_pered/Pealeht_lapsed_ja_pered/vv_istungi_protokollilise_selletuskiri.rtf. Accessed 08.12.2016.
17. Foundation Archimedes. (2014). Archimedese aastaraamat 2014. http://archimedes.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Archimedes_aastaraamat_2014.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
18. Foundation KredEx Annual Report. (2015). http://www.kredex.ee/public/Aastaraamatud/KredEx_aastaraamat_2015_ENG_.pdf. Accessed 08.12.2016.
19. General Report to the ICLS. ILO Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work, Room Document Prepared for the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians to Accompany. Chapter 5 of Report I. http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---stat/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_100574.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
20. GHK, n.d. Study on Volunteering in the European Union. (2010). Country Report Estonia. http://ec.europa.eu/citizenship/pdf/national_report_ee_en.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
21. Global Education in Estonia (2019). Global Education Network Europe. <https://gene.eu/wp-content/uploads/Estonia-PR-report.pdf>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
22. Gramberg, A., & Vutt, M. (2005). Vabatahtliku tegevuse väljakutsed Eestis. Tallinn. <http://www.riigikoju.ee/rito/index.php?id=11561&op=archive2>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
23. Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi aasta-analüüs 2016. Kokkuvõte. Tartu: Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium. <https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/htm-aa-kokkuvote.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
24. Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi valdkondade arengukavade 2017. a. tulemusaruanded (2018). https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/uuringud/htm_tulemusvaldkondade_2017_aruanded.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
25. HTM (2020). Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi arengukavade ja programmide 2019. aasta täitmise analüüs. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/htm_arengukavade_ja_programmide_2019_aasta_taitmise_analuus.pdf. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
26. HTM (2020). Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi 2019. aasta tulemusaruanne. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/htm_tulemusaruanne_2019.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2020.
27. Kallaste, E., Järve, J., Nirgi, P. (2019) Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi valitsemisalas ühendameti loomise analüüs. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/htmi_uhendameti_loomine_loppraport_15.11.2019.pdf. Accessed 27.11.2019.

28. Kangro, H. (2017) Pensionite objektiivne vaade. Statistics Estonia blogpost. <https://blog.stat.ee/2017/02/08/pensionite-objektiivne-vaade/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
29. Keskkonnainvesteeringute Keskus. Keskkonnateadlikkuse programm. <https://www.kik.ee/et/toetata-ve-tegevus/keskkonnateadlikkuse-programm-0>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
30. Kommel, K. Noore inimese päev. Statistics Estonia blogpost. <https://blog.stat.ee/2017/08/11/noore-inimese-paev/> Accessed 09.12.2019.
31. Kredex (2020). Majandusaasta aruanne 2019. <https://kredex.ee/sites/default/files/2020-05/Sihtasutus%20KredEx%202019%20aastaruanne.pdf>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
32. Käger, M., Kaldur, K., Vollmer, M., Talur, P., Krenjova, J., Hänni, L. (2016). Infotehnoloogiliste võimaluste rakendamine noorsootöös. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/infotehnoloogiliste_voimaluste_rakendamine_noorsootoos_-_uuringuaruanne.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
33. Käger, M., Kivistik, K., Tatar, M. (2017). Noorsootöötajate koolitusvajaduse uuring. <https://mitteformaalne.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Noorsoot%c3%b6%c3%b6tajate-koolitusvajaduse-uuring-2017.pdf>. Accessed 15.11.2019.
34. Käger, M., Luring, M., Pertšjonok, A., Kaldur, K., Nahkur, K. (2019). Vabatahtlikus tegevuses osalemise uuring 2018. <https://vabatahtlikud.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Vabatahtlikus-tegevuses-osalemise-uuring-2018.pdf>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
35. Laes, T.-L. (2015) Eesti Laste materiaalsest heaolust. <https://blog.stat.ee/2015/06/01/eesti-laste-materiaalsest-heaolust/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
36. Laes, T.-L. (2014) Laste vaesus kohalikes omavalitsustes. <https://blog.stat.ee/2014/01/29/laste-vaesus-kohalikes-omavalitsustes/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
37. Lapsed. Children (2008). Haugas, L.(ed). Statistics Estonia, Tallinn. https://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=15617. Accessed 30.12.2019.
38. Laste heaolu. Child well-being. (2013). Kutsar, D. (ed). Statistics Estonia. Tallinn. http://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=34248. Accessed 30.12.2019.
39. Lauristin, M., Vihalemm, P. (2013) Minu laulu- ja tantsupidu. Sotsioloogilise uuringu aruanne. Eesti Laulu- ja Tantsupeo Sihtasutus. <https://sa.laulupidu.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Laulupeo-uuringu-aruanne-25-aprill-PARANDUSTEGA-KODULEHELE.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
40. Lepp, Ü., Liiv, D., Kuldjärv, M., & Ümarik, M. (2003). EESTI MITTETULUNDUSSEKTORI KOHTA KÄIVA STATISTIKA KOGUMISE JA ANALÜÜSI KORRASTAMINE Projekti aruanne. Tallinn. <http://www.praxis.ee/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/2003-Mittetulundussektori-statistika-kogumine-ja-analuus.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
41. Lifelong Guidance in Estonia. (2016). Foundation Innove. https://www.innove.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/LifelongGuidance_170x240_web.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
42. Lukas, T. (2016) Possibility for equal society – lessons from cultural consumption. In Krusell, S (ed.) Social Trends 7. Statistics Estonia. <https://www.stat.ee/publication-2016-social-trends-7>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
43. Majandusaasta aruanne (2019). MTÜ Mondo. <https://mondo.org.ee/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Aruanne-Mondo-2018.pdf>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
44. Majandusaasta aruanne (2020). MTÜ Mondo. https://mondo.org.ee/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/MT%C3%9C-Mondo-Aruanne_80260583_2019.pdf. Accessed: 16.11.2020.

45. Ministry of Education and Research. (2015). Noortevaldkonna arengukava 2014-2020 rakendusplaani aastateks 2014-2017 täitmise 2014. aasta aruanne. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/nak_rp_taitmise_2014_aruanne.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
46. Ministry of Education and Research (2020). PISA 2018 uuring: Kas Eesti noor on maailmakodanik? https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/22.10.2020_pisa_global_cokmpetence_kokkuvote.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2020.
47. MTÜ Mondo (2018). Majandusaasta aruanne. https://www.mondo.org.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/mondo-aruanne-2017_auditeeritud.pdf. Accessed 15.12.2019.
48. National Audit Office of Estonia. (2012). Activities of Republic of Estonia Government in assessing impact of its work and performance reporting. Tallinn. <http://www.riigikontroll.ee/Riigikontrollipublikatsioonid/Auditiaruanded/tabid/206/Audit/2265/Institution/3/language/en-US/Default.aspx>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
49. National Audit Office of Estonia. (2015). Riigi tegevus uuringute tellimisel. Kas uuringuid tellitakse läbipaistvalt ning tellitud uuringud on kättesaadavad ja neid kasutatakse poliitikakujundamisel? Tallinn. <http://www.riigikontroll.ee/tabid/206/Audit/2345/Area/1/language/en-US/Default.aspx>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
50. NGO Mondo (2013) Summary research on youth work and global issues in Estonia. http://youthoftheworld.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/YOW_summary-of-Estonian-study.pdf. Accessed 28.10.2017.
51. Noorsootöö õpik. (2013). Estonian Youth Work Centre. Foundation Archimedes Youth in Action office. https://www.entk.ee/sites/default/files/Noorsootoo_opik_veebi.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
52. OECD (2016), Education Policy Outlook. Estonia, OECD Publishing, Paris, <http://www.oecd.org/edu/Education-Policy-Outlook-Country-Profile-Estonia.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
53. OECD (2016). Low-Performing Students: Why They Fall Behind and How to Help Them Succeed, PISA, Paris: OECD Publishing. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264250246-en>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
54. Ord, J., Carletti, M., Cooper, S., Dansac, C., Morciano, D., Siurala, L., Taru, M. (2018). The Impact of Youth Work in Europe: A Study of Five European Countries. <https://www.humak.fi/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/The-Impact-Of-Youth-Work.pdf>. Accessed 15.11.2019.
55. Performance Report for 2013–2014. (2016) „National Health Plan (NHP) 2009–2020“, Ministry of Social Affairs, https://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/eesmarqid_ja_tegevused/Tervis/rta_2013-2014_aasta_tulemusaruanne_eng.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
56. Psience OÜ. (2014) Karjäärispetsialistide koolituste ja meetodiliste materjalide pikaajalise kasulikkuse hindamine ning vajaduste väljaselgitamine. <https://www.innove.ee/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Karj%C3%A4%C3%A4rispetsialistide-koolituste-ja-meetodiliste-materjalide-pikaajalise-kasulikkuse-hindamine-ning-vajaduste-selgitamine-2014.pdf>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
57. Report of the First National Forum of Volunteers. (2003). <http://www.vabatahtlikud.ee/UserFiles/trykised/vtfoorum.pdf>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
58. Solvak, M., Vassil. K. (2016). E-voting in Estonia: Technological Diffusion and Other Developments Over Ten Years (2005 - 2015). Johan Skytte Institute of Political Studies, University of Tartu. https://skytte.ut.ee/sites/default/files/skytte/e_voting_in_estonia_vassil_solvak_a5_web.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
59. Taru, M., Pilve, E., Kaasik, P. (2015). Noorsootöö Eestis 19. sajandi keskpaigast kuni 21. sajandi esimese kümnendi lõpuni. Ajalooline ülevaade. <https://entk.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Noorsootoo-Eestis.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.

60. Tartu, M., Kötsi, K., Talur, P. (2019). The Impact of Youth Work in Estonia: "Friendship", "Experiences" and "Development". National report. Accessed 15.11.2019.
61. Tatar, M., Käger, M., Vollmer, M., Kivistik, K., Pertsjonok, N. (2017). IBS. <https://www.ibs.ee/wp-content/uploads/L%C3%B5pparuanne-FINAL-.pdf>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
62. Tervise Arengu Instituut. (2019). Eesti kooliõpilaste tervisekäitumine. 2017/2018. õppeaasta uuringu raport. https://intra.tai.ee//images/prints/documents/158107216065_Eesti_kooliopilaste_tervisekaitumine_2017_2018_uuringu_raport.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2020.
63. Toomla, R. (2011) Kes ei käi valimas? Võrdlev ülevaade kolmest Riigikogu valimisest. Riigikogu toimetised 23/2011. <https://rito.riigikogu.ee/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/Kes-ei-k%C3%A4i-valimas-V%C3%B5rdlev-%C3%BClevaade-kolmest-Riigikogu-valimisest-Rein-Toomla.pdf>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
64. Treial, K. (2020) Õpilaste kogemused kiusamisega 2020. aasta KiVa programmi õpilasküsitluse põhjal. Tulemused eriolukorra kevadel. <https://kiusamisvaba.ee/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/%C3%95pilaste-kogemused-kiusamisega-2020-KiVa-programmi-RAPORT.pdf>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
65. Trumm, A. (2012). Noored ja sotsiaalne kaasatus: Euroopa Liidu noortepoliitika ja Eesti olukord Euroopa taustalt. Poliitikaülevaade 4/2012. Noorteseire. http://noorteseire.ee/system/resources/BAhbBlSHOgZmIjgyMDEyLzA5LzExLzA5XzIyXzI1XzIzOV9Qb2xpaXRpa2F5bGV2YWFKZV80dmVIYi5wZGY/09_22_25_239_Poliitika_ylevaade_4veeb.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
66. Turu-uuringute AS (2016) Elanikkonna keskkonnateadlikkus 2016. http://www.envir.ee/sites/default/files/eesti_elanike_keskkonnateadlikkuse_uuringu_raport.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
67. Turu-uuringute AS (2018). Eesti elanike keskkonnateadlikkus 2018. https://www.envir.ee/sites/default/files/2018_keskkonnateadlikkuse_uuring.pdf. Accessed 16.11.2020.
68. Uus, M., Hinsberg, H., Mänd, T., & Batueva, V. (2013). Vabatahtlikus tegevuses osalemine Eestis 2013. Tallinn. http://www.vabatahtlikud.ee/UserFiles/uuringud/vabatahtlikus_tegevuses_osalemine_2013.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
69. Valk, A. (2016). Madala haridustasemega noored. Tartu: Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium. https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/haridusmin_madala_hari_dustasemega_noorte_osakaal.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
70. Verke, Estonian Youth Work Centre (2019). Digitalisation and youth work. <https://entk.ee/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Digitalisation-and-youth-work.pdf>. Accessed 15.11.2019.
71. Vihma, P. (2016) "Globaliseeruv maailm" ja väärtuskasvatus koolis" Uuringu raport Peeter Vihma http://www.maailmakool.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Maailmaharidus-2016-raport_final.pdf. Accessed 30.12.2019.
72. Villenthal, A., Kaunismaa, I., Veemaa, J., Talur, P., Žuravljova, M., Varblane, U. (2016) Hobby education, hobby activity, and youth workers in local municipalities. Centre for Applied Social Sciences of the University of Tartu . http://skytte.ut.ee/sites/default/files/skytte/hh_ ja_ ht_uuringuaruande_kokkuvote_eng.pdf. Accessed 09.12.2019.
73. Viltrop, A., Paas, E., Kiis, K., Rull, M., Tambaum, T. (2020). Vabatahtlike rakendamise koostöömudeli testimine hoolekandesüsteemis ja üle-eestiliselt rakendatava koostöömudeli väljatöötamine. https://vabatahtlikud.ee/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Hanke-l-ppraport_030720.pdf. Accessed: 16.11.2020.

Official websites

1. 28.09 õigusloome info. <https://infoleht.hm.ee/2020/09/25/28-09-oigusloome-info/>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
2. 2019 Laulupidu. Laulupidu. <https://2019.laulupidu.ee/laulupidu/>. Accessed: 07.06.2020.
3. 2019 Laulupidu. Järgmised peod. <https://2019.laulupidu.ee/jargmised-peod/>. Accessed: 07.06.2020.
4. Arvamusfestival. Mis on arvamusfestival? <https://arvamusfestival.ee/mis-on-arvamusfestival/>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
5. Association of Open Youth Work Centres. <https://ank.ee/in-english/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
6. Continuous Action. EVS. <http://www.continuousaction.ee/?mid=38>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
7. Digikultuuriaasta. Home page. <https://digikultuuriaasta.ee/>. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
8. Digikultuuriaasta. Pärand ja kultuur. <https://digikultuuriaasta.ee/parand-ja-kultuur/>. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
9. Domus Dorpatensis. The foundation. <http://www.dorpatensis.ee/about-us>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
10. Eelnõude Infosüsteem. <http://eelvoud.valitsus.ee/main#IK7PbWbp>. Accessed 09.12.2019
11. Eesti Loomakaitse Selts. Kes me oleme? <http://www.loomakaitse.ee/kes-me-oleme/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
12. Eesti Noorteühenduste Liit. Information at the web-page www.enl.ee. Accessed 09.12.2019.
13. Eesti Üliõpilaskondade Liit. Information at the web-page <https://eyl.ee/en/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
14. ELF. <http://elfond.ee/en>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
15. Estonian Food Bank. About Food Banks. <http://www.toidupank.ee/about-food-banks/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
16. Estonian National Youth Council. Struktureeritud dialoog. <https://enl.ee/2016/02/16/enli-teated-477/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
17. Estonian Student Councils Union. Homepage. www.opilasliit.ee. Accessed 09.12.2019.
18. Estonian Qualifications Authority. Väljastatud kutsed: kutsetunnistused. <https://www.kutseregister.ee/ctrl/et/Tunnistused/showKutsetunnistused/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
19. Estonian Youth Work Centre. About Estonian Youth Work Centre. <https://www.entk.ee/en>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
20. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Avatud noorsootööd. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo/noorsootoo/avatud-noorsootoo/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
21. Estonian Youth Work Centre. EMP toetuste programm "Riskilapsed ja -noored". <https://entk.ee/toetatavad-tegevused/emp-toetuste-programm-riskilapsed-ja-noored/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
22. Estonian Youth Work Centre. ENL: üle-eestilised Osaluskohvikud ootavad 8. novembril tuleviku teemadel kaasa rääkima. <https://entk.ee/enl-ule-eestilised-osaluskohvikud-ootavad-8-novembril-tuleviku-teemadel-kaasa-raakima/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
23. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Huviala valdkondade kvaliteedi toetus. <https://entk.ee/toetused/huviala-valdkondade-kvaliteedi-toetus/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
24. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Huviharidus ja -tegevus. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo/noorsootoo/huviharidus-ja-tegevus/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.

25. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Huvihariduse ja -tegevuse toetus omavalitsustele. <https://entk.ee/toetused/huvihariduse-ja-tegevuse-toetus-omavalitsustele/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
26. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Konkurss "Noortepäev 2018" korraldaja leidmiseks. <https://entk.ee/konkurss-noortepaev-2018-korraldaja-leidmiseks/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
27. Estonian Youth Work Centre. KOV infopäevadel tutvustati uut digilahendust. <https://entk.ee/kov-infopaevadel-tutvustati-uut-digilahendust/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
28. Estonian Youth Work Centre. KOV-i roll noorsootöös. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo/kovi-roll-noorsootoos/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
29. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Kutse taotlemine. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo-korraldamine/noorsootoo-kvaliteedi-arendamine/noorsootootaja-kutse/kutse-taotlemine/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
30. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Kutse taotlemise hindamine. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo-korraldamine/noorsootoo-kvaliteedi-arendamine/noorsootootaja-kutse/kutse-taotlemise-hindamine/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
31. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Laagrid. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo/noorsootoo/laagrid/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
32. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorsootöö. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo/noorsootoo/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
33. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorsootöö kvaliteedi hindamismudel. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo-korraldamine/noorsootoo-kvaliteedi-arendamine/noorsootoo-kvaliteedi-hindamismudel/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
34. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorsootöö nädalal motiveerisid noori Erik Orgu, Liis Velsker ja teised tuntud tegijad. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo-nadalal-motiveerisid-noori-erik-orgu-liis-velsker-ja-teised-tuntud-tegijad/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
35. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorsootöö struktuurid. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo/noorsootoo-struktuurid/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
36. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorsootöö teenuste kättesaadavuse suurendamise ja tõrjutusriskis noorte kaasamine, KOV-ide koostöörupid. <https://entk.ee/toetused/noorsootoo-teenuste-kattesaadavuse-suurendamise-ja-torjutusriskis-noorte-kaasamine-kovide-koostooGrupid/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
37. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorte Huvi Heaks. <https://noortehuviheaks.entk.ee/>. Accessed 05.06.2020.
38. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorteinfo. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo/noorsootoo/noorteinfo/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
39. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noortevaldkond. <https://entk.ee/noortepoliitika/noortevaldkond/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
40. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Noorumi otseülekanne. <https://entk.ee/noorumiotseulekanne/>. Accessed: 15.06.2020.
41. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Rahvusvaheline koostöö. <https://entk.ee/noorsootoo-korraldamine/noorsootoo-kvaliteedi-arendamine/rahvusvaheline-koostoo/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
42. Estonian Youth Work Centre. Rahvusvaheline koostöö noortevaldkonnas. <https://entk.ee/rahvusvaheline-koostoo-noortevaldkonnas/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
43. EstYES. About us. <https://estyes.ee/en/about-us/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
44. EstYES. Volunteering in Estonia. <https://estyes.ee/en/opportunities-2/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
45. EV 100. Igal lapsel oma pill. <https://www.ev100.ee/et/igal-lapsel-oma-pill/>. Accessed: 05.06.2020.
46. Federation of Estonian Student Unions. Home. <https://eyl.ee/en/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
47. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. Homepage. <http://noored.ee/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.

48. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. Euroopa vabatahtlik teenistus. <https://noored.ee/programmid/solidaarsuskorpus/aruanalus/euroopa-vabatahtlik-teenistus/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
49. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. EVS20. <http://noored.ee/rahastus/euroopa-vabatahtlik-teenistus/evs20/>. Accessed 09.04.2016.
50. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. Euroopa Solidaarsuskorpus. <https://noored.ee/rahastus/euroopa-solidaarsuskorpus/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
51. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. Meist. <https://noored.ee/meist/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
52. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. Noorsootöötajate õpiränne. <https://noored.ee/programmid/erasmus/noorsootooprojektid/noorsootootajate-opiranne/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
53. Foundation Archimedes Youth Agency. Noortepass. <https://noored.ee/noortepass/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
54. Good Behavior Game pax. <http://goodbehaviorgame.org/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
55. Government of Estonia. Valitsus kiitis heaks haridus- ja noortevaldkonna arengukavade koostamise ettepanekud. <https://www.valitsus.ee/et/uudised/valitsus-kiitis-heaks-haridus-ja-noortevaldkonna-arengukavade-koostamise-ettepanekud>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
56. Haridus- ja Noorteamet (Education and Youth Authority). harno.ee/en. Accessed 16.11.2020.
57. High:five. <http://www.highfive.net/en>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
58. Huvikoolide Liit. Home page. <http://huviharidus.eu/huvikoolide-liit-2/>. Accessed: 08.06.2020.
59. Integratsiooni Sihtasutus. Rahvusvähemuste kultuuriühingute tegevus. <https://www.integratsioon.ee/rahvusvahemuste-kultuuriuhingute-tegevus>. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
60. KiVa. <http://www.kivaprogram.net/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
61. Kodukant. About us. <https://kodukant.ee/en/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
62. KredEx. Who we are. <https://www.kredex.ee/en/who-we-are/sa-kredex>. Accessed: 30.12.2019.
63. Mihus. <https://mihus.mitteformaalne.ee/>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
64. Ministry of Culture. Aruanne 2018. https://www.kul.ee/sites/kulminn/files/le_aruanne_2018.pdf. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
65. Ministry of Culture. Aruanne 2019. https://www.kul.ee/sites/kulminn/files/200507_le_aruanne_2019.pdf. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
66. Ministry of Culture. Culture 2020. https://www.kul.ee/sites/kulminn/files/culture2020_eng.pdf. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
67. Ministry of Culture. Homepage. www.kul.ee/en. Accessed 09.12.2019.
68. Ministry of Culture. Kriisiabi. <https://www.kul.ee/et/kriisiabi>. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
69. Ministry of Culture. Kultuur 2020. <https://www.kul.ee/sites/kulminn/files/kultuur2020.pdf>. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
70. Ministry of Culture. Kultuuriministeeriumi valitsemisala eelarve 2019. https://www.kul.ee/sites/kulminn/files/kultuuriministeeriumi_valitsemisala_eelarve_2019.pdf. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
71. Ministry of Culture. Kultuuripärandi digiteerimine. <https://www.kul.ee/et/kultuuriparandi-digiteerimine-0>. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
72. Ministry of Culture. Varasemad teema-aastad. <https://www.kul.ee/et/teema-aasta/varasemad-teema-aastad>. Accessed: 15.07.2020.
73. Ministry of Education and Research. Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium muudab partnerite toetamise põhimõtteid. <https://www.hm.ee/et/uudised/haridus-ja-teadusministeerium-muudab-partnerite-toetamise-pohimotteid>. Accessed 09.12.2019.

74. Ministry of Education and Research. Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi eelarve. <https://www.hm.ee/et/ministeerium/majandusteave/haridus-ja-teadusministeeriumi-eelarve>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
75. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. Housing. <https://www.mkm.ee/en/objectives-activities/construction-and-housing-sector/housing>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
76. Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. Economic Development. <https://www.mkm.ee/en/objectives-activities/economic-development> Accessed 09.12.2019.
77. Ministry of Education and Research. Euroopa Nõukogu. <https://www.hm.ee/et/tegevused/valiskoostoo/euroopa-noukogu>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
78. Ministry of Education and Research. Noortevaldkond. <https://www.hm.ee/et/tegevused/noortevaldkond>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
79. Ministry of Education and Research. Tööturu ja õppe tihedama seostamise programm. <https://www.hm.ee/et/tooturu-ja-oppe-tihedama-seostamise-programm>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
80. Ministry of Education and Research. Varasemate õpingute ja töökogemuse arvestamine. <https://www.hm.ee/et/tegevused/taiskasvanuharidus/varasemate-opingute-ja-tookogemuse-arvestamine>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
81. Ministry of Education and Research. Vocational Education. <https://hm.ee/en/vocational-education>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
82. Ministry of Education and Research. Youth Policy. <https://www.hm.ee/en/activities/youth/youth-policy>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
83. Ministry of Finance. Finantseerimine. <https://www.rahandusministeerium.ee/et/kov/finantseerimine>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
84. Ministry of Finance. 2021. aasta riigieelarve seaduse seletuskiri. https://www.rahandusministeerium.ee/system/files_force/document_files/2021-aasta-riigieelarve-seaduse-seletuskiri.pdf?download=1. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
85. Ministry of Interior. Civil Society. <https://www.siseministeerium.ee/en/regional-affairs/civil-society>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
86. Ministry of the Interior. Population Register. <https://www.siseministeerium.ee/en/population-register>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
87. Ministry of Social Affairs. 2018. aasta muudatused sotsiaalministeeriumi haldusalas. <http://www.sm.ee/et/uudised/2018-aasta-muudatused-sotsiaalministeeriumi-haldusalas>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
88. Ministry of Social Affairs. Employment. <https://www.sm.ee/en/employment-0>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
89. Ministry of Social Affairs. Public Health. <https://www.sm.ee/en/public-health>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
90. Ministry of Social Affairs. Noortegarantii. <https://www.sm.ee/et/noortegarantii>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
91. Ministry of Social Affairs. (2018). Struktuurivahendid sotsiaalvaldkonnas 2014-2020. <https://www.sm.ee/et/struktuurivahendid-sotsiaalvaldkonnas-2014-2020>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
92. Mitteformaalne. Koolitusprojektid. <https://mitteformaalne.ee/koolitusprojektid/noorsootoo-kvaliteedi-arendamine-2015-2020/>. Accessed 15.11.2019.
93. Mondo. Vabatahtlikud. <http://mondo.org.ee/vabatahtlikud/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
94. Multidimensional Family Therapy. Home. <http://www.mdft.org/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
95. National Institute for Health Development. About us. <http://www.tai.ee/en/about-us/national-institute-for-health-development>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
96. Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organizations. EMSL-i ajalugu. <https://heakodanik.ee/emsl-i-ajalugu/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.

97. Peipsi Center for Transboundary Cooperation. Who we are. <http://www.ctc.ee/peipsi-ctc>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
98. PreventIPV tools for social change. Expect Respect: a school-based program for preventing teen dating violence and promoting safe and healthy relationships. <http://www.preventipv.org/materials/expect-respect-school-based-program-preventing-teen-dating-violence-and-promoting-safe-and>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
99. Research Youth. Home. <https://www.researchyouth.eu/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
100. SALTO. Home. <https://www.salto-youth.net/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
101. Sotsiaalkindlustusamet. Projektid. <https://www.sotsiaalkindlustusamet.ee/et/organisatsioon-kontaktid/projektid>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
102. SPIN. <http://www.spinprogramm.ee/kontakt/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
103. Spordiregister. Treenerid. <http://www.sport.ee/et/treenerid#ankur3>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
104. Statistikaameti Juhtimislauad. <https://juhtimislauad.stat.ee/>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
105. Tartu City. Noortekeskuste mõju huvilised kogunevad täna Tartus. <https://www.tartu.ee/et/uudised/noortekeskuste-moju-huvilised-kogunevad-tana-tartus>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
106. Tartumaa Noorsootöötajate Ühendus. Projektid. <https://tnuhendus.ee/projektid/>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
107. Teeviit. Home. <https://www.teeviit.ee/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
108. Terveilm. GLEN. <https://www.terveilm.ee/leht/teabekeskuse-teemad/teadlikkuse-tostmine/glen/>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
109. Terviseinfo. Ennetusprogramm Suitsuprii Klass <https://www.tai.ee/et/instituut/pressile/uudised/4104-suitsuprii-klassi-programmi-lopetas-suitsupriina-85-protsendi-alustanutest>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
110. Töötukassa. Karjääriteenused. <https://www.tootukassa.ee/content/teenused/karja-ariteenused>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
111. Töötukassa. Tööandjate tutvustused. <https://www.tootukassa.ee/content/teenused/tooandjate-tutvustused>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
112. University of Tallinn. Noorsootöö. <https://www.tlu.ee/hti/noorsootoo>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
113. University of Tallinn. Noorsootöö korraldus. <https://www.tlu.ee/hti/noorsootoo-korraldus>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
114. University of Tartu Narva College. Digital Youth. <https://sisu.ut.ee/digy>. Accessed 30.12.2019.
115. University of Tartu Narva College. Õppekava "Noorsootöö (205619" sisu 2019/2020 sisseastunutele. https://www.is.ut.ee/pls/ois/!tere.tulemast?leht=OK.BL.PU&id_oppekava=601&id_a_oppekava=5465&kordi_pealehel=1&systeemi_seaded=12,1,12,1,&viida%20kaudu=1&session=0. Accessed 15.11.2019.
116. University of Tartu Viljandi Cultural Academy. Õppekava "Kogukonnaharidus ja huvitegevus" (80284) sisu 2018/2019 sisseastunutele. https://www.is.ut.ee/pls/ois/!tere.tulemast?naita_ka_alternatiive=1&naita_ka_alternatiive=1&leht=OK.BL.PU&id_a_oppekava=5217&kordi_pealehel=1&systeemi_seaded=3,1,12,1,&viida%20kaudu=1&session=0. Accessed 15.11.2019.
117. Vabatahtlike Värav. Good Practices of volunteering. <https://vabatahtlikud.ee/eng/organisatsioonile/organisatsioonile-vabatahtliku-tegevuse-hea-tava/>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
118. Vabatahtlike Värav. Tunnustamine. <https://vabatahtlikud.ee/tunnustamine/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
119. Vabatahtlike Värav. Vabatahtliku tegevuse hea tava. <https://vabatahtlikud.ee/vabatahtlik-tegevus/vabatahtliku-tegevuse-hea-tava/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.

120. Vabatahtlike Värav. Volunteer Pass. <https://vabatahtlikud.ee/vabatahtlik-tegevus/vabatahtliku-pass/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
121. Vabatahtlike Värav. Volunteer's friend badge. <https://vabatahtlikud.ee/eng/organisatsioonile/vabatahtliku-sobra-mark/>. Accessed 16.11.2020.
122. Vabatahtlike Värav. Võrgustiku liikmed. <https://vabatahtlikud.ee/kontaktid/vorgustiku-liikmed/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
123. Valgamaa Noorteportaal Tankla. Home. <https://tankla.net/>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
124. Valgamaa Noorteportaal Tankla. Mis on Tankla vabatahtliku pass? <https://tankla.net/tankla/vabatahtliku-pass.html>. Accessed 09.12.2019.
125. VEPA. Tulemused Eestis. <https://www.vepa.ee/tutvustus/tulemused-eestis/>. Accessed: 16.11.2020.
126. Verke. Home. <https://www.verke.org/?lang=en>. Accessed 15.12.2019.
127. Võrdsed Võimalused 2020. NEET-noored. <https://www.vordsedvoimalused2020.ee/neet-noored/>. Accessed 16.11.2020.

ARCHIVE

Information from previous years can be accessed and freely downloaded through the PDF files below.

2020

[Estonia 2020.pdf](#)

2019

[Estonia 2019.pdf](#)

2018

[Estonia 2018](#)

2017

[Estonia 2017](#)