



euro | guidance

Lifelong Guidance in Estonia 2019

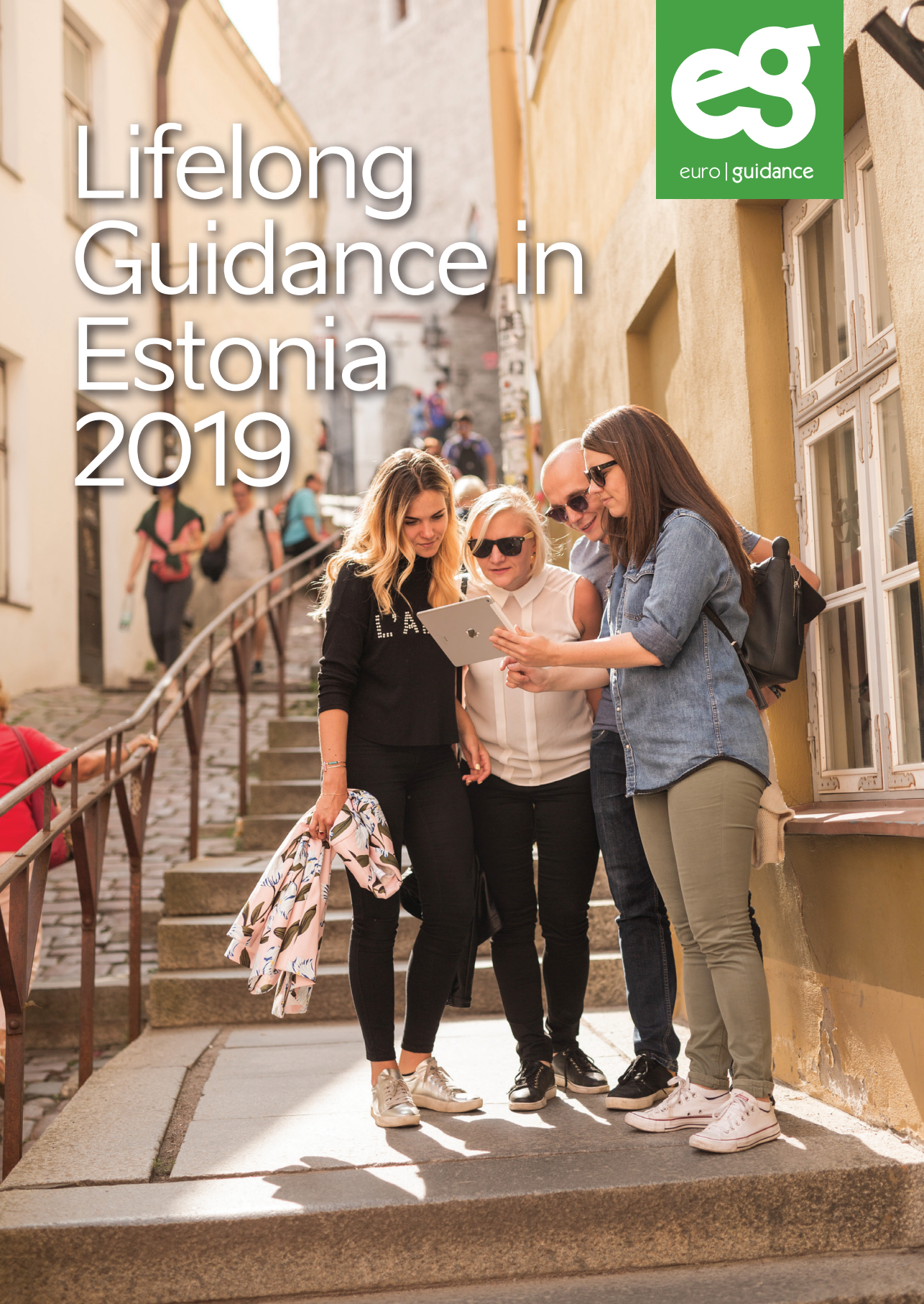


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Strategic View

What Estonia needs is a shared understanding of the direction to take when moving towards a knowledge and innovation-based society. We are successful only when we acknowledge the need to constantly learn and relearn and to be proactive and creative, so that we can cope in today's rapidly changing world. Learning and the knowledgeable application of skills must become an integral part of an active approach towards life.

Our vision for Estonia is:
Learning is a lifestyle.
Development opportunities
are noticed and smart
solutions are pursued.

Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020¹ (LLL2020) addresses the most important challenges in the area of lifelong learning. **The general goal** of drafting the Lifelong Learning Strategy is to provide all people in Estonia with learning opportunities that are tailored to their needs and capabilities throughout their whole lifespan, in order for them to maximize opportunities for dignified self-actualization within society, in their work as well as in their family life.

The overarching strategy includes lifelong guidance and stresses the most crucial issues, including access to guidance for all, quality of service provision and professional practitioners. The strategy sets five strategic goals of which two are closely tied to lifelong guidance.

¹www.hm.ee/en/estonian-lifelong-learning-strategy-2020

Correspondence between opportunities for lifelong learning and the needs of the labour market – lifelong learning opportunities and career services that are diverse, flexible and of good quality, resulting in an increase in the number of people with professional or vocational qualifications in different age groups, and an increase in overall participation in lifelong learning across Estonia.

Equal opportunities for lifelong learning and growth of participation in learning – the Estonian state must ensure all people equal opportunities to get a quality education in accordance with their abilities

Digital solutions in lifelong learning are also in strategic focus. The objective is to apply modern digital technology in learning and teaching in a more efficient way and with better results, to improve the digital skills of the general population and to guarantee access to the new generation of digital infrastructure.

In addition to the above mentioned aims, the other two courses of action are the change in the approach to learning, and competent and motivated teachers and school leadership.

According to the LLL2020, the authorities responsible for the development of lifelong

guidance are the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Research.

Estonia is currently in a middle of a career guidance reform. In 2018, the Estonian government acknowledged that there was some room for improvement both regarding access and quality. Accordingly, starting from 2019 all age career guidance is provided by public employment offices (*Eesti Töötukassa* in Estonian). The role of general education, vocational education and higher education institutions is to ensure the access of lifelong guidance to their students and support them reaching the learning outcomes set in curricula. Foundation Innove supports educational institutions in implementation of national curricula. Archimedes Foundation, as the national Euroguidance centre, provides support in the areas of international learning mobility and lifelong guidance development within education, training and employment to Estonian guidance professionals and to professionals abroad.

In spring 2018, the government approved the creation of the strategy "Estonia 2035". The Government Office and the Ministry of Finance are responsible for compiling, implementing, and renewing the strategy.

What is different in 2020?

We take responsibility

People understand that learning and self-development are their own choice and responsibility.

We care for demand

Studies are based on the learner's interests and capabilities, they support his or her development and meet labour market needs.

We provide opportunities

The lifelong learning system as a whole offers study opportunities that are of good quality, modern, flexible and cater to the special needs of the learner.



Institutions and Services

Lifelong guidance has been practiced in Estonia for years. Services have been provided for different target groups by different service providers and have also been known by different names — the latest version being *karjääriteenus* (direct translation in English career services). Content-wise, both lifelong guidance and career guidance are used meaning “A range of activities that enable citizens of any age, and at any point in their lives, to identify their capacities, competences and interests; to make meaningful educational, training and occupational decisions; and to manage their individual life paths in learning, work and other settings in which these capacities and competences are

learned and/or used” as agreed by the ELGPN members in 2013.²

Career guidance reform

Career guidance, standing in three pillars — career education, career counselling and career information provision, is provided by both education and employment systems. Career education is integrated in curricula at different education levels and has a long tradition. However, career information provision

² Lifelong Guidance Policy Development: Glossary (ELGPN, 2013)

and career counselling outside school has been organised differently over the years and been often influenced by resources available.

Foundation Innove established its regional *Rajaleidja* centres (Pathfinder centre in English) in 2014 at the service of young people (age 7 — 26) and focusing on the needs of pupils in lower- and upper secondary education (age 15 — 19). Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (Eesti Töötukassa, the public employment service — PES) supported unemployed, inactive and employed

people. In addition, as part of Youth Guarantee there was an extra initiative to support young people while entering the labour market and coping there and to bring those not in education or at work (NEETs) back to education.

It was recognized that the previous system with overlapping target groups caused replication of services and therefore inefficient use of human and financial resources. Starting from 2019 career information and career counselling services are offered by and developed in the PES. In practical terms, it means that the career guidance personnel from *Rajaleidja* centres were transferred to PES. In line with making the most efficient use of the resources, the reform also aims at joining together expert knowledge about labour market and education.

Education sector

In the education sector, guidance is provided both as a part of youth work as well as a part of formal education. Career management skills of a child are formed already at the kindergarten stage. A child discovers labour market and education in general, that his/ her parents go to work and what this work



is. Development of such competencies is supported during the entire time of study — at all levels of education. The **Education Act** of the Republic of Estonia³ stipulates career guidance of children and youth to be the responsibility of local governments.

Development and implementation of national curricula and career education is still supported by Foundation Innove.⁴ In general education this includes the implementation of compulsory central topic “Lifelong learning and career planning” and career related elective subject so that development of career management skills is supported in schools. In vocational education (VET), the focal point is the generic skills modules, which consists of career topics integrated with entrepreneurship competences and is an obligatory part of every VET curriculum.

³ Unofficial texts of English translations of Estonian legislation are available at www.riigiteataja.ee

⁴ www.innove.ee/en/teaching-materials-and-methodologies/

General education

The **national curricula** establish the standard for **basic and general secondary education**. The curricula are implemented in all basic (grades 1 – 9) and upper secondary schools (grades 10 – 12) of Estonia, regardless of the schools legal status, unless otherwise stipulated by the law.

In 2014 the national general education curricula were adjusted. In particular, more specific study goals in connection with career planning were included. National curriculum does not prescribe to the school precisely what actions are to be taken to achieve the set goals – each school is able to select the best ways, methods and means based on the specifics and abilities of the school. **The school is obliged to ensure the availability of career-related services.** This includes career counselling and career information services provided by PES or finding other means to make career services accessible for students (e.g. employing career counsellor in the staff). The national basic school and national upper secondary school curricula include **eight compulsory central topics**, 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 elective course in careers education, which enhances the use of this possibility in the school curriculum.

In addition, Foundation Innove with its Rajaleidja⁵ centres continues the provision and development of **educational counselling** services for parents, teachers and other educators of young people with **special education needs** (age 1,5-18). The centres employ speech therapists, psychologists, social pedagogues and special educational teachers.

As part of the youth guarantee the Ministry of Education and Research also launched an initiative to support young people aged 7 – 26 when entering the labour market and coping there, and to bring young people not in education or work (NEETs) back to education. **The Youth Prop Up⁶** is an action plan for young persons of 15 – 26 years in age who are not involved in studies or employment. The main aim is in supporting young people in need, who may have been made redundant or have not completed their education and are not currently studying. The programme attempts to assist them in realising their potential and return to being a productive member of society as quickly as possible, raising their confidence and self-esteem. The Association of Estonian Open Youth Centers⁷ is implementing the action plan in co-operation with 35 youth centres since 2015.

According to the **Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act**, it is also possible to conduct studies in Estonia by following the curriculum formulated under the aegis of either the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) or the Statute of the European Schools. These curricula are designed foremost for the children of the foreign officials and specialists working in Estonia.

⁵ www.innove.ee/en/rajaleidja-network/

⁶ www.tugila.ee/support-program-youth-prop/

⁷ www.ank.ee/in-english/



Vocational education and training

The goal of the **Vocational Educational Institutions Act** is to set out the basics of organization of studies in vocational education institutions. The task of a vocational education institution is to create opportunities for students to obtain knowledge, skills and ethical guidance necessary for life and work, including professional training and retraining, considering the needs of society, students and the labour market.

Development of career management skills takes place in vocational education both through vocational training and **generic skills modules**. In every vocational education curriculum there is a generic skill module which deals with career-related topics and the principles of entrepreneurship. The module is developed for the 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th level of vocational education curricula. The aim of the studies is that students are capable of developing their careers in a modern economic, entrepreneurial and working environment based on the principles of lifelong guidance. Passing the module will help the learners to acknowledge professional studies as one step in their career path and to take responsibility for their learning and development. The curriculum describes the learning outcomes and assessment criteria of the module. The implementation of the module shall be decided by the educational institutions themselves. The updating of the content of the module is planned for the first half of 2019 and is based on the possibility of integrating entrepreneurial competencies and career competencies into a single whole.

Career development competencies are developed also **throughout the course**.

A great emphasis is placed on practice, the preparation for which and direct feedback from the supervisor helps the learners to understand their studies, set goals and determine the need for development.

In addition to the aforementioned, vocational educational institutions also have the possibility to include career development as an **elective subject** into the curriculum. Some vocational educational institutions have their own career counsellor or educational counsellor who supports learners throughout the learning process since the admission.

Amendments to the Vocational Educational Institutions Act, adopted in December 2018, opened up the possibility for vocational educational institutions to carry out the **Career choice training**. The curriculum mainly focuses on career development competencies and their development with the aim of supporting young people entering the vocational training or the labour market. The main target group consists of the dropouts of primary school, upper secondary school or vocational school, NEET young people, students with special needs, etc. who need additional support in their choice of profession and when entering the studies or employment.



Higher education

The goal of the **Universities Act** is to set the procedure for organization of studies in universities and graduation from universities as well as the forms and conditions of obtaining higher education. The act applies to private universities as far as the Private Schools Act does not provide otherwise.

Guidance support is available for students in six public universities. The overall aim is to support students in their studies, to offer a number of services that help students to develop personal life skills and achieve success in the labour market.

Career counselling provides students with support in career planning, making study and job related decisions, and developing their job-seeking skills. Career counsellors support students in making career choices and career plans, self-analysis, searching and applying for a job, writing a CV and a cover letter, and preparing for a job interview. Both individual counselling and services in groups are provided involving university staff and external experts.

Tutoring by student volunteers is also available, e.g. for first-year students and international students who are starting their studies. Tutors are the senior students who are ready to provide additional guidance and

information on several matters, ranging from study system and student life to living conditions in Estonia.

In addition, students are also being supported with **psychological counselling** in case of problems arising during studies or in personal life. Students with **special needs** get help if they need to change or adapt the content of studies arising from the curriculum, organisation of work or study environment in order to guarantee an opportunity for maximum participation in study process and individual development. Universities help students with special needs upon entering the university, participating in studies, making exams and tests, providing study materials as well as creating a suitable social and physical environment.

Regarding **international mobility**, Estonian students are advised on numerous student exchange options and incoming exchange students are being supported throughout their application process and during studies.



Employment sector

The provision of national labour market services including career information service and career counselling and the payment of labour market benefits is available through the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (Eesti Töötukassa, the PES) in every county. The legal basis of the activities of PES is defined by two laws: **The Unemployment Insurance Act 3**, which describes the unemployment insurance system and the organisation of PES, and **the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act**, which contains the provisions concerning job mediation and related services.

The strategy in the employment sector foresees the **provision of career information and counselling to all people regardless of their employment status**. Since 2016 also

employers have an opportunity to provide career guidance to their employees in co-operation with PES, both in employment office or on the spot. In addition to existing labour market measures, a special approach designed for young people, without professional education or work experience was introduced (My First Job). The measure aims to decrease youth unemployment due to little or no work experience, and to help youth without specialized education to find a job. Wage subsidies combined with training compensation can be granted to employers who hire these young people.

Since May 2017, PES has been providing unemployment prevention measures. These services are targeted to employees who need support in changing jobs or remaining employed due to a lack of skills or their skills being outdated, as well as to employers to support them in finding and training suitably skilled workforce and restructuring their

companies. The new services include:

- a degree study allowance for an employed person or a person registered as unemployed for obtaining vocational, professional higher education or Bachelor studies;
- labour market training with a training card for employed persons at risk of unemployment;
- support for obtaining qualifications for employed persons who have undergone labour market or other training with the support of the training benefit and a training grant for employers for improving the skills and knowledge of their employees upon their recruitment and helping them to adapt to changes in the employers economic activities.

If employed people want to receive support from PES for obtaining a degree or attend training, then as a first step they need to see PES career counsellor to discuss what skills or knowledge is needed to learn to continue working. The career counsellor discusses with the person whether the training supports the acquisition of these skills and if the person is in a target group of the training that PES can provide.

Private sector

Since there are mainly small and medium size companies in Estonia, the responsibility of staff development lies on employers, heads of companies. Only in bigger companies' personnel staff is available.

Based on main services, companies providing career guidance for a fee can be divided into two:

- recruitment companies — free services for job seekers (tools for inserting CVs) and fee-charging recruitment services for companies. As support services they usually also offer online information on careers and

training information, tests etc.

- consulting companies mainly provide career counselling (both on outplacement and career development purposes), coaching and competency assessment. Their main target group are companies that are interested in using their human resource as efficiently as possible, and to assess teamwork within the company or for out-placement reasons. In addition, they provide career development services for managerial staff or specialists.

New institutions

In order to ensure the coordinated development and the provision of career guidance, **National Guidance Forum** was re-established in 2019. The members of National Guidance Forum include Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Social Affairs, Estonian Association of Career Counsellors, Estonian Youth Work Centre, Estonian Schools Heads Association, Estonian Students Union, Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Foundation Innove and Archimedes Foundation. The main task of the Forum is to agree on and monitor the career services development goals, also to propose further actions necessary to widen the access to and increase the quality of career guidance.

International co-operation in the field of lifelong guidance has been reorganized as well. The new stakeholder in the field is **Archimedes Foundation**. Due to the reform in national career guidance system **Estonian Euro-guidance centre**⁸ was moved from Innove to Archimedes. The centre is the Estonian National Resource Centre for Guidance providing a range of services to the Estonian guidance professionals and to the professionals abroad. As a member of the Euroguidance Network, we provide support in the areas of learning mobility and lifelong guidance development within education, training and employment at international level.

⁸ haridus.archimedes.ee/en/euroguidance



Digital Solutions

E-Governance is a strategic choice for Estonia to improve the competitiveness of the state and increase the well-being of its people, while implementing hassle-free governance. The modern infrastructure has made it possible to build a safe e-services ecosystem. An important part of this ecosystem is flexibility and the ability to integrate its different parts, while improving e-services and allowing government systems to grow. Citizens can select e-solutions from among a range of public services at any time and place convenient to them, as 99% of public services are now available to citizens as e-services. Every Estonian resident has an electronic ID and in most cases there is no need to physically visit an agency providing the service.⁹

DATA SOURCES AND TOOLS

The data on the Estonian educational system is gathered into the web-based

national register, **the Estonian Education Information System (EHIS)**, which contains information on educational institutions, students, teaching staff, curricula, rights to conduct study, and documents certifying acquisition of education. In addition, the visual educational statistics database *Haridussilm* allows a comparison of schools based on a series of indicators. The database has input from approx. 2,000 institutions: educational institutions, publishers, and other registers. It contains personalized (live) data, and cooperates with over 20 different information systems.

For the integration of various education and labour market services, numerous information systems have been developed which are compatible with the EHIS and facilitate the integration of services. For example, there is the Electronic Assessment Bank,

⁹ See more at www.e-estonia.com/ee/en/euroguidance

Admission Information System for universities and vocational schools, Study Information System, Estonian School Management System, Estonian Research Portal, State register of occupational qualifications, and e-service of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund.

The two most widely used web applications for schools in Estonia are **eKool** (www.ekool.ee) and **Stuudium** (www.stuudium.com). These innovative tools provide an easy way for parents, teachers and children to collaborate and organize all the information necessary for teaching and learning. **E-School** (eKool) is one of the most widely used web applications for schools in Estonia and works as a transparent online diary, providing an easy way for parents, teachers and children to collaborate and organize all the information necessary for teaching and learning. There are more than 200 000 active users and 1 million grades entered daily.

The primary purpose of **e-Schoolbag** (www.ekoolikott.ee) is to allow access to digital learning materials from a single point – the user no longer needs to search for materials in different portals.

The Digital Mirror has been developed for the evaluation of the digitalization of schools. It allows a school's level of 'digital maturity' to be assessed and digital innovation to be managed by means of goal-setting.

National statistics about salaries and employment are available in the various databases of **Statistics Estonia**.

An overview of the demand for labour force in a variety of spheres is provided by the **occupational barometer**¹⁰ managed by the public employment service.

DIGITAL SOLUTIONS AND LIFELONG GUIDANCE

The daily work of the guidance practitioners in Rajaleidja centres is intertwined with the use of various ICT solutions. The use of ICT here is multi-faceted: practitioners are both ICT users and the creators of new values through their use of ICT solutions.

The ICT solutions can be broadly divided into the following two groups:

- For service provision, including web pages, databases, educational software, games, social media channels, and e-tests
- For internal processes, including documentation management, customer management, feedback solutions, information exchange in cloud-based solutions, and e-learning environments

Rajaleidja.ee as Estonia's largest career portal is also going through major changes. Until 2018, it was the main online career planning facilitator by providing tools for self-evaluation, as well as information about work, occupations and educational opportunities. It also featured materials and methodology for the work of guidance professionals. In recent years, two new portals have emerged.

Minukarjäär.ee (My career) has been developed by Estonian PES to provide tools for self-analysis and career planning. Major educational information web portal called **edu.ee** (edu= short for education, also meaning "success" in Estonian) is being developed by the Ministry of Education and Research and aims to give comprehensive overview of Estonia's education system, lifelong study options and to support individuals' career planning. During the career services, a reform agreement was made that the career development part of the portal will be developed by the Estonian



Unemployment Insurance Fund and it will include all relevant content from Rajaleidja.ee, including **database of occupations** (contains videos, descriptions, study opportunities and labour market options, including information about salary range). New solutions on edu.ee will connect educational opportunities to labour market information (occupations, long-term prognosis) and provide career development tools to allow making informed career choices for individuals.

Career practitioners use a variety of **electronically administered tests and evaluation tools**, including personality tests, career choice tests, etc. The online tests have been standardized on norm groups comprising of Estonian school children and adults and are developed by few private companies and in some cases by universities.

In addition, versatile technical environments for information exchange and group counselling are in use. The most popular tools for the involvement of young learners are:

- Webquest.org and zunal.com allow all lecture materials to be in one place

- Kahoot.com is good for the revision of the knowledge obtained during a lecture or any activity in the form of simple quiz
- Padlet.com allows the users to elaborate their opinions. The answer will be seen by all the students in class because it is displayed on the smart board
- Coggle.it makes the compilation of schemes and systems of notions so easy that it can be done during a discussion. It does not require the user to write anything on the board: all activities are internet-based
- Mentimeter.com for creative presentations, workshops and feedback tools.
- Actionbound.com to create interactive games and mobile scavenger hunts and quizzes

There have also been some new and exciting digital tools for career development:

- Estonian Youth Work Centre has made first virtual reality videos of occupations (medical workers, soon youth workers). Estonian PES is hoping to make this a new way of introducing different occupations and work

¹⁰ www.tootukassa.ee/eng/baromeeter

environments alongside with more common texts, photos and videos;

- virtual tours of all Estonia's vocational education institutions;
- thematic e-courses for career practitioners

There are also several ICT tools for internal management purposes. The **employment information system (EMPIS)** in Estonian PES is meant for storing customer data and gathering statistical data about services. It is connected to several databases via so-called X-Road to provide seamless data exchange about clients' employment status, education, health insurance etc. X-Road is a national digital system which ensures the direct and secure exchange of data between various information systems. This means that the clients of PES, be they either grown-ups or young people, have to have to

submit information on paper only minimally. Instead the gathering of background information concerning the very client is done automatically in the information systems.

Electronic client feedback system will be launched by PES in March 2019 to allow quick feedback collection and customer satisfaction evaluation. Within 2 weeks after the counselling session, the clients are sent the following three simple questions:

1. Would you recommend career services to peers? Scale of 0-10.
2. What did you like and what should we change? Free answers.
3. How useful was the guidance for you? Scale of 1-5

Qualifications of Guidance Practitioners

ESTONIAN QUALIFICATION FRAMEWORK

The occupational qualifications system is a link between the labour market and the lifelong learning system enhancing the development, assessment and recognition of a person's occupational competence. According to the Occupational Qualifications Act, **the Estonian Qualification Framework** has eight levels, the first of which is the lowest and the eighth is the highest. The descriptions of the qualification levels are identical with the European framework, i.e. EQF level descriptions.

Occupational qualification standard is a document which describes occupational activities and provides the competency requirements for occupational qualifications and their levels. Part A of the standard provides an **overview of the nature of work, major parts of work and tasks, necessary tools, work environment**, including the specificities of work and describes the personal characteristics and skills enhancing occupational activities. This is a source of information for a person upon selection of an occupation and shaping his or her career path. This also contains useful information for career guidance professionals, labour market consultants, human resources managers and trainers.



The **competence requirements presented** in part B of the standard **serve as a basis for the assessment of the applicant for the occupational qualification**. These requirements are presented as descriptions of mandatory and optional competences. Competence is an ability to perform a specific part of work or a task together with the knowledge, skills and attitudes required for that. Proceeding from the nature of the occupation, its specificity and traditions, attesting competences related to a specialization or optional competences may be the prerequisite for being awarded the occupational qualification.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is not yet possible in Estonia to acquire a career specialist profession in a concise manner in one educational institution, however, the required knowledge and skills necessary for providing the service can be obtained in addition to the existing higher education in various courses and trainings. As a rule, currently active career specialists have acquired their higher education in the fields of psychology, pedagogy, social work, sociology, etc., and thereafter complemented themselves in many ways. Several higher education institutions offer a variety of elective subjects (e.g. introduction to

career counselling, career counselling and coordination, career counselling methods, career counselling module as an elective subject for human resource management and development, organizational behaviour in master's studies, career information module in master's curriculum of information management).

One of the prerequisites for acquiring the career specialist profession is to complete the corresponding basic training. So far, the basic training has been arranged in cooperation between three universities - University of Tartu, Tallinn University and Tallinn University of Technology. The trainings do not take place regularly and are rather internal (organized on request). When becoming a career specialist or applying for a corresponding position, the acquisition of the respective profession is not usually required but rather recommended.

The development of the practitioners' professional competencies on the basis of the requirements of the occupational qualification standard is important, and training courses as well as peer-coaching are available for this purpose. The range of the training topics is broad, for example, characteristic features of teenagers with special educational needs, psychological evaluation tools, personality and

career testing, motivational interviewing, ICT skills, etc. To ensure international exposure, we invite speakers and trainers from other countries and our practitioners to search for opportunities to travel in Europe for the purposes of training and exchange of practices.

REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTITIONERS

In the field of lifelong guidance, the occupational qualification standards are available on two levels, including career specialist on EQF level 6 and 7. The current standards were defined and the requirements on knowledge, skills, experience, values and personal characteristics necessary for the career specialists were established in close co-operation with the main stakeholders in the field in 2017.

The main tasks defined in the standards are:

- individual and group career counselling;
- information provision of education, labour market and professions for groups and individuals;
- networking and cooperation with other service providers;
- service development;
- informing the public about the services;
- training and mentoring of other guidance professionals (only on level 7).

The Association of Estonian Career Counsellors (www.kny.ee/en) is the authorised organisation for accreditation. The accreditation of occupational qualifications is highly valued by the public employment service as the biggest employer in the field. Thus, these have been incorporated into the requirements in job descriptions and pay extra for the qualified specialists. The costs of acquiring the qualification, if completed successfully, are covered by the employer. Guidance professionals working in the private sector can benefit from the professional qualification while applying for participating in different

field-related projects and programmes.

FUTURE QUALIFICATIONS

OSKA analyses the needs for labour and skills necessary for Estonia's economic development over the next 10 years. OSKA applied research surveys (oska.kutsekoda.ee/en) on sectoral needs for labour and skills are unique because they use a combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods and analyse professional qualifications across all levels of education. For this purpose, both statistical data and information collected from personal interviews with sectoral experts and from group discussions are used.

Five economic sectors are examined each year. In 2018 OSKA study of labour force and skills anticipation in the field of human resource, including career services, administrative work and business consultation was completed.

The key findings show that over ten years:

- The demand for career services is increasing due to the need to bring more people to the labour market and keep them employed as well as the changing expectations of employees for their career paths.
- There are no career guidance degree studies available. Continuing education opportunities need to be developed further to ensure the best solutions for their training.
- In the field of human resource management and career services, the ability to deal with employees of different cultural backgrounds, persons with reduced work ability and senior citizens becomes increasingly important.
- Human resource managers are expected to be more employee-centred and have career development competences as well as knowledge of business fundamentals and finances.
- There is an increasing demand for ICT competences.



Participants of European Lifelong Guidance Week 2017 in Tallinn.

International Co-operation

Lifelong guidance is on the agenda of many international forums. The main aims and components of the Estonian guidance system are very much in line with EU and OECD recommendations on guidance policies and practices. The importance of promoting an international dimension in Estonian guidance is a value and therefore co-operation with partners outside Estonia is our priority – experience from other countries inspires us in meeting the challenges and opportunities at home.

WE ARE ACTIVE PARTNERS IN THE FOLLOWING GUIDANCE AND MOBILITY NETWORKS:

- Many of the international activities for guidance practitioners are initiated by the Esto-

nian Euroguidance Centre, placed in Archimedes Foundation since January 2019. The European network of **Euroguidance Centres** includes national centres in 34 European countries and supports the competence development of the guidance community on the European dimension of lifelong guidance. Its main target group consists of guidance practitioners and policy-makers in all European countries.

See more: www.euroguidance.eu

- Since the year 2000 Estonia has been part of the Academia network which aims at providing practitioners with an opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills in an international context, to study the changes that take place in Europe, and to learn from



the experiences of their colleagues in other countries. In the framework of Academia, hundreds of professionals from European countries have visited Estonia and hundreds of practitioners have participated in study visits in different European countries.

See more: www.euroguidance.eu/academia

- The **Network for Innovation in Career Guidance and Counselling** in Europe includes more than 40 Higher Education Institutions across Europe. NICE is dedicated to professionalism and academic excellence in career work. The network has published extensive guidelines on the academic training of career guidance professionals. Our mission in this network is to encourage academic training of practitioners in Estonia.

See more: www.nice-network.eu

- **VALA** is network of career counselling and guidance programs at higher education institution in the Nordic and Baltic countries.

Twenty partner institutions have established the network to be able to better prepare career counsellors and guidance workers for the diverse clients they work with. The broad aim of the network is to increase professionalization and strengthen co-operation between higher education institutions and the labour market, and between research, practice and policy. The network focuses on the curricula development and exchange of practices. An Intensive course about the use of technology in guidance has been designed and the 4th International summer school on ICT in guidance and counselling will be held in August 2019.

See more: peda.net/vala

- **International Centre for Career Development and Public Policy ICCDPP** aims to facilitate and promote international policy sharing and learning on career development and public policy issues. The purpose of sharing is to help countries and policy developers to improve national and regional policies and systems for career guidance. Participation at the ICCDPP symposia has offered Estonian country teams the opportunity to share ideas, analyse contemporary challenges to career development systems, and develop new thinking.

See more: www.iccdpp.org

- Furthermore, Estonia is also represented in the newly established Cedefop's network for lifelong guidance and career development **CareersNet**. The network was created to collect comparable and reliable information on a European scale in the field of lifelong guidance and career development issues. The gathered information and analysis aims at identification of gaps and solutions, beyond a snapshot of national guidance systems.

See more: www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/events-and-projects/networks/careersnet



Education System

KEY FEATURES

The organisation and principles of the education system are established in the Republic of Estonia Education Act and specified in lower level acts structured by type of educational institution.

The structure of the educational system and education standards create an opportunity for everyone to transfer from one level of education to another. Levels of education comprise preschool education (ISCED level 0), basic education (ISCED levels 1 and 2), upper secondary education (ISCED level 3), and higher education (ISCED levels 6, 7 and 8).

Management of the education system is

based on the principle of reasonable decentralisation. Generally speaking, the Estonian education system is headed towards decentralisation. The division of responsibility between the state, local government, and school is clearly defined. In the recent years, the state supervision system has been replaced with an internal assessment system in general education schools and vocational educational institutions; national curricula founded on study outcomes offer schools and students a larger freedom of choice than they exercised before; teachers have the right to choose their own teaching methodology and materials.

Studies are conducted in Estonian preschool childcare institutions, general education schools, and vocational schools under

Education System

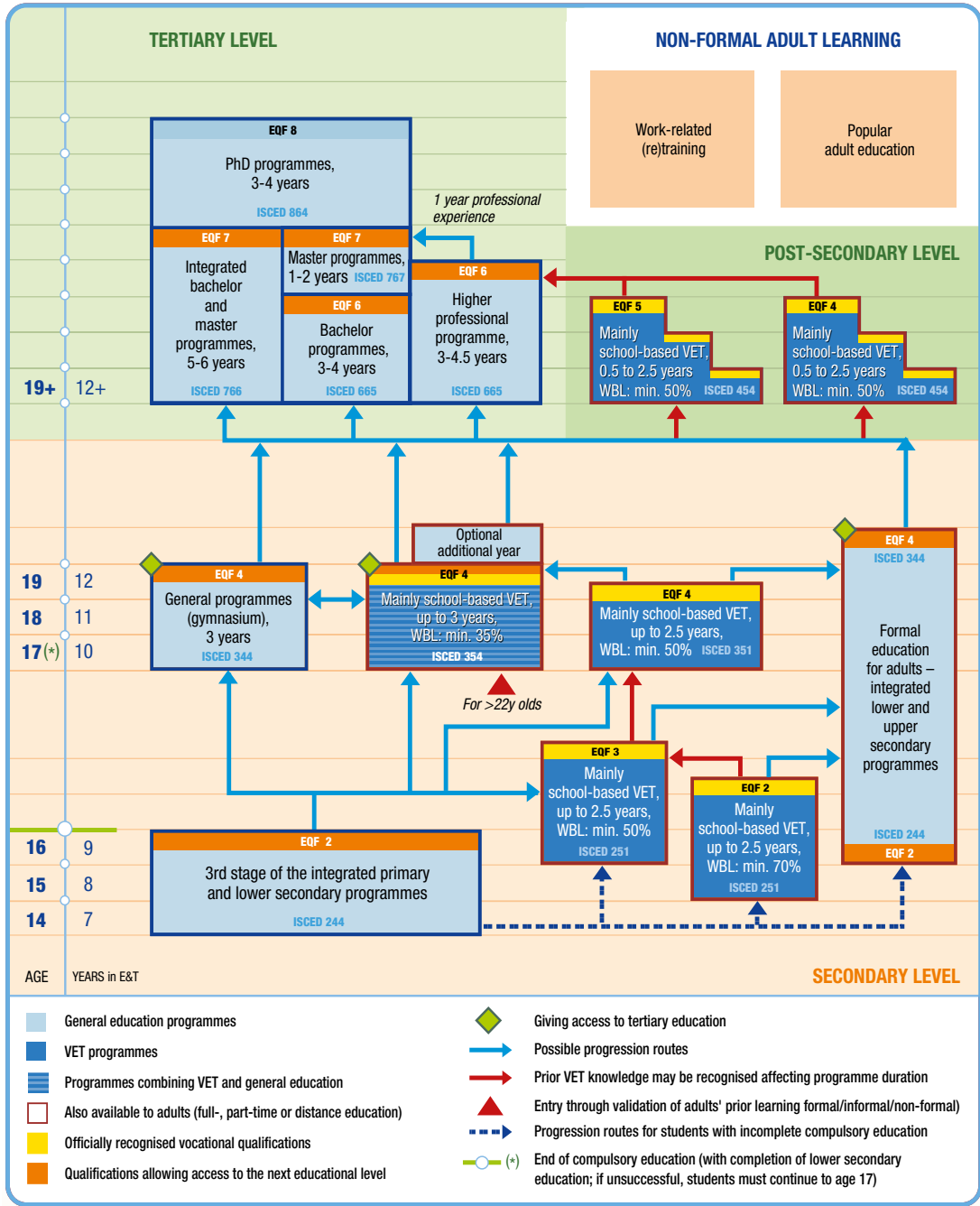


Figure 2. Education System. Source: Refernet Estonia

uniform national curricula, on the basis of which schools compile their own curricula. The language of instruction is mainly Estonian but another language may be used by the decision of the local authority. General requirements for higher education studies, curricula, and teaching staff are established in the Standard of Higher Education.

The vast majority of preschool childcare institutions and general education schools are municipal schools. Vocational schools are mostly state-owned and universities – institutions in public law. Half of institutions of professional higher education are state-owned and the other half are institutions in private law.

Compulsory education 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 institutions. It is not obligatory to attend a preschool childcare institution. Compulsory school lasts until basic education is acquired or until a student attains 17 years of age.

Financing of educational institutions depends on the ownership of the institution. There are state, municipal, and private educational institutions. All expenses of a state school are covered from the state budget. Municipal educational institutions are financed from the state and local budgets.

The management of the private educational institution covers expenses of a private educational institution and, in certain cases, a local government or the state allocates support. Expenses related to in-service training of the teachers of private preschool childcare institutions, as well as salaries and in-service training of the teachers and heads of private general education schools, the expenses related to acquisition of textbooks for private basic schools and upper

secondary schools, as well as the costs of investments and the school lunch expenses of students are covered from the state budget. The state budget covers also the expenses of state-commissioned student places of private vocational schools and private institutions of higher education.

The revenue of a university in public law is comprised of money allocated from the state budget, money received to reimburse study costs, revenue from the provision of services related to the main activities for a charge, revenue from research and development activities, and other income.

The data on the Estonian educational system is gathered into the web-based national register EHIS (the Estonian Education Information System). EHIS contains information on educational institutions, students, teaching staff, curricula, rights to conduct study, and documents certifying acquisition of education. In addition, the visual educational statistics database *Haridussilm* allows a comparison of schools based on a series of indicators.

STAGES OF THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

Preschool education (ISCED level 0) is generally acquired in childcare institutions (*koolieelne lasteasutus*). Local governments are obliged to provide all children aged from 1.5 to 7 years permanently residing in their catchment area with the opportunity to attend a preschool childcare institution if the parents so wish. In addition, there is a system of childcare services (*lapsehoiuteenus*) catering mainly for the youngest children. These services can be either centre- or home-based.

Basic education (ISCED levels 1 and 2) is the minimum compulsory general education, which is acquired in the basic school

(*põhikool*) and which gives the right to continue studies at upper secondary education level. Basic school includes grades 1-9. Successful completion of the curriculum and passing the final examinations is the condition for acquiring basic education.

Secondary education (ISCED level 3) is based on basic education and is divided into general secondary education, which is acquired in upper secondary schools (*gümnaasium*), and vocational secondary education, which is acquired in vocational schools (*kutseõppeasutus*). The length of general upper secondary education is 3 years (grades 10–12). In order to graduate from upper secondary school, students have to pass state examinations, school examination, and a student investigation paper or practical work.

The volume of **vocational education** curricula is calculated in vocational education credit points. The yearly study volume is 60 credit points. The study volume of vocational secondary education (ISCED 3) is 180 credit points. Successful completion of the curriculum, taking the necessary tests and passing all required assessments, practical training and the final examination are the conditions for graduating from a vocational school. The final examination may be replaced by a professional qualification examination. Acquisition of secondary education gives the right to continue studies at higher education level.

Vocational education may also be acquired after graduation from upper secondary school. The study volume of vocational education on the basis of secondary education (post-secondary non-tertiary education, ISCED 4) is 120–150 credit points.

Also people with unfinished basic education can begin 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 (*kutseõppeasutus*), institution of professional higher education (*rakenduskõrgkool*), educational institution belonging to the structure of university (*ülikool*) or academic higher education (*ülikool*). The general structure of academic study has three levels or cycles. The first level is Bachelor's study and the second level is Master's study. The third and highest level is Doctoral study. All persons with upper secondary education or foreign qualifications equal thereto have an equal right to compete to be admitted to the above educational institutions.

The standard period of Bachelor's study as well as of professional higher education study is 180–240 ECTS. The standard period of Master's study is 60–120 ECTS. The standard period of Bachelor's and Master's study combined must be at least 300 ECTS in total. The standard period of Doctoral study is 180–240 ECTS.

In the course of studies, educational institutions may take into account a person's previous study results and professional experiences (APEL). Through APEL, a curriculum can be completed in full, except for the final examination or final paper. Estonian higher education institutions do not have the right to implement APEL in the course of student admission.

Adult education enables acquiring formal education at all levels of education, participating in professional education and training, as well in non-formal education.

Labour Market Data

Estonia's population of working age is just below one million, with the labour force participation rate around 71.9% (Statistics Estonia, 2018). About one third of Estonia's work force have higher education and 86% of adults speak at least one foreign language. For older generation the main foreign language is Russian and for younger adults English.

In the graph below, it is shown the number of unemployed people out of people in the working age, and the number of registered unemployed. Since the peak of economic crisis in 2010, the overall and the registered unemployment has been declining. Unemployment decreased in all age groups. For example, unemployment rate among young people decreased year-on-year, and was 11.8% in 2018. The number of long term unemployed was the lowest of the last 20 years.

The number of inactive persons in the labour

market also continues to fall. The decrease in the number of inactive persons is affected by the Work Ability Reform led by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund as well as the increasing activity of retirement-aged persons in the labour market.

The highest registered unemployment rate is in Ida-Virumaa, Valgamaa, Võrumaa and Põlvamaa. The lowest unemployment rate is in Harjumaa. The average unemployment rate was 5.1% at the end of January 2019. In the majority of the regions of Estonia the unemployment rate was close to the average unemployment rate. The highest number of unemployed people are in Harjumaa and Ida-Virumaa where the overall population is highest.

Figure 3 Registered Estonian Unemployment by January 2019.

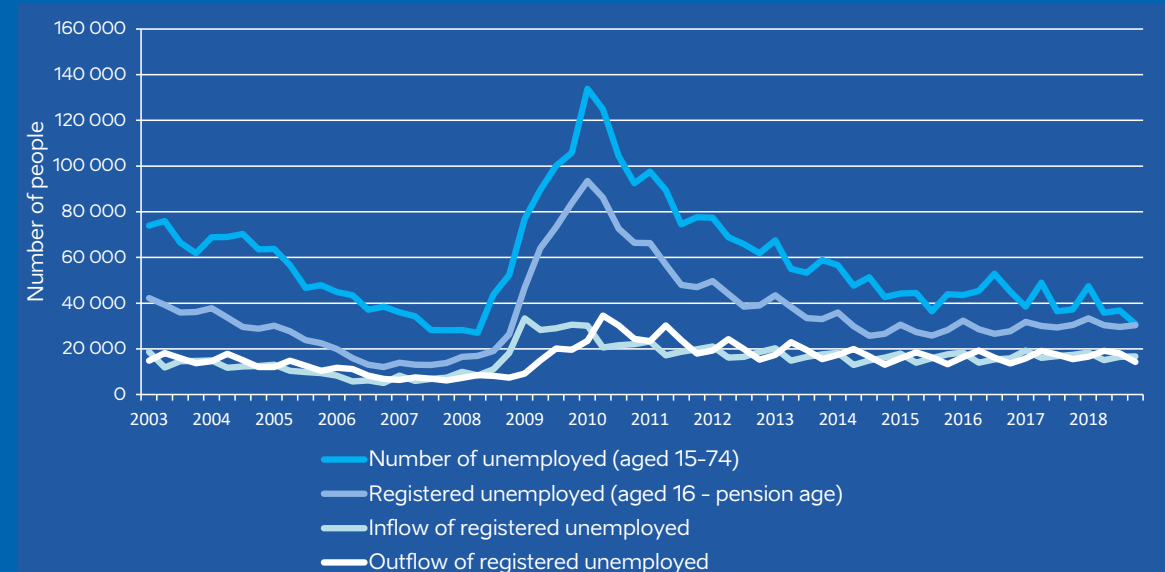


Figure 3. Number of unemployed in Estonia between 2003–2019.

Additional Information

REFERENCES

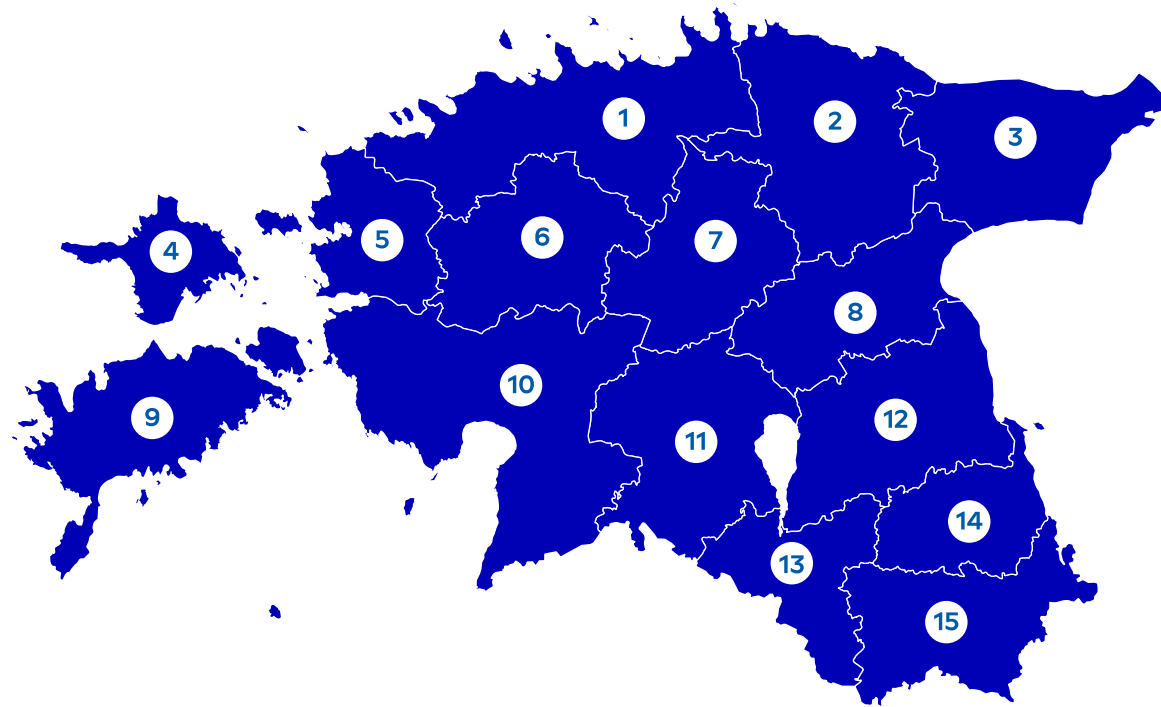
References at
haridus.archimedes.ee/en/euroguidance

ESTONIA IN BRIEF

Capital: Tallinn
 Language: Estonian
 Head of state: President Kersti Kaljulaid
 System of government: Parliamentary republic
 Area: 45,228 km²
 Population: 1,3 million
 Administrative divisions: 15 counties
 Currency: EUR
 Calling code: 372
 Highest point: 318 m
 Number of islands: 1521
 Member of: NATO, EU, UN, OSCE, OECD & WTO, Schengen zone

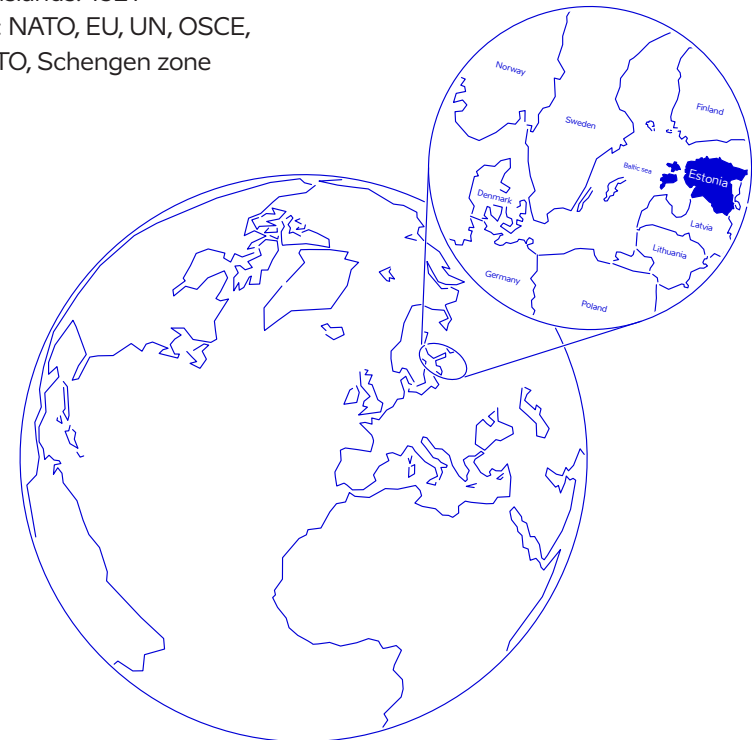
OTHER INSTITUTIONS

- Ministry of Education and Research
www.hm.ee
- Ministry of Social Affairs
www.sm.ee
- Qualification Authority
www.kutsekoda.ee
- Unemployment Insurance Fund (Estonian PES)
www.tootukassa.ee
- Foundation Innove
www.innove.ee
- Association of Estonian Career Counsellors
www.kny.ee



1 Harjumaa : 3,9%	6 Raplamaa : 4,9%	11 Viljandimaa : 3,9%
2 Lääne-Virumaa : 5,5%	7 Järvamaa : 6,0%	12 Tartumaa : 4,6%
3 Ida-Virumaa : 9,4%	8 Jõgevamaa : 4,5%	13 Valgamaa : 8,5%
4 Hiiumaa : 3,7%	9 Saaremaa : 3,7%	14 Põlvamaa : 7,2%
5 Läänemaa : 5,2%	10 Pärnumaa : 6,4%	15 Võrumaa : 7,2%

Figure 4. Registered unemployment by counties by January 31st 2019.



Contact Us

ABOUT FOUNDATION ARCHIMEDES

Archimedes Foundation is an independent body established by the Estonian government with the objective to coordinate and implement different international and national programmes and projects in the field of training, education and research.

Archimedes is the implementing body of Erasmus+ and administer several national and international scholarship schemes for improving mobility, marketing Estonian higher education and research abroad.

Archimedes is the Structural Funds Agency for the period 2014-2020 in the field of Research & Development.v



Erasmus+

EUROGUIDANCE IN ESTONIA

Euroguidance Estonia is the Estonian National Resource Centre for Guidance and provides a range of services to Estonian guidance professionals and to professionals abroad. As a member of the Euroguidance Network we provide support in the areas of learning mobility and lifelong guidance development within education, training, and employment.

Euroguidance Estonia is part of the Foundation Archimedes.

- Are you interested in developing your own skills and competencies in relation to a global education and labour market?
- Would you like to expand your professional network and establish contacts with colleagues from other countries?
- Do you think that new inspiration from other countries and cultures might be good for your professional development?

If yes, then the national Euroguidance centres are at your disposal.

Experts and practitioners within the field of lifelong guidance are welcome to contact us for further information:

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