

study
estonia

Lifelong Guidance in Estonia





Publisher: Foundation Innove, 2018

Texts: Kairi Valk, Karolin Kõrreveski, Margit Rammo, Nele Labi

Photos: Maanus Kullamaa, Tõnu Runnel, SA Innove

This booklet is published with the support of the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union. The European Commission support does not constitute an endorsement of the contents which reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Table of Contents

Strategic View	4
Institutions and Services	6
Education Sector	6
Employment Sector	10
Legal Framework	11
Digital Solutions	14
Data Sources and Tools	14
Solutions in Rajaleidja	15
Qualifications of Guidance Practitioners	16
Occupational Qualification Standards	18
Practitioner Training and Development in Rajaleidja	18
International Co-operation	19
Priorities	19
Networks	19
Education System	21
Key Features	21
Stages of the Education System	23
Labour Market Data	25
Number of Unemployed	25
Registered Unemployment by Counties	26
Additional Information	27
References	27
Other Institutions	27
Estonia in Brief	27



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. The Ministry of Education and Research introduced new strategic principles for ICT development in August 2016. The educational digital revolution in Estonia aims to implement modern digital technology more efficiently and effectively in learning and

teaching, to improve the digital skills of the entire nation. A concept of different integrated e-services and information systems called *Hariduspilv* (the Education Cloud in English) has been announced, which focuses on users' needs and accessibility of the services. Five thematic web portals will be established – one for each domain (education, science, youth, language, archives) and all information, e-services, and statistics from numerous existing websites will be transferred to the portals.

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. The main institutions in the provision and development of lifelong guidance in education are schools and the Agency of Lifelong Guidance within Foundation Innove. In the employment sector guidance is provided by the Unemployment Insurance Fund (public employment service).

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 lifelong guidance, including two areas: career services and educational counselling services for students with special educational needs (SEN).

tion and labour sector, has been reorganised - integrated lifelong guidance has been introduced. Before September 2014 guidance services were provided by different institutions – local governments, non-profit organisations, foundations, altogether 24 institutions. The system was fragmented and it was recognized that the limited and unevenly distributed resources did not secure equal high quality services for youth all over Estonia.

Education Sector

The system went through a major change in 2014. Service provision, both in the educa-

In autumn 2014 **Foundation Innove initiated 15 public centres called *Rajaleidja*** (Pathfinder in English). Centres are located in every county and under unified quality assurance system provide support for young people in

their studies and career related issues. In addition the role of counselling committees, which decide on more complex and expensive educational measures, was given to the newly established centres.

Integrated services provided by the centres:

- Career counselling
- Career information provision
- Socio-pedagogical counselling
- Special educational counselling
- Psychological counselling
- Speech therapy

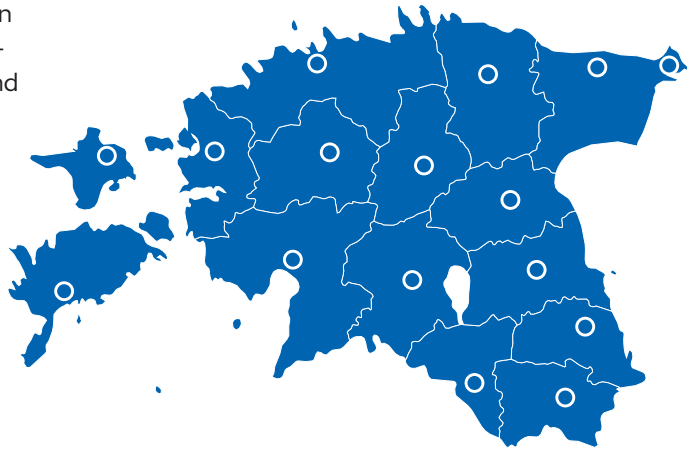


Figure 1. Rajaleidja centres in 15 counties.

RAJALEIDJA CENTRES – CENTRALISED PUBLIC CENTRES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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 Up** is an action plan for young persons of 15 – 26 years in age who are not involved in studies or employment. The Association of Estonian Open Youth Centers is implementing the action plan during the period of 2015-2018, providing support to approximately 8,800 young persons. During last two years about 4,000 persons have joined and 25% of them have reached the end of the program. 70% of participants are in employee or student status and no longer have the NEET-youth status. The most effective approach has been a synergy between outreach youth work, individual coaching, and partnership with different service offers. It is important to offer the service near a young person's place of residence.

Later developments have taken place due to the changes in expectations and requirements

of the labour market as well as due to the advanced concept of lifelong learning. The core idea of the changes have been to reduce the fragmentation of the service provision – improve access and raise the quality of lifelong guidance.

QUALITY ASSURANCE IN RAJALEIDJA

The Rajaleidja network has provided integrated services for almost four years. Continuous measuring both in volume and quality shows substantial developments. When measuring quantity, the most important aspect is targeting. Our aim is to provide career services at least once during lower- and once during upper-secondary school. Special attention is given to SEN-youth and NEET. Important target groups are also teachers and parents as they have daily contact with the young people and are important influencers when it comes to decision-making for further studies.

Quality measuring is based on three pillars:

- Instant client feedback system
- Conformity assessment of procedures
- Studies on effects

Target groups	Number per annum	% of the total volume of the target group
Individual career services for students	24 022	~24%
- lower secondary level, grades 7-9	15 736	~43%
- upper secondary level, grades 10-12	6 215	~29%
- vocational schools	1 251	~9%
- NEET youth and other	820	~3%
Individual educational counselling for SEN, children and students (1,5-18-year-olds)	8 811	~4%
Individual counselling for SEN, teachers and parents	17 739	N/A

Table 1. Service provision by target groups.

Quality is defined through universal procedures and standards for services. Specialists are supported with systematic training, a support program for obtaining occupational standards and for sharing best practices. A co-vision method is supported, but our most valued outcome is direct feedback from our clients. The usual surveys can't be held often and the results often come too late; that's why we started to use the recommendation index. This helps us to get immediate feedback and react on time. Two to five simple questions

are sent to our clients soon after the counselling session. The response rate is ~28%.

Our recommendation index from the youth for career services is 32% (on the scale from -100 to +100%) and from NEET youth is 60%. Regarding counselling services for special educational needs, instant feedback is requested from parents and teachers. The recommendation index there is even higher: 71%. The formula for the indexes is % of Detractors minus % of Promoters.

How likely would you be to recommend our service to your friends?

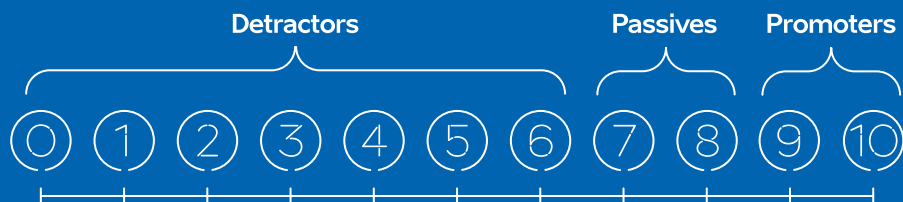


Figure 2. The scale for recommendation index.

We are also happy to acknowledge that **85% of our responders find decision-making easier after service provision in the Rajaleidja centre.**

The open answers from our clients are valued more than the numbers, since with those the practitioners can quickly identify which methods are more appreciated by clients. It has been identified that:

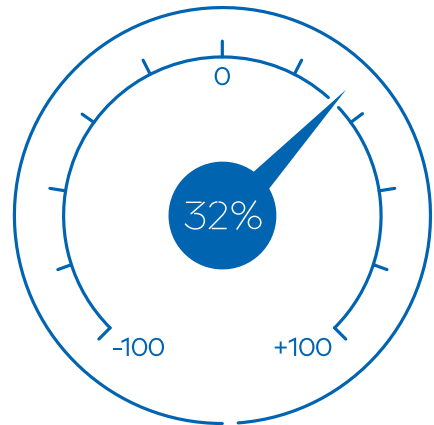
- Longer sessions for individual counselling receive a higher recommendation index
- Although simulations and tests are fun, young people value the personal approach and counselling
- Often simple assurance that their choices are ok, makes a big difference
- Anonymity and trust are important for both the youth and the grown-ups
- Services are more valued when decisions need to be made soon (e.g. at the end of lower and upper secondary school)

There are several valuable aspects of direct feedback: one is the change of the index over time – the **possibility to constantly improve and to see results immediately.** Quick and specific feedback helps to **test new approaches, new methods** in service provision, changes in organization, surroundings, etc, and immediately receive feedback from the target group, which helps us to decide whether to go on with the new approach.

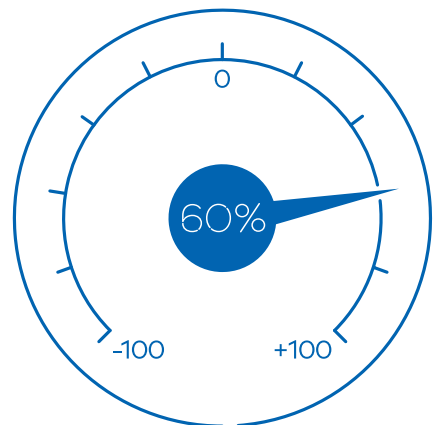
Peer learning. The index shows strengths, who the best counsellors are, and also where the balance is the best between volume and satisfaction.

Healthy competition. Feedback is for learning and improving, but it also triggers a little competition. One can see not only balancing between different centres, but a steady and significant rise of the index.

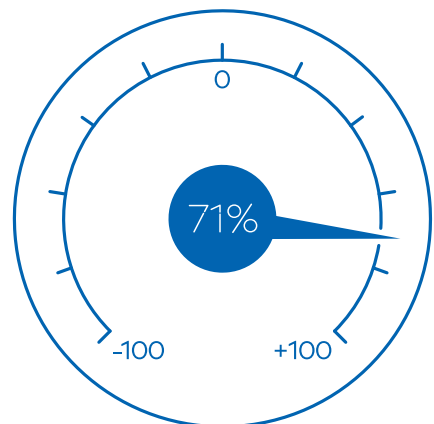
Recommendation indexes



Career services for youth



Career services for NEET youth



Counselling for SEN teachers and parents

Employment Sector

The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (the PES) is a quasi-governmental organisation and a legal entity in public law. It performs its activities independently from the government but in the framework of its mission and its operational rules defined by law. The highest body is the tripartite Supervisory Board with equal representation of trade unions, employers and the government. Key responsibilities of the PES Estonia are the provision of employment services to jobseekers and employers, implementation of active labour market policies, management and payment of unemployment and work ability benefits and work ability assessment.

The strategy in the employment sector foresees the provision of career information and counselling to all adults. Until the end of 2014 the career guidance was provided only to the unemployed. Since 2015, the Estonian PES has expanded service provision to all people of working or retirement age. Career guidance is available individually and in groups. Approximately 40% of sessions are provided for groups. Clients can reach the service also via e-mail or Skype.

Since 2016 employers have an opportunity to provide career guidance to their employees in co-operation with the Fund, both in employment office or on the spot.

In addition to existing labour market measures, a new labour market measure *My First Job* designed for young people, without professional education or work experience was introduced. 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 Estonia 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's 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 employer's economic activities.

If working people want to receive support from PES Estonia 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 are 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.



Legal Framework

IN THE EMPLOYMENT SECTOR, 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 (EUIF) and its offices in every county. The legal basis of the activities of EUIF is defined by two laws: the Unemployment Insurance Act², which describes the unemployment insurance system and the organisation of EUIF, and the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act, which contains the provisions concerning job mediation and related services.

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 general and applied education levels.

The Education Act of the Republic of Estonia stipulates career guidance of children and youth to be the responsibility of local governments.

National curriculum for pre-school sets out the basics of study and upbringing regardless of the legal status of the institution. The curriculum indicates the goals and the content of study and upbringing and the expected results with regard to the development of 6-7 year-old children.

² Unofficial texts of English translations of Estonian legislation are available at www.riigiteataja.ee.

At school development of students is regulated by **national curricula for basic schools³ and upper secondary schools** that set out what support services of special pedagogues (including speech therapists), psychologists and social pedagogues are provided to students free of charge.

The basic education standard is set out in the national curriculum and in the simplified national curriculum for basic schools for students studying under simplified conditions, as well as coping or nursing programs. The general secondary education standard is set out in the national curriculum for upper secondary schools.

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. The national basic school and national upper secondary school curriculum 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.

A school can order lifelong guidance from Innove.

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.

Vocational training in basic schools and upper secondary schools are studies based on vocational training curriculum carried out by the vocational school of which basic or general secondary education students are to receive basic vocational and professional knowledge and skills.

Obligation of schools regarding vocational training applies with regard to persons who lack basic education, and is a form of study that takes place on the basis of vocational education standards and the vocational or professional national curriculum, where no restrictions in connection with the education level are set for the commencement of studies and the nominal duration of the curriculum is up to 2.5 years.

Development of career management skills takes place in vocational education both through vocational training and generic skills modules.

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 Universities Act applies to six public-law universities (University of Tartu, Tallinn University of Technology, Tallinn University, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonian Academy of Arts and Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre). The act applies to private universities as far as the Private Schools Act does not provide otherwise. The **Private Schools Act** applies to private-law legal persons as the result of activities of which it is possible to obtain pre-school, primary, secondary or higher education in a private school.

³ Compulsory school grades 1 - 9.

The Private Schools Act also applies to self-employed persons and private-law legal persons that provide for obtaining hobby-based education or organize professional or voluntary training for adults, where the organized studies last longer than 120 hours or six months a year.

Youth work is mainly legislated by Youth Work Act providing a legal basis for the organisation of youth work. The Act defines youth work as a creation of conditions to promote the diverse development of young persons, which enable them to be active outside their families, formal education acquired within the adult education system, and work on the basis of their own free will. The Act defines a young person - between 7 and 26 years of age.

Innové's regional youth guidance centres, called Rajaleidja centres, provide career information, career counselling, psychological, socio-pedagogical, special educational counselling and speech therapy.

Career guidance is provided for young people (aged 7-26 years). The priority group is pupils in grades 7 to 12, in vocational schools and 18-24-year-olds, who dropped out of the education system early without having acquired more than basic education (graduated 9th grade). The other four services are focused on children and youth (aged 1,5-18) with special educational needs and the practitioners' main direct target group is school personnel and parents.

If the measures applied at school have not been successful or the student requires additional in-depth examination and more efficient support in his or her studies or more comprehensive changes in his or her curriculum, the school or parent will turn to the **counselling committee** in Foundation Innove.

The counselling committee:

- is competent to assign a curriculum that corresponds to the abilities of a child with special needs (simplified curriculum),
- make decisions regarding the postponement of the duty to attend school;
- makes recommendations for the application of one-to-one teaching;
- makes recommendations to the school with regard to the creation and development of the conditions necessary for inclusive studies.

PRIVATE SECTOR

As in Estonia we mainly have SMEs the responsibility of staff development lies on employers, heads of companies. In bigger companies personnel staff is available.

On the basis of main services the guidance companies 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.

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.

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, 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.

E-School 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. Over 85% of schools in Estonia use e-School.

The primary purpose of **e-Schoolbag** 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 '**labour force barometer**' managed by the public employment service.

SOLUTIONS IN RAJALEIDJA

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 is Estonia's largest career portal, which facilitates career planning by means of providing tools for self-evaluation, as well as information about work, occupations and educational opportunities. It also features materials and methodology for the work of guidance professionals. **Database of occupations** contains videos, descriptions, study opportunities, and labour market options, including information about salary range. **Career game** serves as a fun and engaging way of delivering labour market information that leverages gamification elements in order to stimulate the interest of and better resonate with the younger audience. **Rajaleidja chat-service** enables people to start an online discussion directly with a guidance

practitioner, including a professional in career guidance, psychology, speech therapy, social pedagogy or special education. No login or identification is needed, although the client can provide their e-mail address to send the conversation at a later date. Rajaleidja chat has become a very popular service among target groups.

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.

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

There are also several ICT tools for internal management purposes. The **customer management system** is meant for the storage of customer data and gathering statistical data. The **Recommy** feedback system allows feedback to be requested from customers in the electronic format and customer satisfaction to be evaluated (see the chapter on quality assurance).



Qualifications of Guidance Practitioners

The occupational qualifications system is a link between the labour market and the life-long 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 qualifica-

tions 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**

Specialist group	Occupational qualification level	Main tasks
Career specialist	Level 6–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual and group career counselling. • Information provision of education, labour market and occupations for groups and individuals. • Networking and co-operation with other service providers. • Service development. • Informing the public about the services. • Training and mentoring of other guidance professionals.
Social pedagogue	Level 6–7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning social pedagogical activities. • Social pedagogical assessment. • Case management and counselling. • Creating a safe learning and working environment. • Service development.
Special educational teacher	Level 7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spotting, researching and evaluating learner’s special needs. • Planning learning • Designing a learning environment. • Teaching. • Reflection and professional self-development. • Special pedagogical counselling and mentoring. • Participating in development, creative and scientific activities.
Speech therapist	Level 7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating communication abilities and swallowing function. • Analysing and interpreting evaluation results. • Planning and conducting speech therapy work. • Counselling.
Psychologist	Level 7–8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluating factors affecting the child’s development. • Preventing problems hindering the child’s development. • Intervention. • Conducting studies. • Training and instructing.

Table 2. Occupational qualification standards in lifelong guidance.

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.

OCCUPATIONAL QUALIFICATION STANDARDS

There are occupational qualification standards available for five specialist groups in the field of lifelong guidance.

PRACTITIONER TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN RAJALEIDJA

The development of 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 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 have opportunities to travel in Europe for training purposes.

Practitioners' work implies coping with complicated cases; it is also emotional and with a high risk of burn-outs, so learning from peers' experiences is extremely important. Since 2015, Rajaleidja centres have been using a peer-coaching system for guidance practitioners. There have been training sessions for learning various peer-coaching models and supervision sessions for group leaders. A peer-coaching group is a support group of specialists of a certain profession, which aims to discuss complicated professional situations, suggest solutions, provide peer counselling and support, as well as reach a common opinion concerning complicated cases.



FILMIMUSEUM



International Co-operation

Participants of European Lifelong
Guidance Week 2017 in Tallinn.

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.

PRIORITIES

Any profession today requires constantly keeping up with the development in the field. Changes in society require modern approaches and solutions from guidance practitioners. This is the reason why Foundation Innove, acting as Euroguidance Estonia, promoted mutual exchange at an international level on the usage of technology in lifelong guidance and focused on the development

of digital skills. Inspired by the experience from many countries we have initiated several events on ICT in lifelong guidance for practitioners from Rajaleidja centres across Estonia and European guidance community. The main aim has been to help the guidance community to become aware of the variation in ways technology plays in the field of lifelong guidance.

Within Estonia's Presidency of the Council of the European Union in autumn 2017, Estonian Ministry of Education and Research, Cedefop and Foundation Innove welcomed over 200 delegates. Guidance practitioners and policy makers from 35 countries participated at the European Guidance Week 2017 in Tallinn. The overall theme of the event was innovative information and communication technologies and future co-operation in the field of lifelong guidance. The aims were to share innovative ICT practices, to disseminate tools and initiatives to support the development of ICT capacity in lifelong guidance, and to facilitate future co-operation at the European level.

CALL FOR ACTION

Based on the communique of the presidency conference in Tallinn we can conclude that for client-centred and efficient lifelong guidance we need, at both the European and national level, to:

- provide reliable, objective, user-friendly labour market intelligence
- provide guidance support to clients with specific needs e.g. early school leavers, NEETs, low-qualified and long-term unemployed
- improve the competences, attitudes, and knowledge of career practitioners in complex labour markets and in rapid technological and media development
- support innovation through structured co-operation and peer learning
- improve accountability and the evidence base for policy and practice
- develop integrated services to support lifelong guidance

All materials, including results of the mapping survey on key development, presentations, photos and conclusions are available at our homepage: www.innove.ee/guidanceweek2017.

NETWORKS

We are active partners in the following European guidance and mobility networks:

- Many of the international activities for guidance practitioners are initiated by the Estonian Euroguidance Centre, placed in the Agency for Lifelong Guidance within Foundation Innove. The European network of **Euroguidance Centres** includes national centres in 34 European countries and supports the development of the European dimension in guidance and promotes mobility, mutual awareness, and co-operation between guidance services in Europe.
See more: www.euroguidance.eu
- Since the year 2000 Estonia has been part of the **Academia network** (www.euroguidance.eu/academia) 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. Each year there are approximately 150 European practitioners who participate in the exchanges. 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.

- 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
- **European Agency for Special Needs and Inclusive Education** focuses on improving all learners' achievements at all levels of inclusive lifelong learning. This enhances learners' life chances and opportunities for actively participating in society. The Agency member countries' shared ultimate vision for inclusive education systems is that all learners of any age are provided with meaningful, high-quality educational opportunities in their local community, alongside their friends and peers.
See more: www.european-agency.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 decen-

tralisation. 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 uniform national curricula, on the basis of

Education System

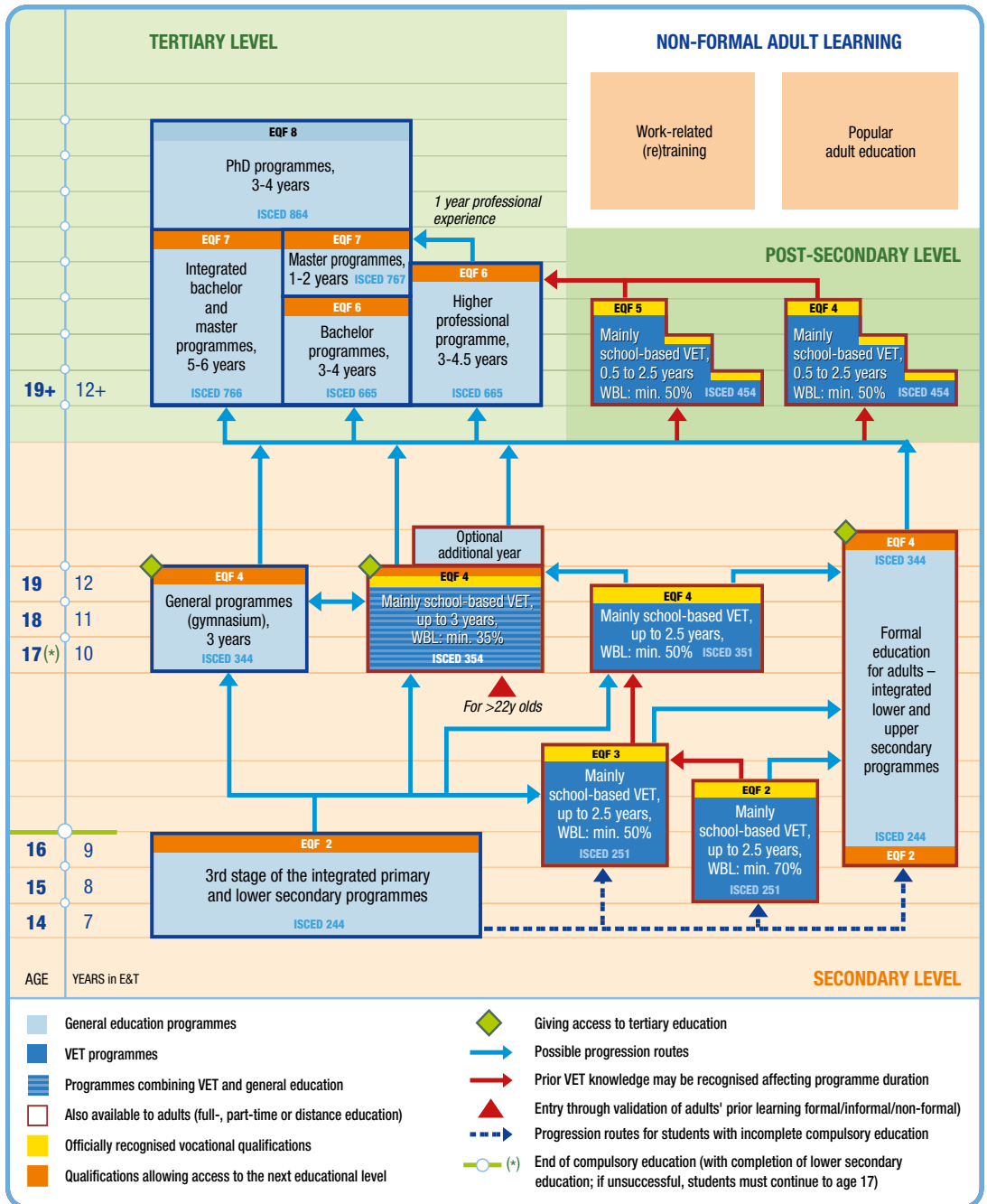


Figure 3. Education System. Source: Refernet Estonia

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 (*rakendusõrgkool*), 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

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.

The highest registered unemployment rate is in Ida-Virumaa, Valgamaa, Põlvamaa and Võrumaa. The lowest unemployment rate is in Harjumaa. The average unemployment rate was 4.6% at the end of October. 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.

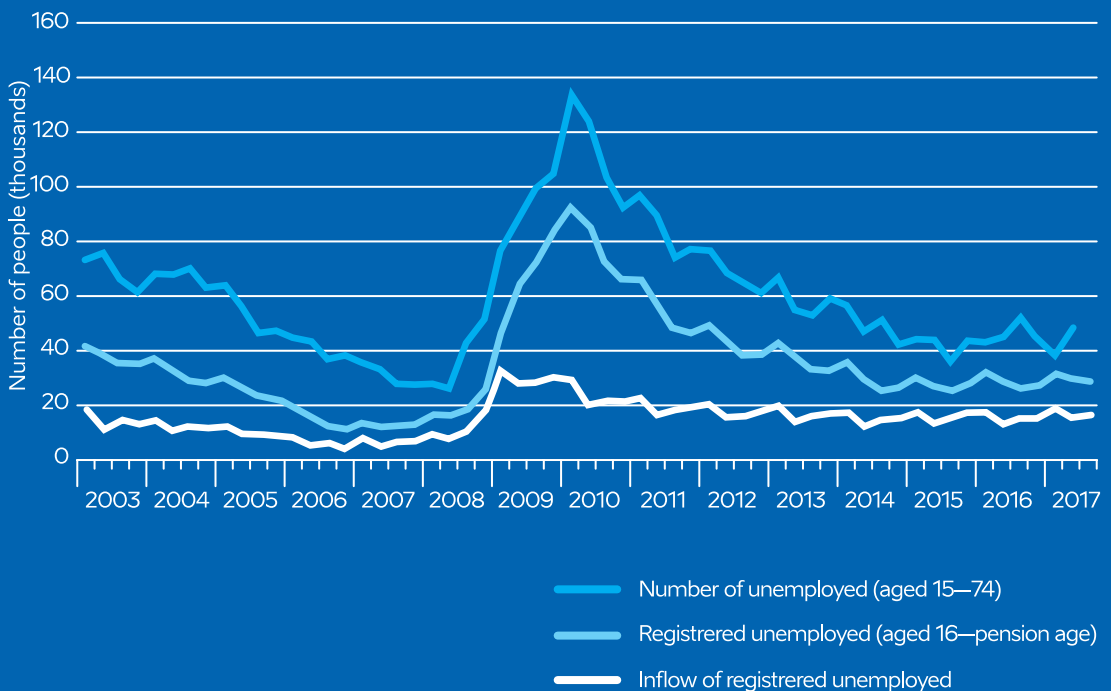
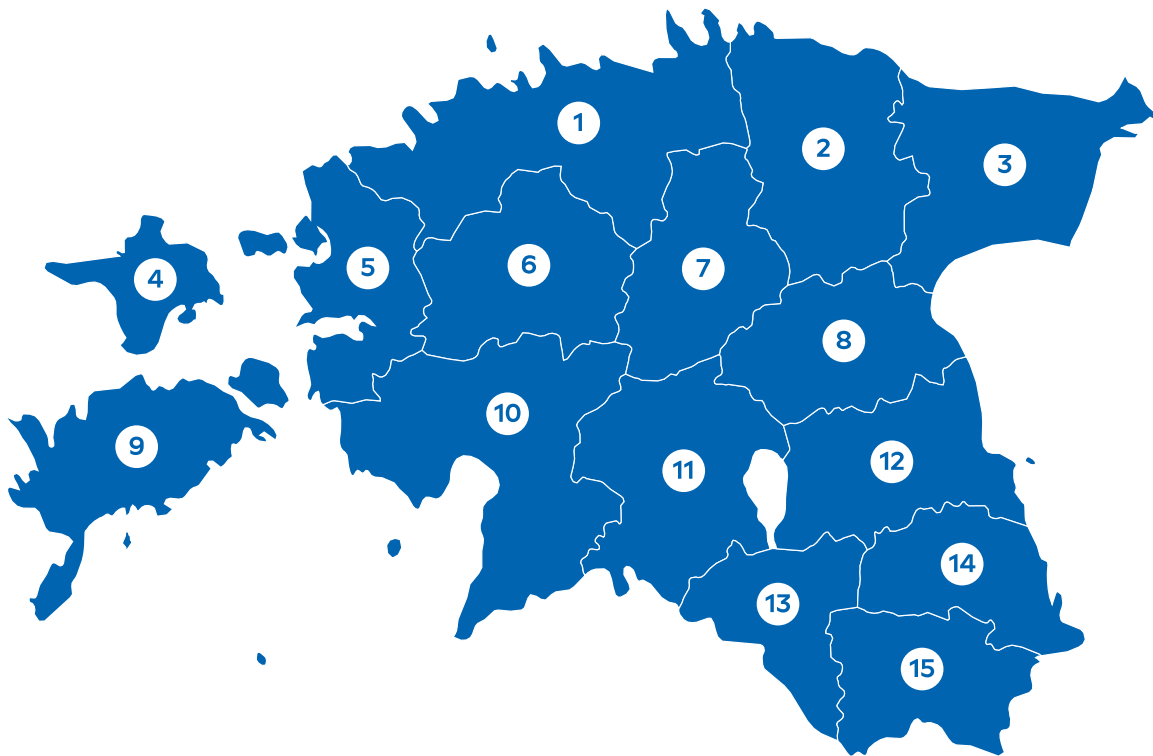


Figure 4. Number of unemployed 2003–2017.



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

Figure 5. Registered unemployment by counties by October 31st 2017.

Additional Information

REFERENCES

References to Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020, Rajaleidja, guidance research, legislation, Estonia in general and other useful sites are available at www.innove.ee/en/references.

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



Contact Us

ABOUT FOUNDATION INNOVE

The mission of the Foundation Innove is to create a bridge between education and different actors in the labour market. Our main strands of activity are the development of general and vocational education, implementation of EU Structural Funds and we have a long-term experience in the development of lifelong guidance. In addition, Tallinn European School was established by Innove in 2013 to offer nursery-, primary and secondary level multilingual and multicultural education primarily for foreigners children working in Estonia.

The Foundation is a Government established non-profit foundation.



euro | guidance
1992 | 2017



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 Innove.

- **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:

Foundation Innove
Euroguidance Estonia
Lõõtsa 4, 11415 Tallinn ESTONIA
euroguidance.estonia@innove.ee
www.innove.ee