



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
GOVERNMENT OFFICE

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UN 2030 AGENDA IN ESTONIA



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SUMMARY

This review provides information on the implementation of global sustainable development goals in Estonia. This is the second such review since the adoption of the UN 2030 Agenda.¹ The review highlights the main measures and activities of the government and the non-governmental sector, especially in 2017–2019, which contribute to the implementation of 18 sustainable development goals. In addition to the 17 global sustainable development goals, Estonia also monitors the goal of the viability of the cultural space, which arises from the **Estonian sustainable development strategy** “Sustainable Estonia 21”. The report also provides an overview of the strategic and institutional framework for the coordination and

¹ Review of the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda in Estonia, 2016: https://www.riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/SA_eesti/2016_06_29_ulevaade_tegevuskava2030_elluviimisest_eestis_loplik_30.06.2016_kodulehele.pdf

monitoring of sustainable development issues in Estonia. The main principles for integrating sustainable development goals into national frameworks and creating a sense of participation in the implementation of the goals are presented.

The preparation of the review was coordinated by the Government Office and the inter-ministerial working group on sustainable development, the Estonian Commission for Sustainable Development, and several non-governmental organisations. The content and structure of the review are based on the recommendations on voluntary national reviews in the annex to the UN Secretary-General's report.² The reports of the Government's Action Plan, the results of data collection among non-governmental organisations and companies, and proposals received from ministries and the Commission for Sustainable Development have been used as the basis for the review.

² Handbook for the preparation of the Voluntary National Review, 2020: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/25245Handbook_2020_EN.pdf

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Estonia has long-term experience in the field of sustainable development. In 1995, the **Sustainable Development Act** was adopted. In 2005, the Riigikogu (Parliament of Estonia) approved the **Estonian sustainable development strategy “Sustainable Estonia 21”**, which defines four main goals of Estonia's sustainable development: the viability of Estonian cultural space, the growth of welfare, coherent society, and ecological balance. Three of them are essentially covered by 17 global sustainable development goals, and one – the viability of the cultural space – is monitored separately in Estonia in addition to the global sustainable development goals.

The global sustainable development goals and the goals of the Estonian sustainable development strategy “Sustainable Estonia 21” are implemented through sectoral development plans and action plans. The global sustainable development goals will be integrated into all sectoral development plans at the government level. In addition, the goals of sustainable devel-

opment have been basis in the preparation of the country's long-term strategy “Estonia 2035”, which sets long-term strategic goals for Estonia and determines the changes necessary to achieve them.

The implementation of sustainable development goals is monitored through a monitoring mechanism based on Estonian sustainable development indicators and a regularly issued **report on sustainable development indicators** prepared by Statistics Estonia in cooperation with the Government Office and ministries. In 2017, the list of Estonia's sustainable development indicators was updated to be in line with global sustainable development goals. The government's key indicators, including sustainable development indicators, are available to all on the web as a data-driven “statistics tree”³, which provides an overview of the state of implementation of the goals by all areas of governance.

³ Statistics Estonia's Tree of Truth – a benchmark for important national indicators: <https://tamm.stat.ee/>

INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The Estonian **coordination mechanism for sustainable development issues** includes both ministries and non-governmental organisations from all relevant areas of sustainable development. At the central government level, the **Government Office** coordinates sustainable development issues and the institutional framework. The Government Office also coordinates the preparation and monitoring of Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035" and the Government's Action Plan.

The Estonian Commission for Sustainable Development was established in 1996 as an advisory body to the government. The Commission brings together NGO umbrella organisations in various areas of sustainable development – environmental protection, entrepreneurship, local governments, research institutions, heritage protection, child protection, youth associations, energy, etc. The Commission for Sustainable Development meets regularly 4–5 times a year. In addition to the meetings, the Commission organises thematic discussions on issues raised by members of the Commission and makes policy recommendations on various issues related to sustainable development.

The inter-ministerial working group on sustainable development consists of representatives of ministries and Statistics Estonia. The work of the working group is organised through electronic communication and needs-based meetings. For example, the working group participated in agreeing on Estonia's sustainable development indicators, preparing Estonia's positions on sustainable development issues in the European Union, and preparing this review.

In addition, at the initiative of non-governmental organisations and companies, a **coalition for sustainable development** was formed in 2018, which is an informal format of cooperation uniting those interested in achieving the sustainable development goals. It includes members from among NGOs, companies, the Government Office, and some ministries. The coalition offers practical solutions for achieving the sustainable development, such as campaigns that introduce everyday practical ways to achieve the sustainable development goals, the creation of an online platform connecting different actors in sustainable development, and so on.

STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GLOBAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS – PROGRESS AND CHALLENGES

Estonia's situation in implementing the goals of sustainable development can generally be assessed as successful. In the last four years, a good status has been maintained or improved in several areas. In 2019, Estonia ranked tenth in the global sustainable development index table.⁴

The identification of activities and indicator-based analyses have highlighted several areas of sustainable development in which Estonia is in a good position. For example,

Estonia's strengths are high-quality and accessible education, efficient health care management, high employment, including a minimum long-term unemployment rate, and a large share of renewable energy in final energy consumption.

However, Estonia also has several areas in which it must continue its efforts to achieve global goals and Estonia's sustainable development goals. **The main tasks** are to achieve gender equality (although the pay gap in Estonia has decreased in recent years, it is still one of the highest in Europe), reduce the risk of poverty for women and people with disabilities, including families with children with disabilities, ensure efficient waste management and recycling, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and preserve biodiversity. Human health indicators, in particular mental health indicators, also need to be improved, and preventable deaths must be reduced.

⁴Sustainable Development Report 2019. Transformations to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, 2019: https://s3.amazonaws.com/sustainabledevelopment.report/2019/2019_sustainable_development_report.pdf



SUPPORT FOR OTHER COUNTRIES

The principles of Estonian development cooperation and humanitarian aid are defined in the **Development Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid Development Plan 2016–2019**. From 2020, the basis of Estonia's development cooperation activities is the new **foreign policy development plan** and the separate development cooperation and humanitarian aid action programme based thereon. Based on Estonia's foreign policy goals and international agreements to contribute more development cooperation funds to vulnerable countries, Estonia will continue to respond flexibly to the needs of other countries, especially least developed countries and post-conflict countries, developing island states, and landlocked developing countries in areas where Estonia has a clear added value to offer (for example, improving health care, access to and quality of education).

FURTHER STEPS IN IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA

In the context of strategic planning, the most important milestone this year is the completion of **Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035"**, which creates a strong basis for a more

systematic and robust reflection of sustainable development goals in sectoral strategies. The integration of sustainable development into various policies will be continued.

At the level of the European Union, Estonia, together with other European Union countries, agreed on the integration of sustainable development goals into the European Union's economic coordination instrument, which is more widely known as the **European Semester**. This means that in the future, the supervision of the fulfilment of the sustainable development goals will be centralised at the level of the European Union, i.e. the importance of the sustainable development goals will increase both in Estonia and in the European Union as a whole.

We are also raising general **awareness of the sustainable development goals**. We will continue to participate in the European Sustainable Development Week and draw attention to the sustainable development goals at the annual Opinion Festival in Estonia. We support the work of the Coalition for Sustainable Development and expand its scope. We intend to create a platform for sustainable development, where both the government and the private sector as well as NGOs and citizens will receive information on sustainable development issues and share experiences and take responsibility for achieving sustainable development goals.

1. INTRODUCTION

On 25 September 2015, the UN Summit adopted the Global Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. Heads of states and governments of the world adopted a declaration **"Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development"** (hereinafter the 2030 Agenda), the main goal of which is to abolish poverty everywhere and to ensure the dignity and good quality of life for everyone while respecting the natural environment. The 2030 Agenda sets out 17 global sustainable development goals and 169 sub-goals as well as guidelines for their implementation. The goals cover human well-being, economic growth, employment, innovation, social protection, environmental protection, energy, climate change, international cooperation, etc.

The 2030 Agenda is universal. This means that it applies to all Member States (both developed and developing countries) and that both governments and non-governmental sectors (businesses, research institutions, civil society organisations, etc.) must contribute to its implementation.

In order to continuously monitor the achievement of the goals of the 2030 Agenda, the declaration provides reporting and review system at three levels – global, regional, and national. The purpose of the reports is to obtain information on the progress made towards the global goals and sub-goals, the methods of implementation used, taking into account the overall and integrated nature of the goals and their interrelationships and the three dimensions of sustainable development. Reporting at the national level is voluntary. It is recommended for each country to report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at least twice during the implementation

of the 2030 Agenda. In 2020, 50 countries will present reviews to the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development⁵, 22 of which provide an overview for the second time, including Estonia. Estonia submitted the first review of the country's sustainable development goals to the UN in 2016.

Estonia has long-term experience in the field of sustainable development. In 1995, the Riigikogu passed the **Sustainable Development Act**, which laid the foundation for strategic planning for sustainable development in the country and created preconditions for planning balanced development. In 2005, the Riigikogu approved **Estonian sustainable development strategy, "Sustainable Estonia 21"**,⁶ which identified four sustainable development goals: the viability of the cultural space, increased prosperity, a cohesive society, and ecological balance. No separate implementation plan has been prepared for the implementation of sustainable development goals, but it is done through various sectoral strategies and development plans. The sustainable development goals have also been used in the creation of Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035", and the goals of sustainable development are integrated into the government's strategic development plans.

In order to monitor the implementation of the sustainable development goals, Estonia operates on the basis of **sustainable development indicators** agreed with the participation of ministries, Statistics Estonia, and stakeholders.

⁵HLPF on Sustainable Development

⁶Sustainable Development Strategy "Sustainable Estonia 21", 2005: https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/estonia_sds_2005.pdf



In 2017, the list of Estonia's sustainable development indicators was updated to be in line with global sustainable development goals. A report is prepared regularly on the basis of sustainable development indicators⁷, which sets out the state of play of the goals and the main measures to achieve them. Government key indicators, including sustainable development indicators, are available to all on the web as a data-driven "statistics tree"⁸, which provides an overview of the state of implementation of the goals by all areas of government.

This overview provides information on the preliminary results of the compliance analysis and the plans for the implementation of the UN Agenda 2030. The aim of the review is to show the development trends in the implementation of the sustainable development goals in Estonia, while highlighting the progress and tasks in various areas of sustainable development. The review covers the institutional framework, the coordination and monitoring mechanism, and the overall situation by 18 sustainable development goals, including key implementation measures.



⁷ Sustainable development indicators, 2018: https://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=44738

⁸ Statistics Estonia's Tree of Truth – a benchmark for important national indicators: <https://tamm.stat.ee/>

2. METHODOLOGY AND REVIEW PREPARATION PROCESS



This review has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines set out in the UN Secretary-General's report. The preparation of the review was coordinated by the Government Office of Estonia. Information for the review was provided by the inter-ministerial working group on sustainable development and the Estonian Commission for Sustainable Development.

The review is based on Estonia's experience so far in implementing the sustainable development goals and highlights the activities and plans to date for the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda. The aim of the review is to identify good practices to be used in implementing the 2030 Agenda and to identify key challenges in the field of sustainable development. The main implementation measures and indicator-based statistics are presented by goals and not as separate chapters.

The review begins with information on the institutional framework for sustainable development and on the possibilities for integrating sustainable development issues and creating a sense of participation. It then provides an overview of the current situation and key activities by 18 global goals. In addition to the 17 global sustainable development goals, Estonia also monitors the goal of the viability of the cultural space, which arises from the **Estonian sustainable development strategy** "Sustainable Estonia 21".

Statistical information is presented by 18 goals according to Estonia's sustainable development indicators and the most important measures and activities that both the government and non-governmental sectors should take and carry out to achieve the goal. Statistical data have been compiled by Statistics Estonia, which regularly

publishes sustainable development indicators on its website among the central indicators of the government.

The Government's action plan, reports of the Government's action plan, and information received from ministries have been used as basic information in highlighting the most important policy measures of the Government. In addition, a wide range of non-governmental partners provided information to the review through the Commission for Sustainable Development and a questionnaire.

The Estonian Commission for Sustainable Development consists of umbrella organisations dealing with various sustainable development issues (research institutions, nature protection, child protection, companies, energy, heritage protection, youth associations, development cooperation roundtable, local governments, etc.). In addition, we compiled a questionnaire to find out the contribution of NGOs. The questionnaire was open from mid-January to March. A total of 43 organisations responded, including companies, NGOs, their umbrella organisations, and local government units. The most important examples are presented in this overview by sustainable development goals.

The Estonian coordination mechanism for sustainable development issues includes both ministries and non-governmental organisations from all relevant areas of sustainable development. The coordination system includes an inter-ministerial working group on sustainable development and the Commission for Sustainable Development bringing together NGOs. At the central government level, the Government Office coordinates sustainable development issues and the institutional framework.

The Estonian Commission for Sustainable Development was established in 1996 as an advisory commission to the government. The Commission brings together non-governmental umbrella organisations in various areas of sustainable development – environmental protection, business, research institutions, heritage protection, child protection, youth associations, energy, etc. In 2016, the membership of the Commission on Sustainable Development was reviewed to cover all major issues related to global sustainable development goals. Until then, for example, the Commission has lacked representatives in the field of development cooperation.

The inter-ministerial working group on sustainable development consists of representatives of ministries and Statistics Estonia. The work of the working group is organised through electronic communication and needs-based meetings. For example, the working group participated in agreeing on Estonia's sustainable development indicators and preparing Estonia's positions on issues related to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the European Union. The working group on sustainable development addresses issues at a horizontal and more general level. Sectoral issues are discussed in the relevant sectoral committees, e.g. the Research Policy Committee, the Transport Sectoral Committee, the Energy Council, the Gender Equality Committee, etc.

The implementation of sustainable development goals is monitored in Estonia on the basis of **sustainable development indicators** agreed in co-operation of ministries, Statistics Estonia, and stakeholders. In 2017, the list of Estonia's sustainable development indicators was updated to be in line with global sustainable development goals. A report is prepared regularly on the basis of sustainable devel-

opment indicators⁹, which sets out the state of play of the goals and the main measures to achieve them. Government key indicators, including sustainable development indicators, are available to all on the web as a data-driven "statistics tree",¹⁰ which provides an overview of the state of implementation of the goals by all areas of governance.

⁹Sustainable development indicators, 2018: https://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=44738

¹⁰Statistics Estonia's Tree of Truth: <https://tamm.stat.ee/>

3. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

Composition of the Commission for Sustainable Development:

Estonian Trade Union Confederation
Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
Estonian Association for Environmental Management
Estonian Council of Environmental NGOs
Association of Estonian Cities
Estonian Society for Nature Conservation
Association of Rural Municipalities of Estonia
Estonian Forest Society
Estonian Heritage Society
Estonian National Youth Council
Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce
Estonian Academy of Sciences
Estonian Union for Health Promotion
Estonian Union of Child Welfare
Estonian Education Forum
Estonian Chamber of Culture
Universities Estonia
Estonian Cooperation Assembly

Involved in the work of the Commission since 2016:

Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation
Estonian Association for the Club of Rome
Estonian Renewable Energy Association
The Responsible Business Forum of Estonia

4. INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES INTO NATIONAL POLICIES



The integration of sustainable development goals and topics into various sectoral development plans is ensured in Estonia by a strategic planning system. The Regulation of the Government of the Republic on the preparation of strategic development plans stipulates that the preparation of development plans must be based, among other things, on global sustainable development goals. There is no separate implementation plan for the implementation of the objectives of the Estonian Sustainable Development Strategy. The objectives are achieved through sectoral development plans and implementation programmes. Such a strategic planning system ensures that all government strategic development plans support the achievement of sustainable development goals.

In the context of strategic planning, the most important milestone this year is **the completion of Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035"**, which creates a strong basis for a more systematic and robust reflection of sustainable development goals in sectoral strategies. The strategy "Estonia 2035" sets strategic goals for the Estonian state and people for the next fifteen years and determines the changes necessary to achieve them.

The consideration of environmental, economic, and social aspects in major strategic planning documents is ensured by the **impact assessment methodology** approved by the government. According to this, upon the preparation of legislation, the creation of a development plan in the field, and the approval of the government's position in the affairs of the European Union, the impact on various areas must be assessed. These impacts are: 1) social, including the demographic

impact; 2) impact on national security and foreign relations; 3) impact on the economy; 4) impact on the living and natural environment; 5) impact on regional development; 6) the impact on the organisation of state and local government agencies. In addition, according to the Environmental Impact Assessment and Environmental Management System Act, all strategic planning documents and plans must be subject to a **strategic environmental assessment**. Thereat, the environment is understood more broadly than just the natural environment. This means assessing the impact in terms of the natural, social, economic, and cultural aspects of the environment.

The **Good Practice of Engagement** approved by the government states that government institutions must involve stakeholders and the public in decision-making that affects them. Major decisions and drafts are subject to public consultation. In this way, representatives of stakeholders from different fields have the opportunity to express their views and draw attention to aspects that are important for their respective fields.

The sustainable development **coordination mechanism** itself also contributes to the integration of sustainable development issues, as it involves representatives of all relevant areas of sustainable development. The work of both the Sustainable Development Working Group and the Commission for Sustainable Development is organised by the Strategy Unit of the Government Office. In addition to sustainable development issues, the Strategy Unit of the

Strategic goals of "Estonia 2035"

Eesti 2035

A democratic and secure country where the Estonian language, nationality and culture are preserved



People

Smart, active, healthy



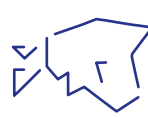
Society

Open, caring, cooperative



Economy

Strong, innovative, responsible



Environment

Taking into account the needs of all, safe, high-quality



Governance

Innovative, reliable, human-centered



Government Office also coordinates the preparation and monitoring of the Government's action plan and Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035". In addition, the Government Office also coordinates Estonia's European Union policy and security policy. This will help ensure the integration of sustainable development issues into the various horizontal planning documents.

5. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GOALS OF THE 2030 AGENDA IN ESTONIA

This chapter provides an overview of the Estonian government's goals and main activities by the sustainable development goals of the 2030 Agenda. At the same time, the currently used national sustainable development indicators for measuring the respective sustainable development goals are provided, and data in comparison with 2016 are presented. In addition to government measures, the main measures and activities also include examples of the activities of non-governmental organisations, including the private sector, and international development cooperation. The overview is based on a general comparative analysis of the goals of the 2030 Agenda and the Estonian government's policy conducted in the spring of 2020. While the report completed in 2016 focused on introducing the existing systems in Estonia, this report focuses on changes made in 2017–2019.

SUMMARY OF THE OVERALL COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The goals of the 2030 Agenda are implemented in Estonia at the government level through sectoral policies. The report prepared in 2016 found that the goals of the 2030 Agenda are covered by strategic documents at various levels, including both horizontal strategies (Estonian competitiveness strategy "Estonia 2020," the Government Action Plan 2019–2023, Estonian sustainable development strategy "Sustainable Estonia 21") and sectoral development plans.¹¹ In 2020, both the Estonian competitiveness strategy "Estonia 2020" and a large number of

sectoral development plans will end. This year, Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035" and several sectoral development plans will be completed. "Estonia 2035" sets long-term cross-cutting goals for the next 15 years and provides guidelines for the implementation of sustainable development goals in Estonia. All new strategic documents that are forthcoming must clearly set out how the goals of the 2030 Agenda will be achieved.

In 2018, a report of Estonian sustainable development indicators was completed.¹² In the course of its completion, indicators were agreed on, which will be taken into account in Estonia for achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda. The following chapters reflect these indicators and results compared to 2016. In addition, in 2019, the measuring instrument of important indicators of the country – the Tree of Truth – was completed,¹³ which reflects the achievement of goals in three key fields: the goals of sustainable development, the competitiveness strategy "Estonia 2020" (in the future, the Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035"), and the Government's action plan.

In summary, it can be said that the Estonian government and NGOs implement various measures and activities in all 17 areas of sustainable development goals. In addition to social, economic, and environmental goals, Estonian sustainable development strategy "Sustainable Estonia 21" also sets the preservation of the viability of the Estonian cultural space, which is why, in the Estonian report, we reflect the achievement of 18 sustainable development goals.

¹¹ Review of the implementation of the UN 2030 Agenda in Estonia in 2016: https://www.riigikantslei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Failid/SA_eesti/2016_06_29_ulevaade_tegevuskava2030_elluviimisest_eestis_loplik_30.06.2016_kodulehele.pdf

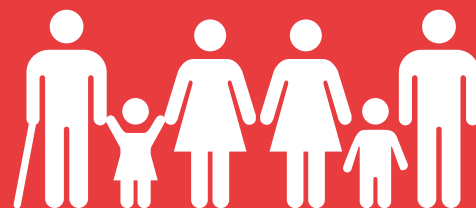
¹² Sustainable development indicators, 2018: https://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=44738

¹³ Statistics Estonia's Tree of Truth – a benchmark for important national indicators: <https://tamm.stat.ee/>

GOAL 1

End poverty in all its forms everywhere

1 NO POVERTY



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

In the case of Estonia, the definition of poverty differs from the context of developing countries. However, reducing poverty and dealing with related problems is a continuing priority of the Government. The government aims to reduce the absolute poverty rate to 2.8% by 2023. Particular attention will be paid to reducing child poverty, with the aim of reducing the absolute poverty rate among children aged 0–17 to 3.1% by 2023. Reduction of social inequality and poverty, gender equality, and greater social inclusion are also the general objectives of the Welfare Development Plan 2016–2023 approved by the Government of the Republic, and the development plan provides for resources and measures to achieve this.

Women, the elderly, people with disabilities, including families with disabled children, and the unemployed are most at risk of economic difficulties and poverty in Estonia. In addition, social

protection measures do not always provide sufficient protection against poverty. The biggest problem is the social protection provided in the event of loss of job and unemployment, which, in many cases, does not prevent a person from falling into poverty. To address these challenges, additional measures need to be developed and implemented to prevent and reduce the poverty of people with low income.

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
1.1. Absolute poverty rate, %	3,2	2,4 (2018)
1.2. At-risk-of poverty rate, %	21,0	21,7 (2018)
1.3. Household savings rate, %	10,0	11,5 (2018)
1.4. People at risk of poverty or social exclusion rate, %	24,4	24,4 (2018)

Absolute poverty rate

2,4%

At-risk-of poverty rate

21,7%

Household savings rate

11,5%

People at risk of poverty or social exclusion rate

24,4%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

5.1.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Various **educational, youth, labour market, and social** measures contribute to poverty reduction. It is important to increase the level of education of people with lower levels of education, reduce the share of people without special and vocational education, and increase employment through measures for different groups (unemployed, young people, the elderly, etc.). At the same time, it is important to ensure both effective and well-targeted social benefits for weaker groups in society and the availability of public services for empowering people (incl. education, youth work, etc.) to reduce the effects of poverty and exclusion risks.

In addition to promoting parental participation in employment and reconciling work and family life, family benefits also play an important role in **supporting children and families with children and reducing their poverty**. The central government has taken a number of important steps in recent years. Both universal child allowance and allowances for disabled children have been increased. In addition, in July 2017, new allowance for families with many children came into force. One of the goals of the support is to reduce the risk of poverty for families with many children. A benefit for triplets and higher multiples in the amount of 1,000 euros per month was also created (for comparison: The average salary in Estonia at the end of 2019 is 1,551 euros), which is paid until the children reach the age of 18 months.

As a new instrument, an amendment to the law entered into force at the beginning of 2017, **establishing a maintenance allowance fund**. Maintenance allowance is intended for the most vulnerable target group, i.e. those children whose parent who lives separately does not pay the ordered maintenance allowance. The purpose of the maintenance allowance fund is to provide a monthly maintenance allowance to the child of a parent raising a child alone, thereby reducing the risk of poverty for single parents and their children. On the other hand, it does

not release the maintenance allowance debtor from their obligations, and the state demands this amount from the defaulting parent. In 2019, the Riigikogu passed a law giving the state stronger powers to collect debts from evaders of child support from 2021 – for example, in the event of non-payment of maintenance allowance without good reason, the court can invalidate the debtor's travel documents and also ban issuing them.

Poverty data for families with children show that various **family benefits** make a large contribution to reducing poverty among families with children, including in the case of families with a higher risk of poverty (families with many children and single-parent families). The economic well-being of families is also supported by various additional investments made in recent years in the availability of childcare places, the expansion of free school meals, the provision of hobby education, other services for families, and other benefits.

The system of parental leave in force in Estonia is quite generous – it is possible to receive parental leave until the child reaches the age of three. However, to best **reconcile work and family life**, different changes in parental leave and benefits will be implemented in the 2018–2022 phase. For example, from 1 March 2018, a parent will be able to earn more income at the same time as receiving the parental benefit (up to 1.5 times Estonia's average salary, i.e. 1,659.90 euros in 2019) without a decrease in parental benefit, and in 2020, paid paternity leave will be extended by 100%.

In order to reduce inequality and revive the economy, the government approved **changes to tax-free income in 2017**, making the current system progressive and thereby reducing the tax burden in the case of lower incomes. Raising the subsistence level, which was increased in both 2016 and 2018, has also significantly contributed to the reduction of poverty, while the subsistence level for children was increased to 120% of the subsistence level of the first member. In addition, in 2018, an amendment came into force that allows the recipient of a subsistence allowance to receive a salary for the first two months so that their subsistence allowance does not decrease. This change is an important step in enabling people living in poverty to return to work.

In order to reduce the risk of poverty for the elderly, **a lump sum benefit was introduced from 2017 for pensioners living alone**. In October 2019, more than 86,700 people received support for a pensioner living alone. The support helps to reduce the risk of poverty, including for older women, which in the age group 65 and older is significantly higher for women than for men (in 2018, 31.3% of men and 49.3% of women were in relative poverty). In 2018, 76.4% of single older men and 78.9% of women lived in relative poverty.

In 2018, the Riigikogu passed an amendment to the law that makes **the pension system more flexible, links the retirement age to the average life expectancy from 2027, and makes the pension dependent on a person's length of service in addition to the salary amount**. The aim of the changes is to make pensions more solidary, responsive to population trends, and flexible enough for people to make their own choices when they want to retire. A flexible pension gives older people who, for example, do not want to or are unable to work full-time, the opportunity to continue working part-time if they so wish and to withdraw their pension in part.

5.1.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Among non-governmental organisations, the **Estonian Roundtable for Development Cooperation** (ERDC) is engaged in raising awareness on the issues of sustainable development goals, global inequality, and reducing global poverty. One of the goals of Estonian development cooperation is the eradication of global poverty – ERDC informs the public about this issue and coordinates the activities of its members.

Important **strategic partners** who help to stand for the well-being of families with children and whose activities are supported by the state are Estonian Association of Big Families and Valuing Life.

Estonian Association of Big Families is an umbrella organisation operating all over Estonia that unites organisations of families with children and deals with the protection of the interests of large families at the state level. To support families, the association provides food, clothing, and household items to large families in cooperation with charities, sponsors, and other partners, and sets up a system of experiential counselling for families with many children to ensure their better coping.

Valuing Life provides therapy and training for couples and individuals. The possibility for families to participate in preventive education programmes in relationship education helps to prevent the breakdown of families and the phenomenon of parents (households) raising children alone. It also helps to prevent domestic violence and, consequently, the fragmentation of children's further development. Studies show that when there is domestic violence, children are more likely to experience learning difficulties, drop out of education, and later more unemployment as well as criminal behaviour that reproduces poverty and social exclusion. To prevent problems, families are offered evidence-based and long-term research-based PREP programmes based on cognitive-behavioural therapy (PREP relationship training and PREP training for individuals "My relationship is in my hands"). The impact of the PREP relationship

training programme on the Estonian population in 2015–2016 was studied by the University of Tartu. It was found that the anxiety and depression scores had decreased significantly among those who completed the programme. The impact of the PREP training of individuals, "My relationship is in my hands", was studied in the years 2019–2020. The study concludes that the results of the study are consistent with the hypothesis that individuals' PREP training has a positive effect on communication style and conflict resolution, as well as on life satisfaction.

5.1.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The goal of Estonian development cooperation is to contribute to the eradication of global poverty and the achievement of the goals of sustainable development. A good example of poverty eradication is the **pilot project of the NGO Mondo digital education programme** in Uganda, which lasted from 2018 to 2019. The project piloted a special digital skills education programme in Uganda in cooperation with the Finn Church Aid, a UNHCR partner in the education cluster there. The education programme has previously been developed with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to increase humanitarian capacity and is intended for use in crisis situations. The pilot project intends to provide a larger educational programme in Ugandan refugee camps.

GOAL 2

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture

2 ZERO HUNGER



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

Estonia is part of the European Union's common agricultural policy (CAP). Over the years, the overall objectives of the CAP have remained unchanged, but several reforms have made it significantly more modern: the topics of productivity, farmers' incomes, market stabilisation, food security, and reasonable consumer prices have been complemented by sustainability and so-called greening requirements related to environmental policy, including climate policy.

The goal of the Government of the Republic is to ensure a rural area with a viable competitive agricultural and fishing economy and to ensure food safety. The government supports the development of environmentally friendly and sustainable agriculture and the realisation of the potential of organic production, together with the development of processing and marketing and export opportunities, the enhancement of agricultural land, and more efficient use of biological resources. The Development Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries until 2030 is being prepared to guide agriculture and fisheries policy. In the area of productivity in the agricultural sector, in the action plan 2019–2023, the government has set the goal of increasing annual net value added per unit of the labour force (compared to the previous year) by 3% in agriculture and at least 21,150 euros of value added per employee in fisheries. By 2030, the overall target level for the field has been set at 29,100 euros.

In making food production more sustainable, Estonia's challenge is to find a balance between food production and the preservation of soil, water, and biodiversity. Environmental protection, the sustainable use of renewable resources, and the preservation of biodiversity in agricultural production can be ensured through environmental support under the Rural Development Plan, directing investments to the digitisation of agriculture, realising the potential of integrated agricultural and organic farming, and supporting joint activities.

In 2019, the Development Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries until 2030 was completed, the activities of which contribute to the development and competitiveness of Estonian agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture, and food industry, balanced development of rural and coastal areas, maintaining good plant and animal health, ensuring food safety, and maintaining a clean environment and species diversity in terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
2.1. Agricultural productivity, euros	9 465	15 812 (2018)
2.2. Share of organic agricultural area, %	18	21 (2018)
2.3. Share of organic agricultural production in total agricultural production, %	9,2	9,8 (2017)
2.4. Placed pesticides, active substance kg	834 328	643 134 (2018)
2.5.1. Use of nitrogen fertilisers, kg/ha	36,4	38,9 (2018)
2.5.2. Use of phosphorus fertilisers, kg/ha	3,4	4,1 (2018)

Agricultural
productivity

15 812
euros

Share of organic
agricultural area

21%

Share of organic
agricultural
production in total
agricultural
production

9,8%

Use of nitrogen
fertilisers

38,9
kg/ha

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

5.2.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

In order to transform the organic economy sector into a viable economic and export sector and to take advantage of Estonia's competitive advantage arising from a clean environment, a **comprehensive organic economy programme** has been prepared, as a result of which administration related to the organic economy must become simpler and more coordinated, and exports of organic products and services must increase. Within the framework of the programme, information seminars and working groups have been organised in 2017–2019 with the aim of raising awareness of organic food and catering in catering establishments and local governments. An export study has also been carried out to identify target markets that are attractive to Estonian organic producers, and the establishment of the Organic Estonia joint marketing platform has been supported.

Since 2015, the Ministry of Social Affairs has been purchasing and distributing **food aid** twice a year with the support of the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD). In addition, from the end of 2019, the Ministry of Social Affairs is supporting the distribution of donated food to people in need from the resources of FEAD.

A **Green Paper on nutrition and physical activity** will be completed in spring 2020, with the aim of increasing regular physical activity and making nutrition more balanced. In the context of a balanced diet, important objectives are to reduce the fat, salt, and sugar content of foods, to provide the consumer with well-legible and comprehensible information on food labels and

to introduce a labelling system for the nutrient content of foods on the front of the package, to influence consumption and purchasing preferences through pricing policies, and to promote healthy dietary choices and the consumption of selected food groups in cooperation between the state and food business operators.

In 2018, the **Action Plan for the Sustainable Use of Plant Protection Products for 2019–2023** was prepared, the central goal of which is to reduce the risks associated with the use of plant protection products to human health and the environment. A humus and nutrient balance calculator will be developed to increase the efficiency of fertiliser use. The requirements for safe and environmentally sound plant protection, including the use of fertilisers, largely derive from European Union law. As a new solution, the creation of a data exchange environment that consolidates agricultural data has been initiated, which promotes the development of ICT solutions that reduce the burden on the environment.

In 2017–2019, the implementation of agri-environmental and climate measures, including support for environmentally-friendly management, support for regional soil protection, support for environmentally-friendly horticulture, support for regional water protection, and support for organic farming, has contributed to the **promotion of environmentally friendly agricultural production**. Great emphasis is also placed on providing the necessary laboratory services and research related to state supervision, as a result of which, agricultural production has become more environmentally friendly (e.g. farmers of nitrate-sensitive areas are being directed to more environmentally friendly management,



FOTO: TARVO PUUSEPP

thus reducing nutrient leaching from agricultural land), the area of organically managed land has increased, and the competitiveness of organic farming and the consumption of local organic food have also increased.

Contingency plans for **dangerous pests** have been prepared, monitoring of the spread of dangerous pests, map applications, and the plant health register have been ensured, and readiness for crisis management has been prepared, including informing the European Commission, other Member States, and the Estonian public about the spread of dangerous pests.

The **diversification of school meals will continue to be supported** by encouraging the consumption of milk and dairy products and fruit and vegetables (organic products are preferred) by children and the development of conscious eating habits in pre-school, basic school, and upper secondary school. The support scheme has been implemented since 2017, and it also contributes to the reduction of social inequalities in the school environment (link to Sustainable Development Goals 3 and 4).

5.2.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

In the **non-governmental sector**, the European Aid Fund and the **Estonian Food Bank** (together

with local governments), which is a partner organisation organising the distribution of food aid in Estonia, are cooperating to eliminate hunger and reduce food losses. Food has been purchased and distributed to those in need since 2015. An average of 25,000 people receive aid each year (a large part twice a year), and from the end of 2019, the distribution of donated food was also started with the support of the aid fund. In the last three months of last year, food was distributed to 2,890 people from this measure. The activities of the Food Bank contribute to the reduction of waste in society, as many food products that were previously destroyed now reach where they are really needed. The work of the Food Bank relies on volunteers who assist in the collection, storage, packaging, and delivery of food.

In order to reduce food waste and increase public awareness, in 2016, the **Estonian Food Bank** and the **Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn Centre** organised the campaign "Consume food wisely!" The biggest stores and restaurants helped to convey the message. The campaign was aimed at home consumption, shops, as well as restaurants. During the campaign, a website (www.tarbitoitutargalt.ee) was set up, where information and tips can be obtained even after the end of the campaign.

The Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce in cooperation with the Estonian University of Life Sciences and the Association of Estonian Food Industry, is actively raising

awareness regarding food safety among agricultural and food producers. In 2017–2019, several information days, conferences, and training on food safety for producers have been organised within the framework of the Rural Development Plan “Long-term knowledge transfer programme in the field of food safety”. In addition, information materials, manuals, and instructional videos have been published. For example, in 2019, the EPKK produced the handbook “Guide to good hygiene practice: milk”, and a similar handbook on meat processing is currently being drafted.

Organic Estonia is an association of volunteers, on the initiative of which an umbrella organisation for organic farming was established in 2017. It brings together companies and organisations to promote organic products. The organisation has created the first interactive web map of organic areas, which brings together Estonia’s organic and clean integrated environment (forests and harvesting areas together). The map also indicates organic apiaries, which show the cleanliness of the environment and the richness of the species in Estonia. The concept of a comprehensive programme for organic farming has also been created, which includes five certified economic sectors – organic forestry, organic food and catering, natural and organic cleaning products and natural cosmetics, health and nature tourism, and organic wool and textiles. All sectors are supported horizontally through research, innovation, and education programmes.

5.2.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The project of the **Estonian Animal Breeding Association** “Implementation of cattle breeding and feeding measures in Georgian dairy farms” (2016–2017), during which initial training in the breeding and feeding of cattle was provided to Georgian farmers and the specialists of the partner Caucasus Genetics were advised on the start-up of an artificial insemination centre, and the production of deep-frozen bull semen can be highlighted in terms of increasing agricultural productivity in development cooperation partner countries. The aim of the project was to

improve farmers’ knowledge of cattle breeding, feeding, and husbandry technologies and thus increase efficiency. Lecturers, researchers, and practitioners were involved in the activities. The project focused on the importance of scientific breeding and feeding and keeping conditions that would increase the productivity of both dairy cows and beef cattle.

In order to ensure food security and better nutrition, OÜ Snille implemented in Moldova the project **“Introduction and implementation of EU food safety requirements and principles in the dairy sector”** (2018–2019). During the project, the participants were given an overview of the European Union’s food security system, the current rules, the company’s own responsibility for ensuring food safety, and the organisation of food safety supervision. Better knowledge of the company’s precondition programmes and self-control system was provided by the HACCP method.¹⁴ A 10-day theoretical-practical training was organised in Estonia, and small Estonian companies were visited to demonstrate the implementation of the rules arising from legislation. In addition, an overview of international SPS and TBT measures and their role in international trade was provided.¹⁵ As one of the outputs of the project, video training material was produced on the company’s self-control plan and food production precondition programmes.

Based on the previous practice of **NGO Mondo** in the digital field, the project “Escalation of the NGO Mondo digital education project in East Africa”, carried out in 2019–2020, can also be highlighted as a good experience. The target group of the project is young refugees in Uganda and households suffering from famine in Yemen. A part of the project comprises delivering food aid to the most vulnerable groups in the war- and famine-stricken Yemen.

¹⁴ Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points system

¹⁵ Sanitary and phytosanitary measures and technical barriers to trade agreements

GOAL 3

Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

Estonian healthcare management can be considered effective in both the European and global contexts. 95% of the population is covered by health insurance, which means that the majority of the population has access to health care. Improving public health is a government priority. The Government has submitted the National Health Plan for 2020–2030 to the Riigikogu for discussion, which sets the goal of increasing the average life expectancy of Estonians by 2030 to 78.0 years for men and 84.0 years for women and the number of healthy years to 62.0 for men and 63.0 for women. The government wishes to have it approved this year. The life expectancy of the Estonian population has grown strongly in recent decades, but unfortunately, we do not have such a trend in terms of a healthy life expectancy. Therefore, when implementing the development plan, it is definitely important to ensure that the number of healthy life years grows faster than the life expectancy, i.e. that people would

live most of their lives without restrictions due to health problems.

In addition to the above-mentioned goals, the National Health Plan 2020–2030 aims to reduce health inequalities (between genders, regions, and levels of education). By the end of the National Health Plan, it is desired to achieve that by 2030, the life expectancy in no county is shorter than the Estonian average and that the life expectancy of people with basic education does not lag behind the life expectancy of people with higher education by more than six years.

In order to ensure health and well-being, it is also important to engage in prevention activities. The prevention of diseases and injuries and the early detection of diseases help to increase the quality of life of people, as a disease detected at an early stage is usually treatable, and the person retains activity and ability to work.

Life expectancy

78,4
years

Healthy life years

54,2
years

Share of overweight
population

50,7%

Number of fatal
accidents per
100,000 inhabitants

60,4

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
3.1. Life expectancy	77,8	78,4 (2018)
3.2. Healthy life years	57	54,2 (2018)
3.3. Share of overweight population, %	52	50,7 (2018)
3.4.1. Number of fatal accidents per 100,000 inhabitants	65	60,4 (2018)
3.4.2. Number of fatal accidents at work per 100,000 inhabitants	2	1,1 (2018)
3.5.1. Deaths preventable by treatment	2468	2390 (2018)
3.5.2. Preventable deaths	3158	3176 (2018)
3.6. Deaths due to chronic diseases per 100,000 under 65 years of age	156	156 (2016)
3.7.1. HIV infection per 100,000 inhabitants	17,4	13,5 (2019)
3.7.2. Infection with tuberculosis per 100,000 inhabitants	12,7	9,2 (2018)
3.7.3. Infection with acute hepatitis B per 100,000 inhabitants	0,6	0,3 (2018)
3.7.4. Infection with chronic hepatitis B per 100,000 inhabitants	1,3	1,2 (2018)
3.7.5. Infection with acute hepatitis C per 100,000 inhabitants	1,1	0,4 (2018)
3.7.6. Infection with chronic hepatitis C per 100,000 inhabitants	15,4	9,6 (2018)
3.8. Number of suicides per 100,000 inhabitants	14	14,1 (2018)
3.9.1. Primary morbidity rate of mental and behavioural disorders per 100,000 inhabitants	1956	1986 (2018)
3.9.2. Mental and behavioural disorders caused by psychoactive substances per 100,000 inhabitants	232	242 (2018)
3.10. Alcohol consumption per inhabitant aged 15 and over, litres of 100% alcohol	10,2	10,1 (2018)
3.11. Tobacco consumption among 16–64-year-olds, %	21	17 (2018)

5.3.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Since 2016, health centres have been built or renovated **to improve the availability of primary health care services**. Within the framework of the project, it is planned to renovate 58 primary health centres across Estonia by 2023. To date, 25 centres have started operating. With the new centres, the choice of primary health care services for the patient expands. The team of health centres to be created consists of family physicians and nurses. In addition, physiotherapists, nurses and midwives, and, if necessary, other specialists will work in health centres. The first county health centre will also be established, which is a modernised general hospital.

At the end of 2017, **the government approved the National HIV Action Plan for 2017–2025**, with the help of which the state is taking important steps to stop the HIV epidemic. The aim of the HIV Action Plan is to bring the number of new infection cases to the average level of the European Union, i.e. less than 100 cases per year. The availability of treatment and harm reduction services for HIV-positive people and drug addicts has also been expanded – the number of treatment places will be increased, and a new centre for treatment and rehabilitation services for adolescents will be established in East-Viru County.

In the field of e-health, **amendments to the Act on Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances and Precursors thereof** entered into force at the end of 2019, based on which the collection of personalised data for the drug treatment register (drug treatment database) started in such a way that entries in the register of the same person can be linked to data already collected in other national databases (e.g. population register, tuberculosis register, causes of death register, etc.). Above all, it makes it possible to protect the life and health of an addicted person by improving the quality of drug treatment services and by creating opportunities for linking treatment data to assess the effectiveness of existing treatment. The quality

of the data necessary for the development of health policy and the analyses performed on the basis of them will also improve (e.g. the possibility to evaluate the effectiveness of treatment, diagnostics, and treatment, analyse the occurrence of drug addiction in Estonia, etc. will improve).

In order to ensure better access to health care services and the sustainability of the health care system, the Government of the Republic decided in 2017 **to gradually expand the income base of the Estonian Health Insurance Fund**, which will help to reduce the fragmentation of health care financing. The extra funds provide an opportunity to shorten the waiting list for treatment, improve the availability of health care services as well as the continuity and quality of treatment. From 2020, for example, dental care benefits for adults, ambulance services, reimbursement of infertility treatment costs, financing of substitution fees for family physicians, HIV medicines, immunisation preparations, and the cost of emergency care for uninsured persons and other costs were transferred from the state budget to the budget of the Estonian Health Insurance Fund.

As additional financial measures, **an additional system of benefits for medicinal products** was established in 2018, and people with an increased need for treatment began to be reimbursed for medicines at a higher rate than before. Also, from July 2017, dental care became much more accessible as **a dental benefit was introduced** for adults that was previously absent. Dental benefits for pensioners, pregnant women, mothers of children under one year of age, and people with an increased need for treatment were also increased. The change reduced people's annual spending on improving oral health. Dental care for all insured persons under the age of 19 continues to be free of charge, and the state pays for unavoidable dental care to uninsured people from the budget of the Estonian Health Insurance Fund.

In 2018–2019, **changes to the immunisation plan** came into force, including the vaccination of 12-year-old girls against papillomavirus (HPV), and an infant combination vaccine was introduced to protect against six pathogens (diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, haemophilia B infection, and hepatitis B virus). Vacci-

nation of girls against HPV is important, as the primary incidence and mortality of cervical cancer in Estonia is one of the highest in Europe. Vaccination of girls aims to reduce the prevalence of HPV infection, the resulting pre-cancerous conditions, the incidence of cancer, and to prevent cancer-related health care costs and mortality. As a result of the change that came into force in 2019, it is possible to receive free influenza vaccinations outside the home for recipients of round-the-clock general care services and recipients of round-the-clock special care services.

From the point of view of alcohol policy, **amendments to the Advertising Act entered into force in June 2018 which significantly restrict alcohol advertising**. In addition to the previous restrictions, the amendment completely banned outdoor alcohol advertising and advertising on social media and further restricted alcohol advertising on television, radio, and magazines. The purpose of amending the Advertising Act is to protect public health, reduce the social, economic, and health damage caused by alcohol consumption, and ensure a supportive environment for the growth and development for children and young people. In addition, **restrictions on the display of alcoholic beverages** entered into force in June 2019. This means that alcoholic beverages must be placed in the store separately from other goods so that the consumer does not inevitably come into contact with them.

In order to better prevent minors from starting smoking and using other similar products, to reduce the number of daily smokers in Estonia and thus the health risks, harms, and costs associated with smoking, **the Tobacco Act has been amended** in recent years: the packaging and labelling of tobacco products were regulated, including the obligation to include pictorial warnings, the requirements for nicotine-containing electronic cigarettes were supplemented, cross-border distance sales of tobacco and related products was banned, tobacco display and branding at the point of sale was restricted, compositional and purity requirements for nicotine-free liquid were established, flavours other than tobacco were banned in e-cigarettes, a requirement to request a document when selling a tobacco product was introduced, and police officers were given the



FOTO: LINA NOTTA

right to carry out control purchases to monitor compliance with the ban on sales to minors.

In 2019, a nationwide **digital registry was introduced in Estonia in all hospitals of the Hospital Master Plan**, which makes it easier for people to find an appointment with a medical specialist. A nationwide digital registry does not automatically shorten waiting lists, but it does increase transparency and eliminate the possibility of double bookings. The innovative solution gives people the freedom to book appointments from one place without having to call different healthcare facilities or use the healthcare provider's appointment booking environment. By the end of 2019, a total of 32 healthcare providers, including 20 hospitals in the Hospital Master Plan, had joined the national digital registry solution; by spring 2020, the number of health care providers who had joined the solution has increased to 45.

The completed drafts of the National Health Plan 2030 and the Development Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries until 2030 set the joint target to reduce food-related risks to human life and health, including **strengthening national food safety monitoring**, raising consumer awareness, and improving the country's capacity to provide early warning of health risks. The measures put in place will work together to reduce deaths and morbidity from hazardous chemicals and contaminated water and food.

In 2017, the **road safety programme for 2016–2025** was approved, which focuses on ensuring road safety as a whole and the aim of which is to reduce the average number of road deaths in Estonia by at least 50% in 2012–2014. This means that instead of the current 82 fatalities, the average number of people killed in traffic between 2023 and 2025 would not exceed 40, and the number of seriously injured would not exceed 330 people per year on average.

Estonia does not yet have a separate national **mental health policy**, but the Green Paper on Mental Health, which will be completed in spring 2020, will help fill this gap. The document to be discussed in the Government deals with the prevention of mental health problems and the provision of treatment processes in a coordinated manner.

To support the mental health of families with children, it is planned to create and expand various services and counselling programmes for conscious family planning, the birth of healthy children, protection of maternal health, and early intervention. In addition to parenting programmes that help develop parenting skills, there are also relationship support programmes to prevent divorce and intimate partner violence. As it is best for children to have both parents involved in their upbringing, a national family mediation system is being developed. The aim is to achieve better cooperation between separated parents and to facilitate the conclusion of agreements based on the welfare of children on matters concerning the organisation of a child's life, both out of court and at an early stage during court proceedings. The use of family mediation as an alternative to court proceedings has had a positive effect in many countries and is often free of charge for families. Estonia has also set the goal that the corresponding service be as widely available to families as possible.

To promote physical activity, a **support programme for regional health sports centres** was established in 2019, which aims to improve the quality of services and mobility conditions in at least one health sports centre in each county to ensure high-quality opportunities for all residents to engage in physical activity and engage more people in physical activity. As a result of the programme, the proportion of people who move regularly will increase, it will have a positive effect on people's health behaviour, and it will increase people's potential life expectancy.

Fiscal measures have also been promoted to support people's healthy lifestyles. In 2018, **an incentive was applied to employers to reimburse more employees' sports expenses** and certain health-promoting services, such as a doctor's appointment with a rehabilitation doctor or a doctor's appointment with a physiotherapist. In 2018, the method of calculating coaches' salaries and labour costs was also changed. In order to increase the physical activity of children and young people and thus ensure good health, there is a need for educated people who know and want to instruct young people, even outside of physical education classes.

5.3.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The mission of **the Estonian Mental Health and Well-Being Coalition** (VATEK) is to increase the awareness of the entire population about the importance and significance of mental health and the possibilities of promoting and maintaining it. VATEK started its activities in 2012, and by now, it has become a strong umbrella organisation uniting nearly 60 organisations in the field of mental health, being a spokesperson and partner in the field of mental health for the Ministry of Social Affairs. VATEK's action plan includes a mental health fair as a major annual event, supported by thematic mental health workshops in the counties. The fair is dedicated to World Mental Health Day on 10 October and focuses on the annual theme announced by the World Mental Health Federation (WMHF).

The non-profit organisation Head Matters deals with the promotion of mental health, prevention of problems, early intervention, and reduction of stigma in Estonian society. In 2017, the campaign "Listening to man" was implemented. The issue is important because statistically, men seek less help than women, but they are subject to different stereotypes and attitudes. In 2018, the depression awareness campaign "Black Snow" took place. In addition, in 2018–2019, **Head Matters** focused on the development of mental health first aid knowledge and skills in society through training.

To facilitate the movement, the **Estonian Health Trails Foundation** has been established, which has significantly expanded its activities in 2017–2019. The aim of the foundation is to ensure the availability of the network of health trails for the majority of the Estonian population for year-round free exercise. At present, there are approximately 100 outdoor health trails and more than 50 indoor health trails in Estonia. In 2017–2019, the foundation has significantly increased the capacity to produce artificial snow across Estonia, contributed to the training of trail maintenance personnel, paid attention to informing and communicating with people, and collecting statistics on the use of health trails to reach more people with even better trails.



FOTO: HARIDUS- JA TEADUSMINISTEERIUM / AIVO KALLAS

“Physically active schools” is a programme in which, since 2016, under the leadership of the University of Tartu’s Research Group of Physical Activity for Health, solutions have been sought in cooperation with schools on how to make school days more mobile and bring more joy of movement to each student. To date, more than 100 schools across Estonia have joined the programme.

In 2019, the Ministry of Social Affairs selected strategic partners in the field of mental health for two years, which were **non-profit organisation Head Matters, the Estonian-Swedish Mental Health and Welfare Coalition, the Estonian Youth Mental Health Movement, Minutes of Stillness, and the Centre for Gambling Addiction.**

In addition, the Ministry of Social Affairs, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, has strategic partners operating in the field of children and families. These are **Valuing Life and Estonian Association of Big Families.** Valuing Life brings together organisations that support the mental health of families and children.¹⁶ In cooperation,

¹⁶ Estonian Women’s Associations Roundtable, Estonian Women’s Shelters Union, NGO Crisis Programme for Children and Youth, “No Kids in the Middle”, Association of Mediators, Pro Familia, NGO Vaiter, NGO Hingekeel, NGO Unekeool.

the foundation offers evidence-based training in support of relationships and mental health (PREP), a crisis programme for young people and children, and the programme “No Kids in the Middle”.

5.3.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Health care is one of the priority areas of Estonian development cooperation. One of the longest-term international development cooperation partnerships in ensuring health care has been the project **“Supporting the development of the Moldovan health insurance system”** (2011–2019) between the Estonian Health Insurance Fund and the Moldovan Health Insurance Fund. In the course of this project, the development of the Moldovan health insurance system was supported through the sharing of Estonia’s theoretical and practical experience. Within the framework of the project, 10 study sessions were held for the target group, which also included a project summary visit. The training sessions focused on organisational development, performance management, healthcare financing (pricing, budget planning, contracting,

case-based remuneration system), benefits of medicinal products, EU health insurance, and IT solutions.

Due to Estonian expertise in the field of e-services, e-services have also been developed in partner countries. For example, in the project **“Development of e-services for the primary health care system in Belarus”** (2016–2017), which was implemented by Estonian Help Centers to find out the possibilities for further development of e-services for the primary health care system in Belarus. On this basis, a primary medical counselling service was prepared. The overall goal of the project was to improve the quality of life of the people of Minsk and Gomel oblasts in Belarus by giving them better and faster access to primary health care.

On the topics of e-health, **the project “Consultation on the introduction of e-health in Ohmatdit and preparation of standard guidelines” of Praxis Centre for Policy Studies** (2018–2019) was also successful. At Ohmatdit, the largest children’s hospital in Ukraine, management was advised, and guidelines were prepared for the implementation of e-medicine solutions, from e-document management to e-registration and e-patient card solutions.

In health care, development cooperation also pays attention to prevention. For example, in its project “Development of prevention in health care” (2017–2018), **NGO ProDia** aimed to improve the health behaviour and timely treatment of Moldovan residents. New approaches to health prevention were developed and tested and implemented for the Moldovan population. At the same time, needs analyses were conducted, and recommendations and

evaluation methodologies were developed, e-solutions for prevention were tested, and training seminars were organised for family physicians and personnel managers as well as civic associations and other target groups.

As a preventive action, the **Estonian Sexual Health Association** focused on improving the knowledge and skills of Moldovan young counsellors in sex education, targeting different target groups (students, parents, teachers, etc.) in the project “Improving the availability of sex education through the development and implementation of multifunctional online platform-based training in Moldova” (2018–2019). An online platform and training materials were set up to train the trainers. Teaching methodologies and materials were developed in cooperation with Moldovan partners.

Project activities in the field of health promotion also take place outside the Eastern Partnership countries. For example, for the last three years, under the leadership of **Estonian Doctors Help the World**, Estonian doctors have operated on patients with various surgical pathologies in the Meru County hospitals in Kenya and instructed local medical staff inside and outside of the operating room. Within the framework of the Mondo follow-up project for the promotion of women’s and girls’ health education in northern and eastern Afghanistan (2019–2020), NGO Mondo, in cooperation with the Tallinn Health Care College, will continue educational development cooperation to promote women’s health in northern and eastern Afghanistan. The aim is to improve the curriculum and teaching materials of medical schools, to train midwives in e-learning, who, in turn, provide health education in girls’ schools, and to improve health awareness among the local population in the Jowzjan Province. Cooperation will continue with the Afghan Midwifery Association to align local curricula with the national community-based midwifery education programme. In the Nangarhār province, the education of children of returning war refugees will also continue to be supported with the help of a local partner.



GOAL 4

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

In comparison with other OECD countries, Estonia has very good opportunities for acquiring education – education is equally accessible to all groups in society and is of good quality, which is also shown by the PISA survey, and the participation of children in primary and general education is high. Education (including higher education) is equally accessible to women and men.

Adult participation in lifelong learning has made a leap in recent years, with the fastest growth among people with lower education. At the same time, the share of 18–24-year olds with a low level of education who are not involved in learning is over 11% and has increased in recent years. In addition, the increase in the share of people without secondary education in younger age groups and the gender gap in post-basic education are worrying (about 6% of women and 16% of men with a low level of education are not involved in learning). Drop-out rates in vocational and higher education and non-full-time general education are also problematic. Another important issue is the proliferation of teachers and the unequal change in the number of students by region, which is why the reform of the school network still needs to be continued.

The share of Estonian people aged 16–74 with digital competencies has increased from 76% in 2014 to 90% in 2019. The basic ICT skills of

basic school graduates are at a good level – this has been shown by the students' self-assessed answers to the satisfaction survey (2016–2017) as well as the results of the standard-determining test on digital competencies carried out in 2018 and 2019. Based on the 2019 standard-determining test on digital skills, 83% of students' skills were at least average.

The new Education Development Plan for 2021–2035 is being prepared, which is a continuation strategy of the current Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020. The new plan sets goals for the next 15 years. The overall goal of the Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020 is to create learning opportunities for all Estonian people that meet their needs and abilities throughout their life cycle to provide them with opportunities for dignified self-fulfilment in society, work, and family life. The new development plan continues in the same direction but wishes to place more emphasis on the person's own will and ability to learn, in addition to creating the conditions and opportunities for learning. Access to education, the integration of levels and types of education, the flexibility of the education system, and the quality of education are important. In addition, the development plan aims to focus more on linking youth work and non-formal education with formal education to promote diverse skills development.

In the action plan, the government has set the goal of modernising the organisation of pre-school education, constantly updating curricula, continuing to increase teachers' salaries, and supporting the learning of Estonian as a second language. It is also necessary to continue

offering and expanding lifelong learning opportunities, also taking into account skills acquired in non-formal education. An important overarching principle at all levels of education is that the education provided is in line with the needs of the labour market.

Participants
in lifelong
learning among
25–64-year-olds

20,1%

Share of people with
tertiary education
aged 30–34

46,6%

Share of PISA
top-level students in
mathematics

15,5%

Share of young
people studying
in hobby schools
(7–26-year-olds)

28,8%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
4.1. Participants in lifelong learning among 25–64-year-olds, %	15,7	20,1 (2019)
4.2. Share of people with tertiary education aged 30–34, %	45,4	46,6 (2019)
4.3. Population with digital competence at least at basic level among 16–74-year-olds, %	60 (2017)	62 (2019)
4.4.1. Share of PISA top-level students in reading, %	n/a	13,9 (2018)
4.4.2. Share of PISA top-level students in mathematics, %	n/a	15,5 (2018)
4.4.3. Share of PISA top-level students in science, %	n/a	12,2 (2018)
4.5. Share of young people studying in hobby schools (7–26-year-olds), %	26,7% (2017)	28,8% (2018)
4.6. Early school leavers not in further education aged 18–24, %	10,9	10,5 (2019)

5.4.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

In Estonia, **education is available to everyone and free of charge**, regardless of their gender, religion, or socio-economic background. Basic education is the minimum compulsory general

education, the acquisition of which may take place in part in primary school (1st–6th grade), basic school (1st–9th grade), or an upper secondary school with basic school classes. Pursuant to the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, the costs of the school are covered by the school manager, who, in most cases, is the local government. The state supports the school manager with educational expenses such as the salaries of teachers and the heads of schools and support for continuing education, teaching aids, and school lunches. Local governments are also responsible for the establishment, reorganisation, and closure of general education schools.

Estonia is **at the absolute top of Europe and among the best countries in the world in terms of ensuring the effectiveness and equality of basic education**. According to the results of the international PISA test conducted in 2018, Estonian 15-year-olds hold first place in the ranking of European countries in functional reading, mathematics, and natural sciences (biology, physics, and chemistry). In the world, Estonian students were fifth in functional reading, eighth in mathematics, and fourth in science. Estonia has a significant number of top performers in the PISA test, which is a key factor in the development of an innovative society. For example, according to the results of



FOTO: RENEE ALTROV

the test, there were almost twice as many top performers in the natural sciences in Estonia as in OECD countries, on average – 12.2 percent versus 6.8 percent. In Estonia, there is a large proportion of students who, despite the family's poorer socio-economic background, achieve high results and acquire a very high level of knowledge and skills. This characterises the equality of the Estonian education system. There was also a small difference between schools in Estonia, which shows that Estonian basic schools provide a uniformly good education throughout Estonia.

With the help of the school network programme, the **reorganisation of the school network of students in need of support and the improvement of study conditions will be continued**. The measure for reorganising the basic school network **supports local governments in reorganising the school network** by financing the modernisation and optimisation of the infrastructure of general education schools. The aim is for school buildings to be economical and use land efficiently and learning opportunities to be ensured based on the principles of inclusive education. In order to provide high-quality general secondary education offering an abundant range of

choices, and to organise the school network, **a state upper secondary school with a modern study environment and study organisation will be established in each county centre**. In the academic year 2019/2020, 15 state upper secondary schools have been opened in 13 counties. Energy-saving solutions are used in the reconstruction and construction of buildings.

In order to improve the availability of education, in 2018, the Riigikogu passed amendments to the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act, which **changed the organisation of studies for students with special educational needs and increased state budget support for local governments and private general education providers**. The aim of the change is to provide students with the necessary support, to create better opportunities for the acquisition of education according to their abilities, and to provide schools and school managers with more decision-making power and more flexible opportunities to organise special classes and special groups. Students in need of support may be included in mainstream classrooms, may be offered part-time individual study, or may be provided with the opportunity to study in a special class or special school. From 2018, support specialists can apply for the initial allowance, which will be paid to them during the first year of employment following the acquisition of higher professional education.

To stimulate **educational innovation**, HITSA supports the wise use of technology in the field of education by providing training, information systems that support teaching, and high-quality infrastructure. **The educational innovation testing programme** disseminates new directions, highlighting the stories of innovative schools and making sense of the use of new technologies entering the market. New technological devices and software are being tested in cooperation with teachers and entrepreneurs. In this way, schools and kindergartens have a good overview of how to renew their teaching, and the feedback from the programme helps companies to make more informed decisions. **The ProgeT-iiger programme, which supports learners' technological and digital literacy**, provides training and networking for teachers and trainers, increases access to technology activities for children and young people, and co-finance the acquisition of equipment for teaching. By the

end of 2019, 94% of schools and 68% of kindergartens had participated in the programme. **The monitoring of technological development trends will be continued**, within the framework of which the technological trends that will most affect the educational landscape in the coming years will be identified, and Estonian educators will be kept informed about the development of technology and related teaching methods in the world. In 2019, the first monitoring report, **"Education Technology Compass"**, was published, focusing on the Internet of Things, composite and virtual reality, big data and analytics, artificial intelligence, and security in all areas. Each technology highlights what it is, how it affects everyday life now and in the future, and how it relates to education.

The Innove Foundation **supports the leaders and specialists of educational institutions in planning and implementing innovations** with several programmes and training. A **competency model for the head of an educational institution** has been developed, and training is provided for the development of a 360-degree feedback method and self-analysis and feedback skills. The directors of general education schools and vocational education institutions are offered a six-month development programme **"Educational Innovation Master Class"** to develop innovation management competence. Within the framework of the **local government education leaders development programme**, the competence in the field of strategic planning, change management, and professional development of educational institution leaders can be improved.

Through the centres of the Innove Rajaleidja Foundation, **study counselling services for children and young people and support for parents, teachers, and other educators are offered** in all counties. Until 2018, the centres were also engaged in career counselling and mediation of career information, but from the beginning of 2019, all career services were concentrated centrally in the Unemployment Fund. As part of the restructuring, a call centre and centralised information services have been launched in the Rajaleidja Network. Working principles and techniques have been harmonised, the service to customers is becoming more uniform, regardless of location, and waiting lists have also been reduced.

As part of the Digital Revolution programme, the Innove Foundation is developing **new e-solutions for learning and learning assessment**. In the development of e-tools, 24 diagnostic tests were prepared and published for use in schools in 2019, which find out the extent of the student's previous knowledge and skills. The development of innovative e-tests for general education schools continued in six areas: mathematics, natural sciences, social sciences, language and literature, foreign languages, and Estonian as a second language. During the development of e-learning materials, about 4,000 study materials were reviewed in the E-schoolbag, and 47 digital collections were compiled. The Education Information Technology Foundation (HITSA) **will continue to develop the digital competences of teachers and school leaders**. In 2019, nearly 4,000 people participated in a training organised by HITSA, and 14 new training programmes were developed and tested, some of which are available online. The concept of assessing the digital competence of Estonian teachers, together with the principles of assessment, was completed.

In May 2017, to prevent unemployment, the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund **also started to support the retraining and in-service training of working people** to contribute to the improvement of their qualifications and skills. The measures have been participated in more than 13,000 times and are focused primarily on the training of people with a low level of education, the elderly, people with health problems, and employees with little Estonian language skills. In 2018, **the circle of employees who can receive support for participation in formal education and labour market training through the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund was expanded**. According to the amendments, these opportunities are open to people earning up to the average salary, as well as to employees under an employment contract or other contract under the law of obligations. The possibilities of paying training support to the employer for organising Estonian language training were also expanded.

Projects continue to bring **low-educated adults back into basic and general secondary education and to support participation in learning**. Based on regional specifics and needs, educational institutions can support the devel-

opment of a suitable range of activities that support staying in education and completing studies successfully. To this end, courses are offered to develop learning skills and abilities, additional and levelling courses in the most important subjects, counselling of students, individual supervision, if necessary, childcare services, etc.

The number of returnees has grown rapidly in recent years. **Children from families returning to Estonia** are offered flexible opportunities to acquire school education, which means studying in an individual curriculum as well as other solutions that support the student's adaptation and take into account their knowledge, skills, and individual characteristics. The government has decided to support teachers and management to ensure that all children have the best education possible due to increasing multiculturalism.

In the autumn of 2018, the first approach to improving the learning of Estonian as a second language was started, within the framework of which an **Estonian-speaking teacher will be employed as a third teacher in Russian-language kindergarten groups**, supporting children's learning opportunities in Estonian. Kindergartens from both Tallinn and East-Viru County, a total of 53 kindergarten groups, are participating in the pilot project. The pilot project helps children with another mother tongue to acquire Estonian through play, and activities in Estonian include all educational activities, including those involving music, movement, and art, as well as daily communication and activities. In 2019, another 30 kindergarten groups were added, and in 2020, the project will expand to the first grades of general education schools.

In 2017, the **concept of the support system for youth hobbies** was implemented, which provides for the provision of opportunities for every young person to participate in sports and recreational activities. Recreational activities foster the creation of opportunities for the diverse development of a young person through systematic, guided non-formal learning.

In 2018, **the opportunities for work-based learning or apprenticeship training were expanded** from vocational education to higher education as well. Work-based learning is a form of learning where the share of learning in a company or institution makes up more than half

of the curriculum. This helps to create a closer link between learning and the labour market, and learning better meets the needs of the employer, as learning takes place in collaboration between the educational institution, the learner, and the employer. The apprenticeship form of training enables employers to actively participate in the training of the workforce, and learners will have a smoother transition to working life in the future.

5.4.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Among non-governmental organisations, **NGO Bullying-Free School** and the **Estonian Union for Child Welfare** coordinate and organise anti-bullying programmes used in kindergartens and schools. The programmes launched to teach social skills, prevent bullying, and solve cases, provide educational institutions with the knowledge and tools to make educational institutions more bullying-free and keep them that way.

The Good Deed Education Fund is a philanthropy foundation founded by a new generation of entrepreneurs in 2019 with the aim of giving impetus to initiatives that help solve the biggest key issues in Estonian general education. The main focuses are to increase the succession of teachers, to support the improvement of the quality of school management, to reduce the drop-out rate after basic school, and to increase the acquisition of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics) skills. In cooperation with the Tallinn Education Department, an Internship Programme for Educational Leaders has been launched, which gives school leaders the opportunity to go on internships in companies to learn from the management experience of successful companies and apply the acquired knowledge in their school. The growth of the substitute teacher programme (ASÕP) and the Youth to School programme has been supported.

The Noored Kooli Development Programme enables people with non-pedagogical higher education to work as teachers at school for two years and to become a leader in education to help create a learning environment that supports

all students in partner schools and thus prevent early school leaving. Over a two-year period, participants selected through competition will undergo unique teaching and leadership training, while working full-time in mainstream schools. Youth to School has brought more than 200 active people who have proven themselves in other areas of life to the field of education, most of whom have remained in the field.

The main idea of the activities of the Estonian Education Forum is to analyse the key issues of education, to bring together representatives of educational policy stakeholders, and to promote the principles of participatory democracy, partnership, and social agreements in Estonian education policy.

5.4.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The availability of education and the improvement of its quality is one of the priorities of Estonian development cooperation. Every year, Estonia awards scholarships (92 in 2020 in total) to students from developing countries to study in various technical and ICT curricula at Estonian universities. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports the acquisition of higher education, for example, in the **Tallinn University's** project "Conducting master's studies in the curriculum "Open Society Technologies" in the School of Digital Technologies of Tallinn University for Kabul University and Afghanistan IT Ministry staff" (2019–2021). The project enables ten students to study in the master's study programme at the School of Digital Technologies of Tallinn University. The study places will be created to improve the professional qualifications of the staff of the IT Faculty of the University of Kabul, the Department of Political Science of the Faculty of Humanities, and the Ministry of IT.

Significant educational projects have been implemented in the Eastern Partnership and Central Asian countries with the support of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs' development cooperation funding. Among the Eastern Partnership countries, the main target countries have been Ukraine and Georgia, where **reforms in vocational education, higher education,**

and general education (curricula) have been supported. The main target country for development cooperation projects in Central Asia is Kyrgyzstan, where an X-Road e-government system called "Tunduk" has been built in cooperation with the e-Governance Academy (eGA). This is Estonia's best-known enterprise in the region.

For a long time, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has supported cooperation projects between the **United Nations Children's Fund** and the **Innovate Foundation** to improve the quality of education in Georgia. Together with the Georgian Ministry of Education and Research, curricula and teacher training for general education schools have been developed. Estonian experience and best practices have been shared. Cooperation will continue in 2020 with the project "Promoting quality education for all children in Georgia through the improvement of the national curriculum of grades 11–12" (2020–2021), in the course of which a national curriculum for upper secondary education corresponding to modern needs will be developed. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports the UNICEF project "International consultancy for technical assistance to improve the quality of education services in Abkhazia, Georgia – Salme (Psou) village" (2020–2021), which provides technical and expert assistance to improve access to quality education for Abkhazian children.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs supports the promotion of inclusive education and the creation of a safe learning environment for various groups, for example, in Ukraine with the **UN Children's Fund** and the **Innovate Foundation** project "Social partnership for quality and inclusive education in eastern Ukraine" (2019–2020). The project will pay special attention to people with disabilities and other vulnerable population groups in Ukrainian communities, including in areas controlled by the Ukrainian government in eastern Ukraine.

Educational activities in the crisis area of eastern Ukraine are also supported in the **NGO Mondo** project "Supporting the activities of the education programme in the crisis area in eastern Ukraine" (2018–2020). The aim of the project is to support the education network of general education schools in eastern Ukraine and the Lugansk region through the activities of the

education programme for the crisis area of NGO Mondo. In cooperation with Estonian education experts, human rights education training, educational conferences, study trips of educators to Estonia, UN simulations for students, workshops, and school visits for students of educational programmes are organised. Study materials are also being developed. The Lugansk region hosts opinion festivals and smaller local human rights festivals.

ICT solutions play an important role in development cooperation. For example, the **Tallinn University** project “DG-revolution: enhancing quality of education through digital innovation in Georgian schools” (2018–2020) trains 120 leadership school teams (principal + 5 teachers) in different regions of Georgia to plan and lead digital innovation in schools using the Tallinn University digital maturity self-assessment framework DigiPeegel, the LePlanner platform for innovative lesson scenarios, and the digital learning tool compilation tool Digivaramu. The role of the lead schools is to become leaders in digital innovation and educational innovation in their region by disseminating exploratory, research-based interdisciplinary project learning in all Georgian schools, thus improving the quality of education and democratising school culture.

University of Tartu, for example, is also working on digital solutions in Georgia, with the project “Supporting school innovation, digital literacy, and entrepreneurship to prepare Georgian youth for the future labour market” (2019–2020), developing digital skills and entrepreneurship of Georgian youth, preparing them for future professions, supporting teacher training and school renewal, and enhancing cooperation between Georgian general education, university teacher training, and start-ups;

Tallinn University of Technology operates in Belarus to implement ICT in specific curricula. The aim of the project “Application of new technologies, including ICT, in curriculum development in Belarus” (2018–2020) is to improve the study quality of the specialties of Polatsk State University with the help of **Virumaa College** of the School of Engineering, Tallinn University of Technology, using the latest technologies and introducing engineering software packages in the curriculum. IT+ programmes are important,

wherein a specialist in a field can acquire a large amount of ICT-related knowledge and skills, either as part of postgraduate studies or through in-service training.

In addition to general education schools and university education, the focus is on improving vocational education. The project “Supporting vocational education in Belarus in its Development” (2019–2020) of the **Olustvere School of Service and Rural Economics** supports making changes in vocational education in Belarus based on the needs of the EU and Belarusian labour markets. To this end, ten employees of Belarusian schools are undergoing internships in Estonia, and a seminar is also taking place in Belarus. The Belarusian partner will be supported in launching entrepreneurship education, integrating it with the specialty, broadening the curricula, increasing the practical part, and adapting the curricula to the requirements and needs of the modern labour market. All this improves the quality of vocational education and the competitiveness of graduates in the labour market and, thus, the satisfaction of employers with the workforce.

In 2019, the analysis of the situation of Estonian world education took place in cooperation with the **Global Education Network Europe (GENE)**. The report is one stage in the promotion of world education in Estonia, mutual learning with other European countries, and policy development.

Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

The strategic goals of gender equality policy and the indicators for achieving them, as well as the planned activities, are included in the Welfare Development Plan 2016–2023 and in the gender equality programme annually renewed for its implementation. Activities in support of the equal distribution of the care burden between women and men will also be implemented within the framework of the Development Plan for Children and Families 2012–2020, and measures supporting sexual and reproductive health within the framework of the “National Health Plan 2009–2020”. The framework for strategic planning of activities for the prevention and combating violence against women consists of the Strategy for Preventing Violence 2015–2020 and the Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence 2019–2023.

Stereotypical perceptions of the role of women and men in society influence people's choices and support the perpetuation of social and economic inequalities between women and men, including gender inequalities in education, the labour market, the distribution of unpaid domestic work and burden of care, gender-based violence, different health behaviours, and indicators and life expectancy. Inequalities between women and men in the labour market are reflected in the different employment rates and wages of women and men, as well as in the sometimes vastly different employment rates

by occupation and profession, which reflects segregation in educational choices. The gender employment gap, i.e. the difference between the employment rates of women and men, is the largest among parents with young children – in 2019, the employment gap between men and women aged 20–49 with children aged 0–6 was 36.1 percentage points. Women predominate in activities that are considered important but not very well paid, such as social and educational activities. According to the preliminary data of Statistics Estonia, the difference between the average hourly wages of women and men, i.e. the gender pay gap, was 18.7% in 2018.

Gender inequality in society is also reflected in the decision-making level, including the unequal representation of women and men in politics and other public and private decision-making levels. For example, at the beginning of 2020, the share of women among the members of the Riigikogu was 29% and in the Government of the Republic 13%. The elderly population of Estonia is characterised by a higher proportion of women among the elderly, the main reason for which is the large difference in the life expectancy of women and men – Estonian women live on average almost nine years (8.6 years in 2018) longer than men. Although the difference in the number of healthy life years between Estonian men and women has decreased, the number of healthy life years among men is still 2.8 years lower than among women.

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
5.1. Gender pay gap, %	20,9	18,7 (2018)
5.2. Share of women in managerial positions, %	36,2	37,1 (2019)

Gender pay gap

18,7%

Share of women in managerial positions

37,1%

5.5.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

In order to reduce gender inequality, prevent its recurrence, and achieve gender equality in all areas of society, the focus will be on reducing gender stereotypes and their negative effects, reducing gender segregation in education and the labour market, supporting women's and men's economic independence, including reducing the gender pay gap, achieving gender balance at different levels of decision-making, enhancing the protection of rights and promoting institutional capacity for gender equality, including gender mainstreaming. Preventing and combating violence against women with the help of necessary services is also important.

Much attention has been paid to **reducing the gender pay gap** during the reporting period. Equal pay day is regularly celebrated every spring, highlighting the pay gap between women and men and its various causes, as well as the need and opportunities to close the gap through various information activities. In order to analyse the unexplained part of the gender pay gap, a thorough study will be conducted in 2019–2021 under the leadership of researchers from Tallinn University together with data researchers from Tallinn University of Technology and Statistics Estonia. The aim of the study is to improve knowledge of the formation of the wage gap by reducing its hitherto unexplained part and to develop science-based tools and potential solutions to reduce the pay gap.

In 2016–2019, the **draft Gender Equality Act** was developed, the purpose of which was to give the Labour Inspectorate supervisory powers over the fulfilment of the requirement to pay equal wages for women and men for the same

and equal work and to make amendments to the law more broadly that should have contributed to reducing the gender pay gap. In 2018, the Government of the Republic submitted the draft law to the Riigikogu for processing. In the spring of 2019, the draft act dropped out of the parliamentary procedure due to regular elections. The new government has not decided to resubmit the draft act. At the same time, the draft act played a role in raising awareness of the gender pay gap and, more specifically, equal pay issues in society at large and at the political level.

Various activities have been carried out to **reduce gender segregation** in educational choices and the labour market. In the spring of 2017, the Ministry of Social Affairs organised training for career counsellors working with young people, the aim of which was to provide the counsellor with basic knowledge about gender equality and skills to take the gender aspect into account in their work. In 2018, the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Competence Centre for the Use of Cohesion Policy Funding published information materials for parents and supervisors of science clubs, among others, to arouse interest and support girls in the field of science and technology. In order to reduce stereotypical attitudes and segregation, an applied study will be carried out in 2019–2021 at the request of the Ministry of Social Affairs, with the aim of developing and testing nudging methods to increase the share of girls and women in ICT specialties in education and the labour market.

In order to dispel gender stereotypes in the digital field, the information campaign "ICT is everywhere" was organised in 2018, which was primarily aimed at girls and young women. The aim of the programme was to encourage young women to consider studying and working in



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higher education in digital specialties. Within the framework of the campaign, 50 information events took place in schools all over Estonia over the course of two years, and ten separate workshops in technology companies in cooperation with Tech Sisters were held.

In addition, **the "Choose IT" programme was launched in 2017**. It is an adult retraining programme designed to provide participants with basic software development skills. Over three years, 500 people will be trained, where after a 6-week basic course, an 8-week internship in companies will be organised. The project is not only aimed directly at women, but has proved to be quite popular among them. To date, 62% of graduates are women.

Ensuring gender equality is also supported by **more equal distribution of the burden of care among parents** and diverse opportunities to combine work and family life. More flexible use of parental leave and parental benefit systems will allow for a more balanced distribution of parental leave between mother and father and support women's more active participation in the labour market. To support the implementation of the changes in the law, the media campaign "Grow Together" was implemented at the end of 2017, the aim of which was to draw attention to the important role of the father in raising children, and to encourage fathers to take parental leave. In recent years, the state has also supported local governments with the help of EU structural funds in creating new childcare places. At the same time, special attention has been paid to

the care facilities for children with special needs. With the help of additional funding, the previous physical shortage of childcare facilities has been substantially solved.

In 2017, the Riigikogu passed a draft law ratifying **the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence**, i.e. the Istanbul Convention. By ratifying the Convention, the State undertakes to develop measures to prevent violence against women and domestic violence and to provide assistance to victims. In order to bring the Estonian legal system fully into line with the requirements of the Convention, an amendment to the Penal Code entered into force in 2017, criminalising harassing pursuit, disabling female genital mutilation, and forced marriage. Buying sex from a victim of human trafficking also became a crime. **Amendments to the Victim Support Act** also entered into force in 2017, the main purpose of which is to ensure better access to services for victims of human trafficking, sexual abuse, and violence against women. The law provided for the service of a women's support centre for victims of violence against women, which includes both safe accommodation and various counselling. In the past, services for victims of trafficking and sexually abused minors were only available to those who had been subject to criminal proceedings. At the same time, it is important that the victim can be offered assistance as soon as possible, and the amendment will ensure the provision of services for up to 60 days in the future without a crime report.

In January 2017, the **Children's House in Estonia** was opened, which offers versatile assistance to children with suspected or confirmed sexual abuse. A child protection worker, psychologist, police officer, forensic doctor, and other specialists working with children contribute to the child's well-being on site. The Children's House assesses the child's health condition and need for help and offers a trusting environment, where experts from various fields can provide the necessary treatment and counselling services to the child under one roof. Currently, there are two Children's Houses in Estonia, covering primarily the regions of northern and southern Estonia; during 2020, a Children's House will also be opened in the eastern Estonia region and in 2022 also in western Estonia, thus covering the entire country. In addition, a 24/7 victim helpline was opened in early 2019 for all victims of violence and crime and their loved ones, which also contributes to an early response.

In 2019, the government approved an **Action Plan for the Prevention of Domestic Violence for 2019–2023**. The action plan is based on five general objectives: the victim is protected and supported, the person who used the violence must be responsible for their acts, the specialists are aware and competent, the tools support the specialists, and the area is constantly monitored.

5.5.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Estonian Union for Child Welfare has created a hotline that allows Internet users to provide information about illegal content spreading on the Internet – sexual abuse of children, trafficking in children (human trafficking).

Civic associations – women's support centres – have been established all over Estonia to support victims of violence against women. Some of them are concentrated in the **Estonian Women's Shelters Union**. Since 2016, women's support centres have been open in all Estonian counties, providing safe shelter and other necessary assistance to female victims of violence and their children.

To prevent domestic violence, Valuing Life, in cooperation with the Prosecutor's Office,

the Social Insurance Board, and the Ministry of Social Affairs, offers the PREP programme "My relationship is in my hands" to individuals. In the case of systematic, cold, controlling violence, it makes sense to empower the victim with training that focuses, among other things, on developing skills to distinguish between healthy/safe and unhealthy/violent relationships, leaving unhealthy relationships safely, and self-awareness and personal boundary skills. It is taught to notice repetitions in the patterns of childhood trauma both in one's close relationships and in parent-child relationships, as well as to consciously change these patterns. Participants in the programme learn to proactively recognise violent relationship patterns in their future relationships to prevent the recurrence of violent relationships in their own lives and in the lives of their children. The programme teaches one to deal with anxiety, anger, frustration, etc. This relationship programme provides relationship education skills and knowledge on how to cope better and more securely in a relationship and how to keep it safe (including what is the broader definition of security).

NGO Lifeline has been assisting victims of human trafficking and women involved in prostitution since 2005. Day centres are open in three regions, and fieldwork is being done in the fourth to find those in need. The non-profit organisation also informs the public about the dangers of human trafficking, especially sexual exploitation, and about the possibilities of receiving assistance.

Various initiatives have been launched by both the private sector and NGOs to increase girls' willingness to study sciences and technology to reduce the strong male dominance and labour shortages in this sector. For example, in 2013, **NGO Tech Sisters** was established, which organises seminars and workshops in the fields of development, robotics, and design. It has given birth to the programme **Digigirls**, which is designed for girls in grades 7–12. The programme introduces the construction and design of apps, how to create user-friendly web environments, what software product project managers, testers, and analysts do, and what the many other possible career options in the IT field are.

HK Unicorn Squad is a movement that offers

technology education only for girls as a hobby education. The enterprise started in the autumn of 2018 with the aim of arousing and increasing technical interest among girls through practical tasks. To date, the initiative has grown into a network of more than 600 girls.

There are also examples from the private sector. In 2017–2018, **Telia Estonia** organised a special programme, “Telia TechGirls”. About 200 girls participated in the programme, 95% of whom said that they are considering linking their future to technology-related specialties.

A representative of non-governmental organisations participates in the expert group on gender equality in the field of culture and creativity set up within the Working Group of Culture of the Council of the European Union.

5.5.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Women’s empowerment is one of the cross-cutting themes in Estonian development cooperation, and several projects are aimed directly at improving the status of women. For example, the project of the Estonian Women’s Studies and Resource Centre “Combining the knowledge and experience of Estonia and Georgia for the protection of children and women in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara” (2017–2018) aims to reduce violence against women and children in the Autonomous Republic of Adjara and to increase the effectiveness of victim support. During the project, officials and specialists (social workers, teachers, psychologists) working in five municipalities in Adjara were trained in counselling victims of domestic violence. Separate training was provided for law enforcement officers to recognise and prevent human trafficking. An information campaign was organised during the project to explain the criminal nature of domestic violence and to encourage victims to turn to law enforcement for help.

Focusing on the protection of the interests of Ukrainian internally displaced women and the expansion of their prospects in the labour market and entrepreneurship, the Estonian Women’s Studies and Resource Centre implemented the project “Women Are Smart” (2017–2018). Activ-

ities focused on the better and faster integration of Ukrainian internally displaced women into communities, the broadening of their prospects in the labour market, especially in business, and their inclusion in society.

Currently, NGO Mondo is also dealing with the issue of domestic violence in Georgia. The project “Mondo in Georgia: Supporting female victims of domestic violence in the Samegrelo region” (2019–2021) will improve the independent coping of female victims of domestic violence in the town of Zugdidi in the Samegrelo region near the Abkhazian border in Georgia. The project activities will improve the capacity of the local partner organisation to provide psychosocial support services in the women’s shelter and day centre. They will also improve their capacity in the field of social entrepreneurship and identify opportunities to start a business. A social enterprise would provide women who want to leave a violent home with the confidence and additional income that is essential to start an independent life. In addition, in-service training on human rights is provided to rural youth workers and the media, supporting awareness-raising on domestic violence.



Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

The goal of the government is to ensure accessible, high-quality, safe, and affordable drinking water for every inhabitant. According to the latest data, 98% of consumers receive adequate drinking water from the public water supply system (in 2013, this share was 91%, and in 2016, 97%). Estonia continues to be characterised by a large number of low-capacity public water supply systems. 50% of all water supply systems have a capacity of less than 10 m³/day and supply 1.5% of all public water supply system consumers. At the same time, water supply systems with a capacity of 1,000 m³/day, which only make up 1.45% of all water supply systems, provide water for 70% of all consumers of public water supply systems. Approximately 12% of the total population obtains their drinking water from private or individual water supply systems. The state is taking sufficient measures to increase the number of users of the public water supply system, but it is not possible to connect

all households with private and individual water supply systems to the public water supply system due to low population density or other reasons. However, the state is constantly working to ensure the safety of drinking water in individual water supply systems by various support measures and raising consumer awareness.

In addition, the government aims to improve the status of water bodies. The share of water bodies in good status has remained at the same level in 2016 and 2017. In 2017, 56% of surface water bodies and 79% of groundwater bodies were of good status. The goal is to achieve good status in 81% of surface water bodies and 84% of groundwater bodies by the end of 2021. Achieving this target is problematic, as new data from monitoring water bodies indicate a worse status than previously thought, and many remedial measures are voluntary and, therefore, not sufficiently implemented.

Amount of wastewater treated at least at the second level

101
million m³

Share of consumers receiving adequate drinking water from the public water supply

98,1%

Groundwater abstraction

213
million m³

Share of surface water bodies in at least good overall status

54%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
6.1. Amount of wastewater treated at least at the second level, million m ³	117	101 (2018)
6.2. Share of consumers receiving adequate drinking water from the public water supply, %	98,1	98,1 (2019)
6.3. Groundwater abstraction, million m ³	221	213 (2018)
6.4. Share of surface water bodies in at least good overall status, %	55	54 (2018)

5.6.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

In order to improve the condition of Estonian water bodies, **water management plans** are being implemented, the aim of which is to improve the status of rivers, lakes and coastal waters, and the sea, prevent floods, and retain the sediment and nutrients transferred from agricultural and forest lands through ditches and streams. The river basin management plan provides for more than 2,000 measures, many of which are advisory, research, and administrative measures such as awareness-raising through training, review of environmental permit requirements, and, where necessary, imposing stricter requirements, conducting surveys to identify the non-good status and planning measures, etc., which is done on a day-to-day basis.

To achieve this goal, **measure programmes of water management plans** will be implemented, and a water status assessment system will be further developed to support the design of appropriate measures to eliminate sources of pollution or reduce hydromorphological burdens or their effects. The measure programmes include, inter alia, large-scale investments to ensure clean drinking water and the proper treatment of wastewater discharged into the environment. As a result of the support of the Cohesion Fund and the Environmental Investment Centre (EIC), in 2017–2019, an additional drinking water and wastewater service meeting the requirements was provided to approximately 28,000 more people.

In cooperation with local governments, **the construction of a water and sewerage system** for Estonian households in low-density areas has been supported since 2013. For example, in 2018–2019, approximately 1,500 sewerage systems and 1,400 water systems have been built for households of low-density areas established with the support of the low-density programme jointly financed by the state and local governments. As a result of the programme, the proportion of families living in rural areas who do not have sewerage or running water has now decreased significantly. In addition, a study of drinking water quality and systems in low-density areas was started in 2018 to find out the status of wells and the quality of drinking water that people **obtain from private wells**. The study will be completed in 2020, and as a result, decisions can be made on how to better ensure high-quality drinking water for people who consume water through private wells.

Measures to reduce the impact of diffuse agricultural load (construction of manure storages, modern manure application equipment, maintenance of land under winter vegetation, etc.), which are financed by the Agricultural Registers and Information Board have also been important. In 2018, the Ministry of Rural Affairs developed a new support measure, "Regional water protection support measure", with a budget of 500,000 euros in a nitrate-sensitive area to support additional water protection measures. 2017–2019, the largest investments that can be highlighted are the liquidation of the Sindi dam and opening thereof for fish migration and the elimination of residual pollution from the area of the former Priimetsa asphalt plant.

The **elimination of residual pollution** from the catchment areas of the Purtse River and the Kroodi stream was also started, but these activities will end in 2022 and 2020, respectively. New plans, together with measure programmes and flood risk management plans for 2021–2027, are being prepared. When preparing the plans, a thorough overview of the status of Estonian water bodies is obtained, and activities are planned to improve the status of rivers, lakes and coastal waters, and the sea.

5.6.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The Estonian Water Association, which includes experts in both water management and natural science, actively participates in commenting on both national and local water management decisions, as well as in public exhibitions and discussions. Every year, a summer tour is organised in some counties to be acquainted with water management problems and meet local decision-makers. As a member of the Global Water Partnership, special attention is paid to transboundary water management plans and public involvement.

At the end of 2017, vocational training for water treatment operators was launched at the Järva County Vocational Education Centre on **the initiative of the Estonian Water Work Association (EVEL)**, the courses of which are successfully conducted to this day. The need for vocational training of water treatment operators was recognised in Estonia in 2012, when EVEL drafted a strategy for the years 2012–2016. The training of competent water treatment operators is essential to ensure the proper maintenance and consistent operation of expensive water and sewerage equipment. How clean our drinking water is and how we treat wastewater in an environmentally friendly way also depends on the work of the water treatment operator. Appropriate handling of equipment is only possible with the use of skilled labour, as water management involves extremely complex and highly specific work processes that require specialist knowledge.

AS Tallinna Vesi is the largest water company in Estonia, providing water and sewerage services to almost a third of the Estonian population. An average of 67,000 m³ of water and 130,000 m³ of wastewater is treated at their plants every day. Groundwater resources are a limited and slowly renewable natural resource, which is why the company has gradually reduced the share of groundwater in drinking water production for more sustainable use of water. Therefore, only about 10% of the population consumes local groundwater for drinking water, and 90% of drinking water is produced from surface water. As part of efforts to achieve sustainable water use, the focus is on reducing leakages in the water pipeline.

The Estonian Chamber of Agriculture and Commerce is actively involved in raising farmers' awareness of water protection. To this end, various information days and trainings are organised, which include an overview of the obligations and requirements arising from the regulation of the field, as well as the introduction of environmentally friendly ways of operating. In addition, the ECAC participates in the LIFE IP CleanEST project led by the Ministry of the Environment, which started at the end of 2018 and will last for ten years. The aim of the project is to improve the condition of water bodies in East- and West-Viru counties. It includes a study on the impact of agriculture on the quality of surface water and groundwater in the East-Viru sub-basin, guidance material on possible water protection measures in agriculture, a guide for calculating the nutrient balance, and a training programme for farmers and consultants.

5.6.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

A good example of dealing with the environmental sustainability of water management is the project "Development and training of technological and technical solutions for wastewater treatment and water management infrastructure in Belarus" (2017–2018) of **OÜ Addenda**. The aim of the project was to improve Belarus' ability to introduce environmentally friendly thinking in the manufacturing sector. During the activities, the operational and maintenance errors of natural and technical methods of wastewater treatment of Belarusian paper companies and their technical and technological solutions were analysed, and recommendations were given to prevent these errors and improve the situation. The analysis completed during the project was performed by Belarusian experts. Afterward, the Estonian experts shared recommendations in the format of training seminars and webinars on the knowledge that meets the requirements of the European Union and Estonia's experience in applying the directives.

Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable, and modern energy for all



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

The Estonian government's energy policy is guided by the European Union's climate and energy policy framework, the main objectives of which are to increase the share of renewable energy to 32% of final energy consumption by 2030, increase energy efficiency by 32.5% by 2030, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least by 40% (compared to the year 1990).

In the National Development Plan of the Energy Sector until 2030, Estonia has set the goal of ensuring energy supply to consumers at market-based prices and availability, which is in line with the European Union's long-term energy and climate policy goals, while contributing to improving Estonia's economic climate and environment and increasing long-term competitiveness. The target levels and trajectories for achieving this goal are specified in the National Energy and Climate Plan until 2030. The aim is to increase the share of renewable energy and improve energy efficiency while ensuring the security of supply and energy security. By 2030, the target is for the share of renewable energy to be 42% of the total final energy consumption. Final energy consumption must remain at the current level (32–33 TWh/a). To ensure energy security, we keep our dependence on imported energy as low as possible.

The share of renewable energy in final energy consumption in Estonia is one of the largest in the European Union; in 2018, the overall share of



renewable energy in final energy consumption increased to 30%. The share of renewable energy has increased in the electricity, heating and cooling, and transportation sectors. The heating and cooling sector, where renewable energy sources account for more than half, contributes the most to the overall share of renewable energy. As at the end of 2019, renewable sources account for 21% of electricity production. Introduction of the blending obligation for liquid biofuels and the local second-generation biofuel – biomethane – have been important contributions to the growth of the share of renewable energy in the transport sector. By the end of 2020, the share of renewable sources in the transport sector should exceed 10%. Estonia exceeded the overall renewable energy target for 2020 already in 2011, and by selling our surplus, we are helping other European Union member states to achieve their renewable energy targets. At the time of compiling this review, Estonia has entered into

agreements with two European Union Member States for the sale of renewable energy statistics.

Estonia's average energy consumption per square metre in residential buildings is high compared to other European Union member states. Reconstruction of the housing stock has the potential to save energy, given that buildings use 40% of the European Union's energy, and 75% of buildings are inefficient in terms of energy use.

In Estonia, the security of electricity supply has been based on domestic solid fossil fuel – oil shale. As the production of electricity from oil shale emits a significant amount of CO₂ into the atmosphere, it is particularly sensitive to the price of the EU ETS CO₂ quota. The high quota price has led to a decrease in electricity production from oil shale, which is why Estonia has changed from an exporter of electricity to an importer of electricity. In 2019, 27% of electricity was imported. At the same time, greenhouse gas emissions from electricity generation decreased proportionately.

Energy productivity,
euros per kilogram
of oil equivalent

3,0

Energy
dependency rate

4%

Share of energy
expenditure in
household's total
expenditure

9,1%

Share of renewable
energy in final
energy consumption

30,0%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
7.1. Energy productivity, euros per kilogram of oil equivalent	2,9	3,0 (2018)
7.2. Energy dependency rate, %	8	4 (2017)
7.3. Share of energy expenditure in household's total expenditure, %	9,0	9,1 (2018)
7.4. Share of renewable energy in final energy consumption, %	28,7	30,0 (2018)

5.7.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

On the road to climate-neutral energy supply, it is important to ensure the security of supply. When analysing the security of the electricity supply of Estonian consumers, we need to look at the broader picture than only power plants located in Estonia, because our connections are so good with our neighbours. At present, the **synchronisation of the electricity systems**

of Estonia and the other Baltic States into the synchronous area of continental Europe is underway. According to the best current knowledge, the level of security of supply in Estonia will meet the standards prevailing in Europe at least until 2025 due to market mechanisms. It must guarantee the security and independence of the supply of the electricity system, ensure the functioning of the electricity market, and offer low costs for the consumer. The electricity grids will be connected to the continental European electricity grids by 2025.

In order to **increase energy efficiency and the share of renewable energy**, support will be provided for the renovation of district heating systems and boiler equipment (including the transition to renewable fuels), connection to the district heating network, and, if necessary, replacement thereof with local heating solutions, renovation of buildings, and renovation of street lighting infrastructure.

In order to increase the share of renewable fuels in the transportation sector, support

measures have been launched for the production, refuelling, and consumption of biomethane. Regulations have also been developed to boost the use of renewable energy (incl. renewable electricity) in the transportation sector.

In 2019, the Government of the Republic decided to allocate funds from CO₂ quotas to improve the air monitoring capacity of north-eastern Estonia to release part of **the height restrictions established in Virumaa for the development of wind farms**. At present, most Estonian territories, including north-eastern Estonia, have height restrictions on wind farms, as high wind turbines interfere with the operation of equipment used for national defence. The Government's decision means that the achievement of national defence and climate goals must not be obstacles to each other, but additional investments must be made to ensure the achievement of both goals. The decision means that the Ministry of Defence can start the necessary preparations for the procurement of additional air surveillance radars and other accessories. After the investments have been made, some areas of north-eastern Estonia will be freed from height restrictions (in a total area of approximately 3,100 km²). According to the initial plan, the necessary renewable energy investments will be made during 2024.

At the end of 2019, for the first time, **public reverse auctions of renewable energy** were organised in Estonia. With the help of reverse auctions, Estonia's renewable energy production can be increased at the best price for consumers. The first major reverse auction (450 GWh for the purchase of renewable electricity generation) will take place in 2021. Prior to that, smaller-scale reverse auctions (5 GWh) will take place.

In order to improve the energy use of residential buildings, a long-term reconstruction strategy has been created, which provides guidelines for the systematic reconstruction of the building stock so that the final energy consumption in buildings would slow down to 16 TWh/a and then decrease somewhat. The energy consumption of residential buildings makes up more than 2/3 of the total building stock, and there is also a very large number of residential buildings at the end of their design life. Special attention must be paid to apartment buildings, as 71% of the Estonian population lives in them. More than 1,000 apartment buildings have been completely reconstructed through state support measures, but by 2050, an

additional 14,000 apartment buildings will have to be reconstructed.

5.7.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Among NGOs, the field of renewable energy is promoted by the **Estonian Renewable Energy Association**, who represents renewable energy producers in discussions with government agencies, introduces renewable energy solutions and opportunities to the public, participates in energy debates, conducts research and development, and organises training on renewable and sustainable energy solutions. The Association also manages the project "100% Renewable Energy by 2030", which sets targets for the transition to renewable energy in electricity and heat production.

The Estonian National Committee of the World Energy Council (**WEC Estonia**), which organises conferences and seminars and conducts thematic analyses, helps to promote sustainable energy supply and use.

The goal of the **Estonian Power and Heat Association**, which represents Estonia's leading energy and network companies, is the balanced development of the energy sector. The organisation is an active player as a legislative partner and in the development of a vision for the future of energy. The mission of the association is to train competent engineers and specialists on whose skills and abilities the actual use of modern technology depends. The Association offers in-service training for engineers and study days for apartment associations.

5.7.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

NGO Cleantech ForEst with its project "Cooperation in the field of renewable energy and green technologies with the aim of increasing the use of green economy and sustainable technologies in Uzbekistan" (2018) advised Uzbek green economy on the introduction of sustainable technologies, raising the level of sustainable development, and promoting alternative energy sources.

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH



GOAL 8

Promote sustained, inclusive, and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

One of the main goals of the Government of the Republic is to promote knowledge-based economic growth. Estonian labour productivity has grown rapidly (78% of the EU average in 2018), but regionally unevenly and below the expected pace in manufacturing. Further growth requires more active research and development and the introduction of new technologies. So far, the share of R&D expenditures of Estonian companies in GDP (0.59%) is well below the EU average (1.45%). The integration of digital technologies in the business sector is also poor in Estonia (16th place in the EU).

The government also aims to increase incomes and achieve high employment, at which Estonia has been successful. The growth of the average wage has been fast, and the employment rate is 79.9%. The action plan of the Government of the Republic for 2019–2023 sets the goal of maintaining a high participation rate in employment in the age group of 20–64 years. The favourable economic environment, the implementation of the working capacity reform, and the pension reform have contributed to the growth of employment. The employment rate of people with reduced working capacity has increased to 51.1% by 2018 (in 2015, it was 48.5%). As the retirement age rises, more people will remain in the labour market every year, and many will continue to work beyond retirement age. Compared to other EU countries, Estonia



FOTO: RENEE ALTROV

has the highest employment rate among those over 50 years of age.

The Estonian Research, Development, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Development Plan for 2021–2035 is being prepared. For the first time, these issues will be addressed in the joint strategic plan to create more synergies and coherence between areas. One of the goals of the development plan is to base Estonia's development on knowledge-based and innovative solutions. The goal is to achieve the average level of productivity in the European Union or even above it by 2035. Compared to the above, more attention is paid to the development and introduction of environmentally friendly technologies and the development of the circular economy.

In Estonia, the resource productivity of local resource valorisation is very low (0.4 euros per kg). In business, more emphasis needs to be placed on green technologies and business models, and greater valorisation of local resources and secondary raw materials.

Real GDP growth

4,3%

Resource
productivity

0,56
euro/kg

Labour productivity
per hour

20,9
euros

Employment rate

79,9%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
8.1. Real GDP growth (change compared to previous year), %	2,6	4,3 (2019)
8.2. Resource productivity, euro/kg	0,63	0,56 (2017)
8.3. Labour productivity per hour, euros	18,4	20,9 (2019)
8.4. Employment rate, %	76,6	79,9 (2019)
8.5. Long-term unemployment rate, %	2,1	0,9 (2019)
8.6. Young people aged 15–24 not involved in education or training, %	9,1	6,9 (2019)

5.8.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

It has been recognised that to strengthen cooperation between companies and research institutions and to transfer knowledge, the cooperation capacity of all parties must be increased. From 2017, the recruitment of **research advisers** in ministries have been supported to improve the capacity of ministries in ordering necessary research and development activities and the use of research results in their field. Similarly, at the end of 2019, **a support measure for development advisers of business branch associations** was launched as a pilot project to support the activities of the associations in boosting research and development activities in the field. Development advisors hired with the support of the measure help to increase the awareness of entrepreneurs in the field about the possibilities of research and development and to determine more clearly the common interests of companies and the needs of research and devel-

opment. **Support for researchers to move to the private sector** is also being prepared.

Important steps have been taken to create incentives to improve cooperation between businesses and research institutions and to increase knowledge transfer. **The share of business agreements in the basic funding formula for research institutions has been increased.** The logic is that the more research institutions have received income from cooperation with companies, the more they receive basic research funding from the state budget.

In addition, the Ministry of Education and Research has initiated **sectoral research programmes** based on the needs of entrepreneurs. The ICT programme was launched in 2018, and the resource valuation programme will start in 2020. From 2019, researchers will be offered **development grants** on a pilot basis to develop their research results into a phase of interest to the company.

In recent years, more attention has been paid to supporting the innovation capacity of companies and research and development, seeing it as the main opportunity to achieve the desired productivity growth. Through Enterprise Estonia, companies are offered **innovation and development vouchers** (in the amount of 4,000 euros), which enable them to use the services of research institutions. Often, with the help of the support, companies using the voucher collaborate with researchers for the first time. From 2018, Enterprise Estonia has also offered **product development support**, which is intended to encourage industrial entrepreneurs to invest more in development activities. As a result, the added value of entrepreneurs and the sales turnover of new products are expected

to increase. For more research-intensive activities, help can be obtained from **the NUTIKAS measure to support applied research**, which contributes to applied research in research institutions for the benefit of businesses.

In order to **develop the local capital supply and the risk and private capital market**, we increased the supply of risk capital through KredEx Foundation. Providing venture capital through the use fund of funds helps both Estonian start-ups and fast-growing companies that have operated longer to develop and finance growth.

In 2017, the **Economic Development Committee of the Government** was created. It is a ministry-level committee whose goal is to promote Estonia's economic development and improve the country's competitiveness. The Committee normally meets once a month and is chaired by the prime minister. The Committee discusses in particular issues related to the economic environment, the labour market, and business development. For example, in 2017, the Committee approved a business diplomacy strategy, the implementation of which has helped to encourage foreign investments and the export of Estonian companies.

From 2015, a **measure to develop creative industries** has been implemented with the aim of linking cultural and creative potential to entrepreneurship, fostering the growth of companies with new ambitious business models, increasing the export capacity of cultural and creative industries, and adding value to other sectors of the economy through the creative industries in developing business models, products and services, and sales and marketing. The state promotes the development of the creative economy as part of the knowledge-based economy.

In order to strengthen regional competitiveness, a measure of **regional centres of excellence** has been established, the aim of which is to develop business research and development based on region-specific development preconditions and increase added value in cooperation with regional research and education institutions, companies, and local governments.

In 2016, the **conditions for granting support for regional initiatives to promote employment and entrepreneurship** were approved. The support measure promotes the development

and growth of enterprises, the growth of entrepreneurial activity and employment, and contributes to the entrepreneurial awareness of young people, complementing the respective national support measures and taking into account the specifics of the county and the needs of stakeholders.

In order to harmonise the labour market support activities of different institutions and reduce duplication, the **provision of career services** was streamlined. The career counselling previously offered by the Innove Rajaleidja centres and the provision of career counselling and information services offered by the Unemployment Insurance Fund were combined – since 2019, the career counselling and career information mediation service has been concentrated in the Unemployment Insurance Fund, and career services and career information are available to everyone throughout Estonia, including students, working people, the unemployed, and the elderly.

In 2018, a **support system (Youth Guarantee Support System) was launched for inactive young people aged 16–26** with the aim of finding and providing non-studying and non-working young people with the necessary support and assistance to re-orientate them to work or study. Under the new support system, a local government social worker has the opportunity to find and contact NEETs (young people not in education, employment, or training) living in that municipality with the help of an innovative IT solution. Each young person is approached individually, their need for help and goals are identified, they are directed to existing public services if necessary, and they are assisted in being acquainted with learning and job-seeking opportunities. However, acceptance of the help by the young person is voluntary, and if the young person does not want it for any reason, they can give up the help at any time.

One of the major challenges in the field of the labour market is the **development of renewed employment conditions and social guarantees**. The work of the future brings us flexible forms of work and is characterised by unconventional working hours and jobs or irregular work. Existing obligations and rights in traditional employment are not directly applicable to new forms of work, and different and multifaceted ways of doing

work have developed, e.g. sharing of employees, sharing of work, temporary management of work, occasional work, including zero-hour contracts and on-call work, ICT-based mobile work, work based on Internet platforms, etc.

5.8.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The **Startup Estonia programme** has been launched to develop the Estonian start-up ecosystem, as a result of which, thanks to a bureaucracy-free and start-up-friendly business environment, an internationally prominent start-up ecosystem and innovation-based thereon is currently developing in Estonia. There are about 100 organisations in Estonia that offer products and services at different stages of development of a start-up, starting with entrepreneurship and innovation education for young people and children and ending with service providers of start-ups in the growth phase (scale-ups).

Since 2005, the **Responsible Business Forum** has been developing the topic of corporate social responsibility in Estonia and bringing together companies practicing corporate social responsibility in Estonia. The Forum organises information events and brings together companies with experts and advisers from various fields related to sustainable development issues. In November 2019, various indicators related to corporate social responsibility were introduced, through which to manage the achievement of sustainable development goals in companies.

The **Estonian Council of Environmental NGOs** is the umbrella organisation for associations protecting environmental protection goals. Members participate in various seminars and forums, as well as work with companies to promote their resource efficiency and seek alternatives to various hazardous chemicals (e.g. the Baltic Environmental Forum project Life Fitfor-REACH, which aims to prepare SMEs for future challenges related to restrictions for the use of chemicals).

In 2018, the **Estonian Association for Environmental Management** launched the Circular Economy Forum, which is an open information

exchange and cooperation platform that helps to promote the circular economy, introduce the principles of circular economy and their integration into the daily activities of companies, share best practices, and promote cooperation between companies and organisations. Since 2018, a total of 3 seminars on circular economy have been organised, and circular design audits have been conducted in 10 companies. The organisation has also initiated the issuance of Green Office certificates. The principles of the Green Office, for example in the fields of waste management, energy and water consumption, green purchasing and transportation, and employee awareness, have been implemented by companies, schools, and public sector institutions. As at 2020, a total of 22 Green Office certificates have been issued.

In 2017, the umbrella organisation **NGO County Development Centres** was established, which unites 15 development centres located in Estonian counties into a single network. The change brought about by the members of the network made it possible as of the beginning of the year 2019 to start providing independent advice and development services to regional start-ups and operating companies and civic associations within the framework of support programmes created by various strategic partners. In cooperation with local governments and ministries (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education and Research) and organisations providing services to entrepreneurs (Unemployment Fund, KredEx, Rural Development Foundation, banks, Innove Foundation, Tallinn City Enterprise Department, etc.), MAKs help to plan and implement local, county, and state-level public sector investments in infrastructure and service development.

As a local government, the **city of Tallinn** has been actively contributing to the creation of opportunities for business development and innovation in Tallinn since the early 2000s. The main focus of the activities has been on the growth of entrepreneurial activity and awareness, the support of development and innovation of start-ups, and the creation of a favourable environment for expanding business opportunities through the development of incubators, industrial, and technology parks. Micro and small enterprises are offered a comprehensive

package of services, which includes business advice and business training. With the financial support of the city, start-up entrepreneurship, rapid completion of a prototype and launch of a minimum viable product to the market, and the formation of interdisciplinary teams by supporting the spread of training modules on start-up entrepreneurship will be stimulated. In order to value entrepreneurship and increase entrepreneurship awareness, Tallinn Entrepreneurship Day is organised every year together with recognition events for local entrepreneurs and the MELT Innovation Forum.

5.8.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Since 2014, the **Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry** has strengthened economic and trade relations with developing countries by organising business seminars in destination countries and compiling study programmes that meet the needs of delegations coming to Estonia. The activities carried out support economic growth and employment in developing countries through business links, small and medium-sized enterprises, and other businesses, and will increasingly encourage the use of innovation. The project activities take place in the least developed countries.

For a long time and with great success, **Estonian Business School** has been developing entrepreneurship and the business environment in Ukraine in bilateral cooperation. First from 2017, with the project “Launch of the entrepreneurship competence centre at Ternopil Business School” (2017–2018), as a result of which the Ternopil Business School is able to offer business and entrepreneurship literacy modules of different duration and orientation to Ternopil university students and lecturers, employers, and employees in Ternopil region. After that, the project “Development of a business innovation centre at Ternopil Business School” (2019–2020) was launched, during which a business innovation centre will be developed that connects the university and the business world, contributing to the growth of the competitiveness of the region’s economy. The centre offers business mentoring as well as short and effective business development courses. The project targets start-ups and groups excluded from the labour market, including war veterans and internally displaced persons.

GOAL 9

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

The action plan and budget strategy of the Government of the Republic pay great attention to the construction of high-quality and modern infrastructure. The goal of the Government of the Republic is a good air and sea connection and a high-quality railway and road network. The aim of the transport system is to enable the movement of people and goods in an accessible, convenient, fast, safe, and sustainable way.

In addition, the aim is to support the introduction of new technologies and ensure the wide availability of high-speed Internet access in Estonia.

The innovation capacity of Estonian companies is modest. Only very few invest in research and development (in 2018, companies' research and development expenditures accounted for 0.59% of the GDP), cooperation with research institutions is modest, and the number of researchers working in the private sector is small. The low

innovation capacity of the business sector is also evident from the European Innovation Scoreboard, where Estonia's position has decreased relative to the European average. However, Estonia's strengths are human resources, financial and business support measures, an environment that supports innovation, and close international cooperation of our researchers. The decline in the total innovation index is also related to significant methodological changes. However, the sector of start-ups that stand out in terms of innovation is encouraging. Their numbers and capitalisation have grown significantly, and their contribution to the wider economy is becoming increasingly important.

Share of research and development expenditure in the GDP

1,4%

Number of researchers and engineers per 100,000 inhabitants

376

Share of high-speed Internet connections

15,1%

Internet usage rate

89,4%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
9.1. Share of research and development expenditure in the GDP, %	1,2	1,4 (2018)
9.2. Number of researches and engineers per 100,000 inhabitants	330	376 (2018)
9.3. Share of high-speed Internet connections, %	11,5	15,1 (2018)
9.4. Internet usage rate, %	87,2	89,4 (2018)
9.5.1. Share of train passengers in land passenger transport, %	2,0	2,3 (2017)
9.5.2. Share of car passengers in land passenger transport, %	80,1	80,5 (2017)
9.5.3. Share of bus and trolley bus passengers in land passenger transport, %	17,9	17,3 (2017)
9.5.4. Share of rail transport in land freight transport, %	42,9	46,2 (2018)
9.5.5. Share of road transport in land freight transport, %	57,1	53,8 (2018)

5.9.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

The status, goals, and activities of companies in the field of research and development and innovation are described in more detail in Chapter 1.8.

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the **Transport and Mobility Development Plan for 2021–2030** will be prepared to set long-term goals in the field. The largest transport infrastructure development projects are the gradual **electrification of the railway**, which helps to reduce both the environmental impact and noise and increases the speed of connections, the construction of a new high-speed international railway, **Rail Baltic**, and the **development of 2 + 2 main international roads**. The measures needed to meet the 2030 and 2050 climate targets in the transportation sector are being identified. Preparations are also being made for the use of European Union funds for the financial period 2021–2027, where the main emphasis will be on the development of sustainable transport. Development

projects for cycling tracks and tramways in cities and railways within the country are being implemented in cities.

The **accessibility task force** at the Government Office will contribute to the promotion of infrastructure accessibility from 2020, developing measures that will ensure the accessibility of the new environment to be created, improve the accessibility of the existing environment, and increase public awareness and capacity of the designers of physical and IT environment and services. It is also important to raise awareness among decision-makers and the society as a whole about accessibility and to achieve a situation in the coming years where the physical and e-environment created meet modern principles of accessibility.

Regional measures have also been set up. In 2019, the **East-Viru County industrial investment support measure** was launched, the aim of which is to create new jobs with higher-than-average wages in the industrial sector of East-Viru County and to increase the added value of industrial enterprises.

In order to reduce the digital divide between urban and rural areas, an analysis of the establishment of **high-speed Internet terminals (the "last mile")** was completed in 2017, with recommendations for state intervention to improve the availability of broadband to end users throughout Estonia. The government discussed the relevant proposals of the minister of entrepreneurship and information technology in February and November.

Based on the results of the analysis, a **measure was developed to support the construction of broadband access networks**. With the support measure, the state will invest 20 million euros in seed capital in 2018–2019 to accelerate the construction of final connections.

The government has decisively increased **funding for research and development** from the state budget. We have systematically increased the basic funding for research, which ensures greater stability for researchers' careers. Basic funding for research has tripled in a few



FOTO: KAJAR KATTAL

years, as a result of which the ratio between basic funding and competitive funding (research grants) has reached the target of a 50-50 ratio by 2020.

In order to ensure the succession of research and development, **doctoral student grants were increased in 2018** from 422 euros to 660 euros.

More and more research and development projects related to **remote monitoring and the introduction of satellite data** are being implemented in Estonia. In 2019, the state satellite data sharing centre ESTHub was established at the Land Board, the aim of which is to mediate and process data of Sentinel missions on the territory of Estonia and other areas of interest. ESTHub data has already been used in remote monitoring projects of ice data and forest resource accounting based on satellite data. AS Datel Sentinel-1 also uses remote monitoring data collected and transmitted by ESTHub in the new global service "Sille". The "Sille" early warning system makes it possible to monitor barely perceptible movements and subsidence of infrastructure and buildings, thus mitigating risks and preventing accidents.

At the beginning of 2019, the analysis **project "Introduction of remote monitoring data in the creation and development of public services"** was also launched. The two-year project will explore the use of remote monitoring data in the following areas: prevention and

response to landscape fires, flood and water level monitoring, monitoring the use of agricultural land, and planning and supervision of construction activities.

5.9.2. ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Estonian organisations in the field of intelligent transport from both the public and private sectors have been brought together into a single **ITS Estonia network** under the leadership of the Estonian Association of Information Technology and Telecommunications. The main objectives of the network are to increase the efficiency, environmental sustainability, and safety of the transportation and logistics sector in the field of both passenger and freight transport, and to support the export and development of companies in the field. To achieve the goals, various workshops, seminars, and brainstorming sessions take place between the public and private sectors, both internationally and nationally. ITS Estonia is a platform for cooperation between the public and private sectors in launching new pilot projects and sharing knowledge about developments in the field. ITS Estonia is also a member of the international network of Ertico ITS Nationals, being an active partner for other European networks in the field of intelligent transport.

Tallinna Linnatranspordi AS is a company belonging to the City of Tallinn, whose main activity is the provision of bus, trolley, and tram traffic services. The focus of the company's strategy is on the development of environmentally friendly public transport, which contributes to a cleaner urban environment and a gradual increase in the number of passengers. By renewing its fleet, the company wants to reach the following important milestones by 2025 and 2035:

- in 2025, diesel buses will be replaced by more environmentally friendly vehicles (mostly gas buses) and tests will be carried out on the operation of electric buses;
- in 2035, all public transport vehicles in Tallinn will be mostly powered by renewable electricity.

The set goals are high because diesel vehicles make up about 79% of the rolling stock of Tallinna Linnatranspordi AS. The first major step was taken in 2018, when the procurement of one hundred gas buses and the necessary refuelling infrastructure was started. The new vehicles will start operating at the end of 2020 and will replace the oldest diesel engines. In the years 2017–2019, the transport company has been seeking to promote electric transport and reduce its environmental impact. It is also important that the company's trams and trolley-buses use electricity produced from renewable energy sources for movement.

5.9.3. INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

In order to improve the availability of ICT and ensure more universal and affordable access to the Internet for the population of developing countries, the **e-Governance Academy Foundation** has introduced a secure data exchange environment in several countries since 2014: supporting the government in developing an e-governance system in Tunisia, developing interoperability solutions in Kyrgyzstan, including the introduction of X-Road, improving the provision of public services in Ukrainian municipalities, and creating e-services and X-Road in Palestine.

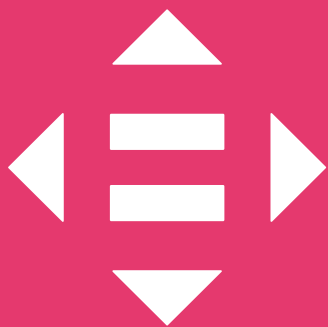
One of the most outstanding projects in promoting innovation in development cooperation has been the **Estonian-UNDP cooperation project "Digital transformation as a sustainable development pathway"** (2018–2020) announced by President Kersti Kaljulaid and Achim Steiner, Head of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 2018 as part of the UN General Assembly High-Level Week, the aim of which is to share Estonia's e-governance experience through the UNDP platform with about 170 developing countries, and to digitise UNDP. On the Estonian side, the project is implemented by the e-Governance Academy Foundation. The project has four lines of work. As part of the first line of work, a diagnostic tool was developed to quickly assess the country's digital situation and draw up an action plan for the country's digitalisation. The tool was tested on a project in Mauritius. The tool was then integrated into the official UNDP database, which can be used by UNDP country offices. The aim of the second line of work was to digitise UNDP. The UNDP digital strategy and its implementation plan for 2019–2021 were developed. A chief digital officer has now been hired at UNDP to continue digitising the organisation. In the third line of work, the introduction of the tool developed during the project was organised. The fourth line of work envisages the use of the tool at the city level and the digitisation of workshops on e-identity. In September 2019, UNDP and the Hilton Foundation launched the City2City Network Initiative, which, among other things, supports the use of the tool.

Another good example of international cooperation is the **Garage48 OÜ** project “Building a local community of mentors in Moldova and popularising entrepreneurship among Moldovan youth by Garage48 and Yep! Moldova” (2019–2020), which brings together the most outstanding talents of Moldova’s younger generation in software development, design, marketing, project management, and other fields to create a new generation of start-up communities with strong knowledge and real skills in international business and ICT sectors through education and inspiration. The other half of the project brings together a community of local mentors and offers them support from experienced Garage48 mentors. An incubation programme for students, Idea Garage Days, and the visit of the Yep! Moldova team to Estonia will be organised, and the capacity of the local mentoring community in the workshops will be developed.

Garage48 has also promoted the activities of start-ups in Belarus with the project “Development of the small business and start-up community in Belarus” (2016–2017) and currently in Georgia with the project “Development of entrepreneurship among Georgian youth” (2019–2020).

A good example is the development of the **export control information system “Stratlink”** in Ukraine and Moldova between 2017 and 2018, co-supported by the US Department of State and the Estonian Foreign Ministries, and implemented by SpinTeK AS. This e-licensing system ensures the timely exchange of information between government agencies and corporations on the granting of permits in the military-industrial sector. Through full automation, the system speeds up the implementation of licensing procedures, saves state budget resources, and establishes constant communication with customs authorities to prevent violations in the field of export control. E-licences make it possible to better manage the data of individuals and organisations involved in international arms transfers.

In preparing for and **supporting housing reforms in Ukraine**, the Estonian Union of Co-operative Housing Associations implemented the project “Supporting housing reforms in Ukraine” (2018–2020). Within the framework of the project, the Estonian Union of Co-operative Housing Associations and project partners in Ukraine, together with UNECE housing experts, developed a professional standard for Ukrainian apartment association managers and apartment building managers in implementing housing reforms.



Reduce inequality within and among countries

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

The principle of equal treatment is based on the principle of equality between persons and non-discrimination and means taking into account the needs of all people for uniform treatment for all. The goals and tools of the equal treatment policy are described in the Welfare Development Plan 2016–2023, more precisely in sub-goal 3: people's opportunities to cope independently, live in the community, and participate in society have improved due to effective legal protection and high-quality assistance.

The field of equal treatment is regulated by the Equal Treatment Act, the purpose of which is to ensure the protection of persons against discrimination on the grounds of nationality (ethnic origin), race, colour, religion or belief, age, disability, or sexual orientation. At the same time, the law offers uneven protection in groups: discrimination on the grounds of religion or belief, age, disability, or sexual orientation is regulated in fewer areas than on other grounds.

The share and the total number of elderly and disabled people in Estonian society are growing. By the beginning of 2019, people with disabilities already made up 12% of the Estonian population (158,542 people), which has been on a growth trend in recent years. As one gets older, one also is more likely to have health problems and need help. The environment, the services, and products offered must also be accessible and

usable safely and as independently as possible for all members of society.

In order to achieve the effective protection of rights, we address the following issues:

- Supporting the opportunities of social groups to have a say in issues concerning their rights, either themselves or through representative organisations. The lack of equal opportunities causes damage to the person whose rights are violated on the one hand and damage to society as a whole on the other.
- Alleviating negative prejudices and stereotyped attitudes towards people belonging to minorities. In Estonia, attitudes are negative, especially towards people of different ethnic backgrounds, skin colour, and/or different religious or cultural backgrounds, as well as towards sexual and gender minorities. The general attitude towards equal treatment issues is also negative or indifferent rather than sympathetic.
- Better implementation of the Equal Treatment Act to raise people's awareness of their rights and obligations. Prejudices and stereotypes can lead to discrimination and negative attitude against minorities.
- To improve awareness of access to assistance, including legal aid, and harmonise the interpretation of legislation in this area.

In promoting equal treatment, it remains important to address accessibility in all areas, to harmonise legal protection for all groups, and to raise public awareness of equal treatment.

Income per household member
per year

12 721
euros

Income inequality,
quintile ratio

5,1

Unmet needs
for specialised
medical care

15,8%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
10.1. Income per household member per year, euros	10 698	12 721 (2018)
10.2. Income inequality, quintile ratio	5,4	5,1 (2018)
10.3. Unmet needs for specialised medical care, %	15,7	15,8 (2018)

5.10.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

In 2020, an **information campaign was launched to promote equal treatment**. The aim of the campaign was to break down stereotypes and prejudices about different minority groups, to promote understanding and solidarity between different social groups, and to reduce discrimination by setting a good example. The aim was also to promote tolerance towards minority groups and to promote social attitudes in which everyone has the right to self-fulfilment on an equal basis with others and to feel safe.

The model of the **Diverse Workplace label** was created in 2016. Companies that have joined the label aim to promote diversity in their organisation in a targeted and thoughtful way. Therefore, joining the label does not only mean that diversity is valued in words, but that plans to promote diversity are developed and implemented in organisations. Diversity in state institutions is directly related to the legitimacy of state power and also to internal security, and every citizen must recognise themselves as a civil servant. Concrete steps have already been taken to include people with disabilities in public administration, but much remains to be done to achieve proportionality. National minorities are

also under-represented. It is also important that groups are represented at all levels (including management).

Diversity is also highlighted in the context of **Diversity Day**, which is celebrated every year in April. In addition, it has been possible to join a voluntary diversity agreement as early as from 2012, by which a company, NGO, or public sector organisation confirms that it respects people's diversity and values the principle of equal treatment among its employees, partners and customers. To date, 110 organisations or companies have joined the agreement.

In 2017, the **campaign "Career in Estonia"** was implemented, which was intended to inform people with a mother tongue other than Estonian about job opportunities in the public sector: the campaign page www.karjeravestonii.ee, the Facebook page of the same name, the campaign subpage in Russian Delfi (<http://rus.delfi.ee/daily/career/>), outdoor commercials, the TV series Shadow Day (10 success stories of non-Estonian-speaking public sector employees, one Russian-speaking young person as a reporter in each programme), and ten short videos to introduce the programmes and successful characters were completed. Dozens of articles were published (appeared on the campaign pages), eight information seminars were held in universities and general education schools, and a webinar (interactive information seminar) attended by more than 300 people was conducted.

In 2019, the **analysis "Communication of public sector employment opportunities to non-native speakers"** was completed, which recommends recruiting more people of other nationalities to public service. The analysis makes



FOTO: TÕNU TUNNEL

concrete proposals to increase the awareness of the non-Estonian-speaking population, especially young people, about the possibilities of working in the public sector: to intensify cooperation with upper secondary schools and universities, improve the options of in-service training, including teaching professional Estonian language, and inform potential candidates about job opportunities in their preferred communication channels. The analysis offers the implementation of mentoring and internship programmes as supportive measures.

In the autumn of 2019, two **seminars on hate speech** were organised in Estonia, the target groups of which were journalists and officials. The seminar dealt with how to recognise hate speech, how to react, and how not to transmit or amplify hate speech by oneself.

In order to create additional **social guarantees for persons with irregular incomes**, including freelance creative people, an amendment to the Health Insurance Act entered into force in 2016, which provided for the possibility to aggregate social tax for a person for which several employers together pay social tax in one month at least to the established minimum. This was a relief for those who work on a project basis or for several employers.

In order to improve the coping of people with special needs and to support their participation in the labour market, a **new work ability support system, i.e. the work ability reform**, was launched in 2016, which was implemented in three stages. The aim of the reform was to support the full life of people with incapacity for work by finding a new job, taking into account their personal abilities. This means that instead of the current incapacity for work, the person's ability to work was assessed, services were renewed, and the focus was on helping people with the reduced working capacity to find a job. This was a big and important change in the way of thinking, which affects more than 100,000 people living in Estonia.

Within the framework of the action plan for the involvement of foreign specialists and the ICT development programme, the **International House of Estonia**, where foreign specialists coming to work in Estonia and the entrepreneurs recruiting them are offered various services, such as registration of residence, information on family doctors, kindergarten and school places and language training, assistance in preparing residence permit documents, career counselling for spouses of specialists, and adjustment programme training.

In 2017–2023, the state will financially support local governments to **adapt homes of more than 2,000 people with special needs**. Adapted housing helps people with special needs to cope better on their own, reduces the burden on caregivers, and creates better conditions for participation in the labour market. Adaptation means the conversion of a dwelling in such a way that a person is provided with specific adaptations based on their special needs, such as a ramp, platform lift, etc., as well as conventional adaptations due to a disability, such as replacing a bath with a shower. During the adaptation, for example, due to special needs, a safety barrier can be built, the garden gate can be automated, or kitchen worktops and appliances can be brought to a lower level.

In September 2019, the government decided to set up an **accessibility task force** to develop proposals and measures to support accessibility in both the public and private sectors. Lack of accessibility is particularly noticeable in public spaces but also exists in e-environments when consuming both public and private e-services. The proposed measures will improve the well-being of the entire population but will, in particular, facilitate the coping of people with special needs, the elderly, and families with children. Various ministries, state agencies, and representatives of local government and the third sector are involved in the work of the task force. The Government Office is responsible for convening and coordinating the task force, and its task is to submit to the government by the summer of 2021 its proposals for improving accessibility in the country.

5.10.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The activities of the **Estonian Chamber of Disabled People** help to improve the coping, quality of life, and inclusion of people with disabilities in society. The Chamber is a network of 16 regional chambers of people with disabilities and 32 all-Estonian disability-specific unions and associations. The Chamber acts as a partner organisation in policy-making, participating in working groups that address the issues of accessibility, inclusive education, the fight

against poverty, bringing innovative solutions to social welfare, etc. In 2018–2019, childcare services were provided to families of children with disabilities to reduce the care burden. Round tables on rare diseases were also held. In 2018, a shadow report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was completed.¹⁷ The shadow report draws attention to the shortcomings in the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, based on the practical reality in the lives of people with disabilities in Estonia.

NGO Accessibility Forum was founded in 2014, and its goal is to ensure an accessible environment for everyone. The organisation consists exclusively of representatives of various types of disabilities, including specialists of accessibility and universal design with 10–15 years of experience in the fields of architecture, construction, design, IT and other areas.

The advocacy activities of the **Estonian Human Rights Centre** are aimed at the effective implementation of the principle of equal treatment in various areas where it has not worked well so far. This includes general outreach so that people know their rights, working with the authorities to improve law enforcement, and strategic action to set precedents through the courts. One of the most talked-about tasks in recent years in the field of equal treatment has been the adoption and correct implementation of the Registered Partnership Act. Its correct implementation is one of the priorities of the Human Rights Centre's advocacy activities, as it not only helps to promote the factual situation of LGBTIQ+ people, but also promotes attitudes that support human rights and tolerance in general in Estonia. The Estonian Human Rights Centre is also a leader in promoting diversity in Estonia.

The Estonian LGBT Association is a non-profit organisation working for LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender people and people with other forms of sexual and gender identity and self-expression) people and their loved ones, whose mission is to support the LGBT+

¹⁷ Shadow report on the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2018: https://www.epikoda.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/EPIK_variraport_webi.pdf

community and their loved ones by providing support services and advocacy and to raise public awareness of LGBT+ issues through information activities. The vision of the Estonian LGBT Association aims at a strong community and a caring and inclusive society, where individuals are valued regardless of sexual and/or gender identity. The Estonian LGBT Association is the spokesperson for LGBT+ issues in Estonia, whose main areas of activity are advocacy, strategic communication, education, and community support and empowerment.

5.10.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The lagging behind in rural areas in Belarus was addressed by the **Peipsi Centre for Transboundary Cooperation** with the project "Development of social and women's entrepreneurship and community cooperation in the Naroch agricultural area, Belarus" (2016–2017). The activities developed small business and organic food production in the Naroch region, a former agricultural region currently characterised by unemployment, youth exodus, and marginalisation. The activities of the project also contributed to the preservation and introduction of heritage and culture, and to the promotion of organic production, using the experience of the Lake Peipsi region. Cooperation was established with the non-profit organisation Women for the Rebirth of the Naroch Region. Information days and cooperation seminars, a local food and handicraft fair in Komarovo, and a study trip to Estonia were organised, information and printed materials were prepared, and internships were offered in cooperation with the Komarovo Vocational School.

Another good example is the project of the **Eassalu-Neitsi Village Society**, "Handicrafts unite and give work" (2017–2018), in the Chişcăreni district of Moldova. The project activities encouraged talented woman artisans to work with new state-of-the-art embroidery machines. With the aim of starting to produce and sell handicraft products on national subjects, embroidery machines and product display tents were purchased for them. In addition, the project helped to develop women's entrepreneurship. The project included a visit

to a festival of handicrafts in Moldova and the organisation of workshops on the embroidery of national patterns and logos. Moldovan crafts-women presented and sold their products at the 2018 Pärnu region handicraft festivals.

Similarly to the previous project, the current project of the **Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre** "Estonian-Moldovan cooperation platform for entrepreneurial rural women" (2019–2020) focuses on the promotion of women's entrepreneurship in rural Moldova. In the course of their activities, Estonian women entrepreneurs share their experiences with Moldovan women, demonstrating good practices, and offering mentoring. In order to increase the financial and operational capacity of female entrepreneurs in the target area, a five-module training will take place partly with the participation of Estonian experts, and a study visit to Estonia will be organised.

A good example is the **University of Tartu** project "Involvement of women and young people in rural entrepreneurship, developing their skills and knowledge in the field of hospitality and event tourism product design" (2017–2019). The project empowered women and young people in rural areas, increasing their knowledge and skills in the development of event and hospitality services, thereby increasing their entrepreneurship. To achieve this goal, a practical handbook of rural tourism business (incl. event management) was compiled, seminars were organised for event organisers, craftsmen, and small entrepreneurs, where good examples of Estonian rural tourism destinations and businesses and festivals were introduced. A study trip to Estonia was also organised. In addition, the organisers of Moldovan rural festivals were offered mentoring for the events. As a result of the project, more than 50 participants gained new ideas, experience, and support to develop entrepreneurship in rural Moldova.

In 2018–2019, the **Jaan Tõnisson Institute** addressed regional inequality in Georgia within the framework of the project “Supporting the economic development of rural areas in Georgia”. Georgia’s economic development has been uneven in recent decades, and slower-growing rural regions have clearly emerged. Tourism is one of the most important economic sectors in Georgia, but generally, only the main and best-known attractions are visited. This has had a negative effect on the economic performance of rural areas and the well-being of the population. The project focused on the lesser-known mountain areas of Javakheti and Kakheti in Adjara. The overall aim of the project was to reduce inequalities and increase the socio-economic well-being of lagging regions. To this end, greater use was made of the potential of tourism by developing trans-regional tourism products and routes and by improving the sectoral capacity of regional tourism businesses.

The UN Children’s Fund and the **Innovative Foundation** are cooperating in Belarus to improve education for children with special needs. In 2018, the project “Inclusive education for students with special needs in Belarus” (2018–2021) was launched to improve the capacity of national stakeholders in the field of inclusive education policy development and implementation; the curricula will be reviewed and updated, based on the principles of inclusive education. In the course of the activities, the capacity of students learning to be teachers to implement an inclusive methodology will be strengthened, and a model of a network of educational support services will be created, taking into account Estonia’s best practices and experience with the Rajaleidja Network.



Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

The aim of the government is to ensure that the Estonian people feel that they live in a safe and secure country where the fundamental rights and freedoms of all are equally guaranteed.

Spatial planning is a key instrument for creating the conditions for a democratic, long-term, balanced spatial development, land use, quality living and built environment in cities and other settlements that take into account the needs and interests of members of society, promoting environmentally sound and economically, culturally, and socially sustainable development. Spatial planning addresses issues such as housing, transport, roads and streets, cultural heritage, waste management, green spaces, resource efficiency, climate change adaptation, security, and much more. At the same time, the keywords in the preparation of plans are cooper-

ation and involvement, without which it is not possible to establish any plan in Estonia.

The active role of the community and, more broadly, the cooperation of the participants is important for the quality of life and sustainable development of cities and settlements. Particular attention will be paid to security issues. The Estonian Internal Security Development Plan 2020–2030 is being prepared and one of the objectives of it is to create a public space that promotes security. It is planned to increase people's awareness of behaviour in public places and the use of prevention and protection measures, as well as to implement measures in public space planning that promote safe and secure behaviour and discourage risky behaviour.

Share of architectural monuments in good and satisfactory condition

79%

Human casualties in traffic accidents

1406

Access to green areas

90%

Share of people commuting by public transport, cycling or walking

38,8%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
11.1. Share of architectural monuments in good and satisfactory condition, %	65 (2017)	79 (2018)
11.2. Human casualties in traffic accidents (number per year)	1468	1406 (2019)
11.3. Emission of fine particular matter (PM < 10 µm), thousand tonnes	11,92	13,92 (2017)
11.4. Access to green areas, % of population	90 (2017)	90 (2018)
11.5. Households satisfied with the condition of their dwellings	89,9	90,8 (2018)
11.6. Share of people commuting by public transport, cycling or walking, %	40,1	38,8 (2019)

5.11.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

In order to review the planning processes of the spatial living environment, an inter-ministerial **spatial design expert group** operated at the Government Office in 2017–2018 in cooperation with the Union of Estonian Architects. The main shortcomings were the lacking and fragmented spatial competence at the central government level and the lack of a holistic view. In the final report of the spatial design working group at the Ministry of Finance in 2019, proposals were made for **a more comprehensive approach to spatial policy and more effective** inter-ministerial cooperation, which would ensure the improvement of the quality of infrastructure and related living environment. It was proposed to create a joint agency in the land, regional, and planning sector, introduce the basic principles of high-quality space, and increase spatial competence throughout society.

A large number of Estonian cities are facing problems due to population decline. Therefore, guidelines have been continuously issued to local governments for the preparation of master plans to promote sustainable adaptation to the conditions of a declining population. In 2019, a corresponding **survey of small Estonian**

settlements¹⁸ was completed, which, inter alia, makes recommendations to local governments for actions for adaptation with the decline of the population. In 2020, the Ministry of Finance launched a cooperation project with the OECD, the aim of which is to find cross-sectoral ways to adapt to declining populations.

In order to adapt to population changes, the Union of Estonian Architects has been implementing the **"Good Public Space" urban centre revitalisation programme** since 2014 with the support of the state and local governments. In the course of this, public architectural competitions have been organised in Estonian cities for the last five years, after which the renewal of many city centres has taken place with the implementation of the winning works.¹⁹ Approximately twenty local governments are in the queue to improve the quality of the living environment through the activity. The programme contributes to integrated and balanced regional development and the achievement of climate policy objectives, increases the attractiveness of urban areas as living and business environments, and reduces urban sprawl.

The **principles and conditions for granting support to local government housing stock investments** were developed. The aim is to ensure better availability of modern rental accommodation for mobile workers in areas with market failures. The capacity of local governments to provide housing for socio-economically disadvantaged households will also be improved. The measure improves the ability of local governments to invest in housing and the living environment. In addition to the availability of housing, the condition, and energy efficiency of the housing stock across Estonia will improve,

¹⁸ Survey of Estonian small settlements, 2019 – https://planeerimine.ee/static/sites/2/vaikeasulate_uuring_2019.pdf

¹⁹ While in 2018, the central squares of Tõrva, Põlva, Valga, and Rapla were opened, in 2019, Võru Square, Kuressaare Square, and Rakvere Pikk Street were also completed. In 2020, it is planned to open the solutions of Kärdla, Jõhvi, and Viljandi, and in 2021, it is planned to open the first stage of Narva (Town Hall Square, Stockholm Square). Ongoing or upcoming competitions concern the centers of Tapa, Võsu, Lihula, and Paide.

and as a result, the competitiveness of the business and economic environment in remote areas will increase.

According to a pan-European survey, heating sources are unsafe in 23 per cent of Estonian dwellings. In 2018, the two-year **project “Fire safety for homes”** was launched, in the course of which, in cooperation with the state and local government, at least 633 households with coping difficulties, of which 500 are in a particularly critical condition, were made fire-safe. The project will continue in the coming years. An amendment to the law also entered into force on 1 January 2018, according to which it is **mandatory in Estonia to install a carbon monoxide sensor in all dwellings** where a gas device connected to the chimney is located. The Estonian Rescue Board is ready to start activities to increase **home safety more widely, including, for example, the prevention of falls by the elderly.**

In 2017, the government implemented an **administrative reform**, as a result of which 79 local governments remained instead of the previous 213. Larger local governments provide higher-quality services to citizens and must be able to ensure more balanced regional development. In order to increase the revenue base and financial autonomy of local governments, the share of income tax going to local governments was increased, and changes were made in the distribution of the equalisation fund – the gradual abolition of targeted subsidies will create opportunities for local governments to manage their budgets more flexibly.

After the administrative reform, all merged local governments will prepare new **comprehensive plans – the main strategic development documents for directing spatial development on the territory of the local government.** New comprehensive plans are also prepared by non-merged local governments, which is why a new comprehensive plan is currently being prepared in more than 80% of local governments. The comprehensive plan creates the foundations for high-quality and sustainable space, and many comprehensive plans also look for opportunities for further development of wind energy, for example. The Ministry of Finance as the organiser of planning activities has supported the preparation of new compre-

hensive plans with the preparation of guidance materials, advice, and support measures to address the necessary topics in more detail during the preparation of the comprehensive plan.

In the coming years, it is planned to continue with the **activities of promoting the administrative capacity of local governments** to make maximum use of the preconditions created by the administrative reform for better administrative capacity. Following the reform of local governments, most local governments are facing novel tasks and the ability to solve them depends on further development in public administration (for example, greater decentralisation of public sector tasks). Increasing the capacity of local governments to manage, cooperate, and deliver services and to apply flexible management and service delivery models is also critical to addressing a number of societal challenges (such as population change, improving people's health and prolonging healthy life expectancy, creating flexible and responsive learning opportunities, and reducing social disparities).

A third of **Estonia's construction heritage is still in a state of break-down in danger of being destroyed.** The situation is worse in areas with a declining population, where the real estate market is not functioning, and there are many empty houses. Architectural monuments are best preserved when they are in use, so it is strategically necessary to prioritise existing valuable architecture over the construction of new buildings and to develop historic city centres. To facilitate this, a new Heritage Conservation Act entered into force in 2019, the aim of which is to create a better balance between the obligations and rights of the owners of monuments, to ensure the long-term preservation of cultural monuments. In addition, in 2019, the Ministry of Culture launched a new support measure for the development of city centres in areas with a declining population. The aim is to restore and use empty or underused buildings, thus revitalising the heart of the city. Repaired and used buildings of cultural value improve the living environment by making it more attractive and make a significant contribution to the construction and tourism sectors and employment.



FOTO: RIINA VAROL

Clean outdoor air is one of the most important components of a high-quality living environment. In cities, air quality is primarily affected by transport, electricity and heat production, district heating, industry, and the long-range transboundary air pollution. In 2019, the Minister of the Environment approved the **National Plan for the Reduction of Emissions of Certain Air Pollutants for 2020–2030**, which addresses the possibilities for reducing pollutants in all relevant sectors. The programme agreed on the necessary measures to reduce emissions and to achieve the objectives agreed in the Gothenburg Protocol to the UNECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution in the framework of the European Union's Clean Air Policy Package.

Through the **air quality management system Airviro**, which covers all of Estonia and all Estonian cities, it is possible to monitor air data in real-time on the Internet. The concentration of pollutants in the ambient air is constantly measured at air monitoring stations located all over Estonia. In addition to air quality monitoring, Airviro can also be used to model air quality to develop appropriate measures to reduce pollutant emissions. In addition, e-noses or odour sensors have been installed in the Muuga Harbour and Maardu area and by

Pirita Road, the purpose of which is to detect odour disturbances when they occur. With the help of e-noses, the chemical composition of the air can be constantly monitored and intervention in the event of an odour disturbance can be immediate. E-noses are a continuous odour monitoring network, which has the advantage of a large number of measuring points. With the help of the readings, the odour disturbance can be identified as soon as it occurs, the cause of it can be found, and quick action can be taken.

One of the most important pollutants with health effects is **fine particles, which in the urban environment originate primarily from local heating** and which, in addition to the solid component, also contain many different pollutants. Therefore, measures to ensure good ambient air quality cover a very wide range of activities, from domestic heating to the optimisation of urban traffic schemes and industries. One of the measures to be implemented is the reconstruction of the heating systems of Estonian apartment associations to enable connection to district heating or to switch the existing heating system to renewable fuel. The development and expansion of the district heating network is important because it is the best possible solution for environmental protection while contributing to the sustainability of district heating networks.

In order to reduce pollution from home furnaces, the Ministry of the Environment has also organised several campaigns to emphasise the importance of more efficient and cleaner heating methods and dry wood; training for potters, and local governments have been organised.

In order to better ensure internal security, in the spring of 2017, the Minister of the Interior approved **action plans to strengthen the regional police network, increase the police's rapid response capacity, renew the protective equipment of rescuers and deminers, and modernise rescue equipment**. Among other things, the action plans increased the number of regional police officers by 45, the number of rapid responders in Estonian regions, and the number of volunteer rescue teams capable of responding to traffic accidents; supported the renewal of the community-based volunteer rescue companies; and increased the volume of prevention.

In 2018, the government approved the **final report of the Civil Protection Task Force and the Civil Protection Concept**, which aims to increase the population's awareness of possible crisis situations and improve their skills and preparedness to deal with them, and to ensure the protection of the population in cooperation with various agencies.

5.11.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

For a century, the **Union of Estonian Architects** has promoted the field of spatial design and has been a leader in the development of Estonian architectural policy. The Union has been actively involved in shaping the legal system in the field of spatial design, implementing good practices in architectural competitions, and developing the professional system for architects.²⁰ As an umbrella organisation of spatial design experts, the union has contributed to the planning of public space so that the environment built by

Estonia would be of a high standard. The Union has systematically provided spatial advice to various institutions and organisations, including to create a better learning environment for the growing generation, and has proposed to integrate spatial education into basic education, laying the foundations for an inclusive, safe, sustainable, and resilient living environment in the future.

In 2019, the Estonian Centre of Architecture organised the Tallinn Architecture Biennale (TAB) for the fifth time, the aim of which is to address topical issues in spatial design and take a look at the future of the field of spatial design. For example, the focus has been on ensuring adequate and affordable housing in the modernisation of Soviet-era panel house districts, as well as on building heritage issues. In 2015 and 2017, the TAB paid special attention to sustainable urbanisation and the reduction of environmental risks through modern digital and biotechnology tools. In the case of public spatial installations, the production of sustainable and durable pavilions made of local materials, especially wood, has been important, where new construction techniques are being tested.

The **Estonian Landscape Architects' Union** develops the professional system of landscape architecture and participates in the work of the professional qualifications committee of spatial planners. The work of a landscape architect includes, among other things, the preparation of spatial environment plans, outdoor construction projects, landscape inventories and analyses, landscape restoration projects, a compilation of special conditions and maintenance, and protection management plans for parks and landscapes. The union, in cooperation with other professional associations in the field of spatial design, has contributed to the organisation of an architectural awards event and the publication of (outdoor) spatial publications, which help to make society aware of and illustrate the application of quality space by highlighting good spatial solutions.

The **Estonian Urban Lab**, which conducted, among other things, community security research in 2015–2016, also developed analysis tools, has made a strong contribution to the issues of safe spatial design, e.g. it has created an urban space analysis tool, i.e. a spatial plan or

²⁰ The professional committee formed at the Union of Estonian Architects as a provider of a profession grants a profession to three professional levels: a Diploma Architect, level 7; Chartered/Principal Architect, level 7, and Chartered/Principal Architect, level 8.



FOTO: ERR / SIIM LÕVI

spatial development plan, which offers a broad-based (urban) spatial analysis, strategic planning of the living environment, and the involvement of partners, local government, and the community to create a high-quality and people-centred (urban) space.

The **Estonian LEADER Union** and the **Estonian Village Movement Kodukant** are important networks in small towns and villages that cooperate with state agencies and local governments, as well as with local cultural, economic, and environmental associations throughout Estonia.

A good example in the field of transport is **Bolt**, which has set up a sharing platform for cars, electric scooters, bicycles, and public transport. Bolt's activities help to reduce traffic congestion in cities, the number of car parks and, at the same time, pollution – all this gives people more free time and opportunities to use urban space to their liking. In order to reduce the company's carbon footprint and contribute to the creation of a more sustainable urban environment, the Bolt Green Plan initiative was launched in 2019. As a first step, the goal of making all Bolt trips in Europe 100% carbon neutral has been invested in. In addition to Estonia, contributions are made to the goals of sustainable development in developing countries, including support for the installation of solar lighting systems in households in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania.

The **Estonian National Youth Council** supports the work (and formation) of participatory bodies and forms in local governments, advises young people and officials on issues of youth participation, thereby increasing the opportunities for young people to participate. At the beginning of 2020, 72 of the 79 local governments had a participation body or form. Participatory bodies and forms have a local say in education, sports, culture, youth work, transport management, waste management, etc., thus supporting the development and sustainability of local governments.

5.11.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

Together with France, Estonia will lead the European Commission's **expert group on high-quality architecture and the built environment**, which will propose policy recommendations by mid-2021 to ensure a high-quality built environment for all. "High-quality architecture" is defined in this context not only in terms of aesthetics and functionality, but also in terms of improving people's quality of life and the sustainable development of rural and urban areas. The task of the expert group will be, inter alia, to analyse models of multidisciplinary and inclusive governance that promote social cohesion, the sustainable development of neighbourhoods, and adaptation to climate change.

After joining the European Landscape Convention, a **working group for the implementation of the Landscape Convention** started working at the Ministry of the Environment in 2019. The Convention is intended to promote landscape protection, management, and planning, as well as cooperation in this field in Europe. The landscape has a significant impact on people's quality of life and identity. It is also of great importance for the culture, social well-being, ecology, and economy of society. In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, the responsibility for landscape-related activities lies not only with national authorities, but also with local and regional authorities. The Landscape Convention is implemented both horizontally and vertically, from individuals to the national level, and in cooperation with all areas of activity that shape and change landscapes.

In 2016–2020, the **e-Governance Academy Foundation** will participate in the U-LEAD decentralisation framework programme for Ukraine initiated by the European Commission. The main goal of the project "E-governance measures to support the U-LEAD project in Ukraine" is to provide systematic support to support e-governance in public administration and the necessary reforms. As a result of the project, Ukrainian government agencies are being prepared to implement a secure data exchange environment and information systems

for the provision of public services in more than 600 service centres throughout Ukraine.

The Ukrainian Ministry of the Interior has also been interested in Estonia's e-governance experience and has wanted to create a single alarm centre in Ukraine with regional service centres, starting with Dnipro. For this purpose, the **Praxis Centre for Policy Studies** advised the relevant state authorities in Ukraine on the project "Consulting the pilot project of the Alarm Centre 112 in Ukraine" in 2018–2019. An important part of the project was to take over Estonia's experience in creating a single emergency number 112 and organising its work.

Currently, the **Estonian Centre of Eastern Partnership** in Moldova is implementing the project "Introduction of democratic governance based on the values and transparent governance of the European Union: Application of Estonia's reform experience in empowering Moldovan local governments" (2019–2021). Valuing integration with the European Union and adhering to understandings and principles of governance based on European values are crucial for Moldova's development perspective. The project activities in the Selemet and Cimişlia municipalities are built on strengthening and introducing these directions and understandings at the local level through the application of practices based on Estonian experience in developing cooperation with civil society and promoting local government tasks, including local business and rural activities. The project will also strengthen the communication capacity of local governments and cooperation with the local media. The activities of the project also include the development of various forms of local media, increasing the reliability and professionalism of the information society, among other things, in preventing the spread of disinformation.

Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

In its action plan, the Government has aimed to increase the value of local resources on the ground and to create high value-added jobs across Estonia. In 2020, the "Support for Resource Valorisation R&D" programme will be launched, according to which it is planned to support research and development for the valorisation of local resources such as wood, food, and mineral resources. The programme sets more specific focus themes for each resource. In the field of mineral resources, research to increase the availability of the necessary raw materials and to add value to local raw materials will be supported to achieve the wider adoption of green technologies and the transition to a carbon-neutral economy by 2050. There has been insufficient progress in waste management. The recycling rate of municipal waste has not increased significantly in recent years, reaching 28% in 2018. Waste generation in 2018 was lower than in the previous few years.

Estonia's problem is that the extraction and use of our national raw material oil shale generates large amounts of waste, waste rock, and ash. The share of waste rock recovery from mining has increased every year, being 63% in 2018, but the recovery of oil shale fly ash and hearth ash has been low, where 1.9% was recovered in 2017. In order to increase the use of waste rock, it is planned to use it to a greater extent in the construction of infrastructure.

Research and development work will continue to achieve the greatest increase in added value in the production of electricity or liquid fuels from oil shale and to maintain long-term knowledge related to the processing of this specific mineral resource.

In recent years, the number of companies implementing various environmental management systems has increased: as at 2018, 582 companies are implementing the ISO environmental management system, and five companies are implementing the EMAS system. In order to promote environmentally friendly resource-efficient products and services, the government has set itself the goal of supporting the expanding use of waste as a resource in its action plan.

In order to promote the resource efficiency of products and services, a circular economy development document and action plan will be prepared by the end of 2021, which will create a systematic approach to Estonia in the transition to a circular economy and ensure economic growth in an environmentally friendly manner. This gives Estonian companies opportunities to develop such products and services that can also be exported, e.g. Cleveron, Reverse Resources.

By the middle of 2021, a comprehensive analysis of the Estonian waste sector will be completed, as a result of which, policy recommendations

on how to implement a comprehensive waste reform in Estonia will be prepared. In the future, the infrastructure needed for waste management has to be thoroughly renewed, and to achieve

ambitious goals, fundamental changes need to be made to the separate waste collection, waste treatment, and what data is collected and how it is collected.

Municipal waste
recycling rate
28,0%

Waste generation
23 517
thousand tonnes

Hazardous waste
recovery rate
6,9%

Oil shale mining
15 944
thousand tonnes

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
12.1. Municipal waste recycling rate, %	27,0	28,0 (2018)
12.2. Waste generation, thousand tonnes	24 441	23 517 (2018)
12.3. Hazardous waste recovery rate, %	4	6,9 (2018)
12.4.1. Implementers of the environmental management systems	6	5 (2018)
12.4.2. Implementers of the ISO environmental management system	552	582 (2018)
12.5. Oil shale mining, thousand tonnes	12 691	15 944 (2018)

5.12.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

The major challenges are the **widespread implementation of the principles of the circular economy and the achievement of efficient and effective waste management.**

In 2019, the **Accelerate Estonia programme** was launched, the aim of which is to develop new projects based on the e-Estonia success story in cooperation with the private sector. One of the four funded projects is the **"Excess materials flow"**, an exchange of data for the recycling of production residues. The idea is to create a

web environment that provides an overview of companies' production waste so that another company can find raw materials there. In essence, this solution strives for a circular economy, which means that no more waste is generated in the production and all material is circulated between companies.

In order to increase the resource efficiency of companies, support is provided to companies in the mining and manufacturing industries. The measure includes four activities: raising awareness, training professionals, audit/resource analyses, and investment. The measure has supported 112 projects (total cost of projects 170 million euros). Projects directed to the industry have achieved at least 5% improvement of the use of resources (mainly the material, as well as energy, heat, and production residues and waste), the more accurate results of the measure will be apparent in the years 2020–2021. The main support has been given to companies in the wood, food, mining, and metal industries, and the implementation of projects will significantly increase the competitiveness of the local industry and reduce the burden on primary raw materials. The measure is planned to be continued, extending it to the service sector.

In order to promote **waste management and waste recycling,** the development of separate collection infrastructure and fourteen waste



FOTO: RENEE ALTROV

recycling projects in 2017–2018 have been supported, including an increase in bio-waste treatment capacity of at least 14,000 t/a and plate glass by 11,000 t/a. In addition, legislation has been clarified, and this activity will be continued. Amendments to the European Union directives on waste must be transposed by 5 July 2020, providing a framework for more effective implementation of extended producer responsibility, for example, as well as for the local collection of bio-waste. The amendments resulting from the directives will set even more ambitious recycling targets for municipal and packaging waste from 2025 onwards.

It is planned to continue supporting the increase of waste management infrastructure and recycling capacity and to prepare for the waste reform, including the new Waste Management Plan 2021–2026, where waste prevention is also one of the important priorities. Part of the waste prevention plan included in the new waste management plan is a specific food waste prevention programme, which sets targets to reduce food waste and food losses.

The local government has an obligation to organise the **separate collection of municipal**

waste, which must ensure the possibilities of separate collection of waste on its territory (organised waste transport and collection points for separately collected waste). In order for the separate collection of waste to be motivating and as convenient as possible for the residents, the local government is obliged to organise a public procurement alone or in cooperation with other local government units or agencies to find a provider of waste transport services. In order to improve the quality of organised waste transport procurements, a guide has been prepared for the preparer of basic documents for organised waste transport public procurement. Local governments are also actively advised to clarify the obligations arising from legislation and to help find solutions to the problems associated with the organisation of a separate collection of waste in local governments. To this end, the Ministry of the Environment has initiated visits to local governments and regular information letters to local governments.

The **Kuhuvii.ee platform**, partly supported by the state, has been created. This is a map application for collection points of waste and items, where one can get information on how to get rid of things that are not necessary for a person,

such as old clothes, electronics, furniture, dishes, or recyclable waste such as containers, waste paper, packaging, construction waste, etc. The purpose of the application is to solve a problem that inevitably affects us all – what to do with waste and unused things. One can enter the name of a specific thing they want to get rid of in the map application (e.g. a broken TV), but it can also be used as an information platform if one wants to be more aware of the waste management options around them. One of the important advantages of the Kuhuviia.ee application is the timeliness of the information.

Environmental management helps to contribute to the goal of sustainable consumption and production, to stimulate companies, especially large companies and multinational groups, to act sustainably and to include information on savings in their reports. The implementation of environmental management systems in companies and institutions helps them to systematically assess the environmental impact of their activities and to improve their environmental performance. Various measures have been developed to encourage the voluntary participation of organisations in community environmental management and an audit system. By joining voluntarily, the state has granted exemptions to avoid energy audits.

A study of clothing flows used in Estonia was carried out within the framework of the project “Towards a Nordic-Baltic circular textile system” of the Stockholm Environment Institute Tallinn Centre (SEI Tallinn) funded by the **Nordic Council of Ministers** and the Ministry of the Environment, in the course of which the quantities of new and used clothing and home textiles introduced to the market in Estonia were assessed, an overview of the existing collection systems was compiled, and the clothing and textile waste flow and their waste management solutions were analysed.

5.12.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

In 2008, the first all-Estonian cleaning day “**Let’s do it!**” was organised, where more than 50,000 people participated, and a total of 10,000 tonnes of garbage was collected. The activity expanded

rapidly around the world, and by now, almost 20 million people from more than a hundred countries around the world have cleaned up their country at various times based on the Let’s Do It! Model. In 2018, the first World Cleanup Day took place. It was the largest civic initiative in the history of the world, which started in and was led by Estonia. Under the leadership of Estonia, people in 158 countries around the world cleaned their land on that day.

In 2019, the **Junior Chamber International Estonia**, as an organisation uniting active entrepreneurial people, organised the environmental campaign “Do not drink plastic. You are responsible!” The aim of the campaign is to raise public awareness on the problems caused by the use of disposable plastic products and to encourage people to change their consumption habits by avoiding disposable drinking bottles.

In 2017–2018, the **Estonian Green Movement** organised a joint Estonian-Latvian project “Environmentally friendly public events”, the broader aim of which was to improve awareness of environmentally friendly behaviour but focus more narrowly on issues related to waste reduction and energy saving. To make public events more environmentally friendly, work is being done on several fronts: interactive and informative activities for festival visitors, meetings and consultations with both festival organisers and service providers, and sharing experiences across countries. Cooperation was established with the Viljandi Folk Music Festival (Estonia) and the Positivus Festival (Latvia), which received well-thought-out environmentally friendly solutions for waste sorting, energy consumption, and the use of their beverage containers during the project.

The **Union of Estonian Architects** and the **Estonian Centre of Architecture** started the PuuExpo project, which aims to increase the export of Estonian wooden architecture and develop cooperation between engineers, architects, and wood manufacturers by creating experimental product development prototypes with modern technological possibilities in mind. The activity contributes to the growth of the knowledge and skills of the new generation of architects in valuing an important renewable natural resource – wood. The project will test and demonstrate new ways to build houses that

store carbon as much as possible and for as long as possible.

In recent years, sustainable design has also become increasingly popular, both among designers and consumers. A good example is **Reet Aus**, whose goal is to reuse as many materials as possible to reduce the footprint of the textile industry. Designer **Stella Soomlais** has created cuts for her leather products in such a way that it is possible to place cuts for smaller products inside the cut lines. Therefore, if a product becomes dirty and cannot be restored, it can be given new life.

5.12.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

An excellent example of the promotion of sustainable production and consumption is the project “Development of organic agriculture and social entrepreneurship – on the example of the TEMI community” (2019–2020) of the **Peipsi Centre for Transboundary Cooperation**. The project aims to develop social entrepreneurship and organic farming in the Kakheti region and contribute to the development of a cohesive society in Georgia. The partner of Peipsi Centre for Transboundary Cooperation is the charity association TEMI, which offers accommodations as well as education and work opportunities for almost 80 people with special needs. The project develops the production and marketing of organic vegetables and vegetables in the TEMI community, which increases the community’s income from entrepreneurship. With the support of Estonian expertise (Estonian University of Life Sciences, Organic Cluster), the sustainable irrigation systems will be introduced, and trainings and a study trip to Estonia will be organised. TEMI is also developing a network with start-up organic producers in Kakheti, making a video, and purchasing the necessary production equipment.



Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

The 2015 Paris Agreement is an important step in tackling climate change. The European Union has set a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 40% by 2030. This is mainly to be achieved through a combination of two mechanisms, the European Union Greenhouse Gas Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) and national commitments to non-ETS sectors. National obligations are set for sectors outside the EU ETS, namely the ESR, i.e. the sectors covered by the Effort Sharing Regulation and LULUCF, the sector of land use, land use change, and forestry. The national responsibilities are covered by the Effort Sharing Regulation (buildings, transportation, agriculture, waste, etc.), where Estonia's greenhouse gas emissions must decrease by 13% by 2030 compared to the 2005 level. As at 2018, we had reduced our greenhouse gas emissions in the sectors covered by the ESR sectors by 0.4% compared to 2005 levels. In the LULUCF sector, the state must ensure

that greenhouse gas emissions do not exceed sequestration between 2021 and 2030.

On April 5, 2017, the Riigikogu approved the General Principles of Climate Policy until 2050. By 2050, Estonia aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by almost 80% compared to 1990 levels and by 70% by 2030. As at 2018, we had reduced emissions by 50% compared to 1990, excluding the LULUCF sector.

Although Estonia is the second largest emitter of greenhouse gases in Europe in terms of emissions per capita, the country's share of greenhouse gas emissions is small on the global scale. Estonia's share of the greenhouse gas emissions of the European Union Member States is about 0.4%. Nevertheless, the government aims to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move towards a low-carbon economy.

In October 2019, the government decided to support the setting of an EU-wide climate neutrality target for 2050.

Greenhouse gas emissions GDP per euro

0,77 kg

Greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector

13 798

thousand tonnes of CO2 equivalent

Greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector

2405

thousand tonnes of CO2 equivalent

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
13.1. Greenhouse gas emissions GDP per euro, kg	0,92	0,77 (2018)
13.2. Greenhouse gas emissions from the energy sector, thousand tonnes of CO2 equivalent	13 801	13 798 (2018)
13.3. Greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector, thousand tonnes of CO2 equivalent	2363	2405 (2019)

5.13.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

In March 2017, the government approved a **Climate Change Adaptation Development Plan**, which sets out guidelines for better coping with a changing climate. Until now, Estonia has mainly dealt with the elimination of the consequences of extreme weather conditions, but now, thanks to the development plan, the dangers caused by climate change can be better foreseen and taken into account.

The most direct effects on human health are the **rise in air temperature and the increase in heatwaves**. Higher temperatures increase the number of hot days and heatwaves, which in turn leads to an increase in heat-related morbidity and mortality. The effects of hot weather have already become apparent, as mortality was relatively high between 1996 and 2013 during hot weather (when the maximum daily temperature exceeded 27 °C). The health of the Estonian population was particularly affected by the hot summer of 2010, when mortality in the summer months was almost 30% higher than expected. In 2017, the Estonian Health Board prepared recommendations for residents based on the updated risk analysis of an extremely hot weather emergency.²¹

The changing climate affects the spread of **vectors, i.e. animal and plant disease vectors** (e.g. fleas, ticks, mosquitoes), which can transmit

dangerous infectious diseases. As a result of the change in the distribution areas of vectors, diseases that are already spreading, such as tick-borne encephalitis and Lyme disease, as well as diseases that are still uncommon in Estonia, such as leishmaniasis, hantavirus, tularemia, dengue fever, etc., will increase in the future. It is also important to reduce the risk of parasites, especially in surface water systems (especially during floods), and to identify the risk of cyanobacterial toxins.

In cooperation with the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Education and Research, **the Action Plan of Environmental Awareness and Education for 2019–2022 was prepared, the aim of which is to increase the environmental awareness of the population**, promote systemic environmental education, and describe sub-sector priorities.

In 2019, the government formed a **Climate and Energy Committee**, the aim of which is to identify ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and ensure energy supply so that the Estonian environment is preserved, and the economy is competitive in the future.

In 2019, the government's Climate and Energy Committee was presented with **analysis and proposals for measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and their socio-economic impact by 2050**. The analysis revealed that reaching a climate-neutral Estonia, where net greenhouse gas emissions have been brought to zero or below, by 2050 is technically possible in cooperation with all sectors, private, public, and non-profit, and potentially profitable in the long term in case of strategically smart investments.

Last year, the Government of the Republic approved and decided to submit a **National Energy and Climate Plan until 2030** to the European Commission. The aim of the plan is to provide Estonian people, companies, and European Union Member States with information on what measures Estonia intends to use to achieve its energy and climate policy goals. The main goals are to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 in the sectors covered by the ESR (transportation, small energy, agriculture,

²¹ Updated code of conduct for residents for an extremely hot weather emergency. Estonian Health Board, 2017. Available at: <https://www.terviseamet.ee/et/keskkonnatervis/inimesele/fuusikalised-tegurid/paike>

waste management, industry, and forestry) by 13% compared to 2005; increase the share of renewable energy to at least 42% by 2030; to maintain final energy consumption at the level of 32–33 TWh until 2030; and to ensure energy security by keeping the degree of dependence on imported energy as low as possible.

5.13.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

In 2019, Estonian youth also joined to protect the climate. There are regular climate strikes and a week of climate events – A Week for the Future – was organised in autumn. The campaign is run by young activists from **Fridays for Future**. Film evenings, lectures, workshops, and demonstrations took place in various cities across Estonia with the aim of raising awareness of the climate crisis and environmental problems.

In the summer of 2019, **AIESEC** Estonia organised city camps, where young people were taught the nature of the problem of climate change and showed them ways to deal with it in more detail.

5.13.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

At the 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 2009, developed countries decided to support developing countries in mitigating and adapting to climate change by 100 billion US dollars annually until 2020. With the Paris Climate Agreement, developed countries confirmed their **intention to continue to assist developing countries for the same amount each year for the period 2020–2025**. Until 2020, Estonia will annually allocate one million euros to developing countries to support activities related to climate change. The funds for this come from the auctioning revenues of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme.

Estonia considers it important to assist, in particular, the countries most at risk from the effects of climate change, including devel-

oping small island states. In 2015–2016, we have contributed one million euros to the **United Nations Green Climate Fund**, carried out projects in cooperation with international organisations, and **supported Let's Do It! World Cleanup**. Since 2017, we have set out to support projects promoting and exporting Estonian green technology in developing countries, which does not preclude the continuation of other types of climate cooperation.

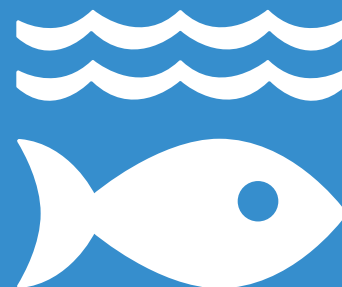
In 2018 and 2019, Estonian companies and non-profit organisations were able to apply for support for the transfer of climate technologies and knowledge to developing countries through the **Environmental Investment Centre**. Activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as promoting the use of renewable energy sources and energy efficiency or increasing the resource efficiency of transport, were eligible for funding. Activities to adapt to the effects of climate change, such as shore protection, sustainable water management solutions, forestry, or agricultural measures, were also eligible for funding. In addition, other activities that improve the capacity of developing countries to deal with the effects of climate change.

Since 2013, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been supporting the organisation of the annual global World Cleanup Day by **Let's do it!**. The project "Implementation of the clean world plan in developing countries" (2019–2022) of the **Let's do it!** aims to support and involve civic society organisations in developing countries in solving the global waste problem. The activities carried out help to prevent a number of health problems, poverty, climate change, enable a better quality of life on land and water, and affect production and consumption patterns, which, in turn, reduce the amount of waste. The project introduces and implements the Clean World Plan (a set of guidelines for waste reduction and management) through the development of empowered and supported civil society policies, the creation and implementation of a non-formal education programme in support of sustainable development, and the collection, visualisation, and analysis of waste data in the developing countries belonging to the Let's Do It! Network.

GOAL 14

Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development

14 LIFE BELOW WATER



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

In the use and protection of the marine environment, Estonia primarily follows relevant international agreements and conventions, such as the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the International Maritime Organisation's (IMO) Conventions for the Protection of the Marine Environment, the Convention on the Protection of the Marine Environment of the Baltic Sea Area (HELCOM), and others.

Due to Estonia's geographical location, the government focuses primarily on the protection of the Baltic Sea in matters of protection of the marine environment. On a global scale, the Baltic Sea is small, but as one of the world's largest brackish water bodies, it is ecologically unique and highly sensitive to the environmental impacts of human activities. In the action plan, the government has set itself the goal of contributing to making the Baltic Sea cleaner by

improving the quality of water bodies. Maritime protection activities are planned by Estonia within the framework of the Baltic Sea Action Plan and the European Union's Marine Strategy Framework Directive.

The environmental status of the Estonian marine area is not good. In Estonia, no coastal water body is in good or very good status, but most are in fair status. The status of seabirds, fish, and mammals of the marine area has been assessed as poor. Water column habitats, marine ecosystems, and food webs have also been assessed as poor. Only the status of the seabed habitats can be considered good. The main pressures are alien species, overfishing, eutrophication, pollutants, and marine litter. The intensity of navigability in the Baltic Sea is high, and it is therefore still necessary to ensure that the capacity to deal with marine and coastal pollution is maintained at least at the current level.

In fisheries policy, Estonia follows the European Union's Common Fisheries Policy, which aims to promote sustainable fisheries and aquaculture in an intact marine environment that can support the economically viable industry by ensuring employment and opportunities for coastal communities.

Share of marine protected area in the area of the territorial sea

27%

Spawning stock biomass of Baltic herring in the Gulf of Riga

110 182 tonnes

Spawning stock biomass of Baltic sprat

1 121 000 tonnes

Western Baltic cod spawning stock biomass

14 509 tonnes

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
14.1. Share of marine protected area in the area of the territorial sea, %	27	27 (2018)
14.2.1. Spawning stock biomass of Baltic herring in the Gulf of Riga, tonnes	103 000	110 182 (2018)
14.2.5. Spawning stock biomass of Baltic sprat, tonnes	1 174 000	1 121 000 (2018)
14.2.7. Western Baltic cod spawning stock biomass, tonnes	13 679	14 509 (2018)
14.3. Coastal water bodies at least in good condition	0	0 (2018)

5.14.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Under the leadership of the Ministry of Rural Affairs, **the development plan for agriculture and fisheries until 2030** is being prepared. The activities of the development plan contribute to the development and competitiveness of Estonian agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture, and food industry, balanced development of rural and coastal areas, maintenance of good plant and animal health, ensuring food safety, and preserving a clean environment and species diversity in rural and aquatic ecosystems.

In order to better monitor the status of the marine environment in the Estonian marine area, the marine area monitoring and status assessment programme will be updated in 2020. The programme includes the measurement of approximately 160 environmental indicators and the assessment of the status of the marine environment over the next six years.

This year, **the renewal of the programme of measure of the Estonian Marine Strategy** will be initiated. The Action Plan aims to identify measures to improve the protection of the marine environment for 2021–2026. The biggest challenge is to combat the effects of nutrients and eutrophication on the marine environment, which, in turn, is being fuelled by climate change.

This year, it is planned to enhance **Estonia's**

participation in cooperation related to the protection of the marine environment of the Baltic Sea. We plan to review the current work organisation and implement new measures to better involve authorities, experts, and NGOs in international cooperation in the field of marine environmental protection.

One of the main problems in all sea areas is **marine litter**. The Gulf of Finland, which is part of the Estonian sea, is the most littered marine area in the Baltic Sea. Measures and activities to combat marine litter have now received a great deal of global attention. In order to intensify the fight against marine litter, in 2020, we will draw up a sea litter plan for national use. The aim of the plan is to highlight the specific types of marine litter and the distribution routes that contribute most to marine litter, taking into account the state of the marine environment. This allows for simple and targeted actions to effectively address the most important types and sources of waste.

The European Maritime and Fisheries Fund's operational programme for 2014–2020 has supported a number of measures in 2017–2019 that directly or indirectly contribute to the sustainable development of the oceans and seas and living marine resources. To support the sustainable development of the oceans and seas and living marine resources, **an electronic catch reporting system and smart application** (PERK) has been developed to ensure better control of fishing and reduction of gear discards. Support has also been provided for the acquisition of fishing gear to support investments that reduce the impact of fishing on the marine environment, support the phasing out of discards, and facilitate the transition to the sustainable use of marine biological resources.

The establishment of artificial habitats has been supported for the protection and restoration of marine biodiversity and ecosystems. In addition, support has been provided for the restoration of sustainable fish stocks in specific marine and coastal habitats and for their scientific preparation and assessment.

To support the processing of fishery and aquaculture products, joint investments have been developed to promote investments in the processing of fishery and aquaculture products that support the processing of industrial fish unfit for human consumption and help save energy or reduce environmental impact, including waste treatment. In 2017, the government initiated the preparation of an Estonian Maritime Spatial Plan, which determines in which regions and under which conditions activities can be carried out in the marine area. Considering that it is necessary to contribute to the achievement and maintenance of the good status of the marine environment and to the promotion of the maritime economy, the established Maritime Spatial Plan serves as a basis for decision-making by various ministries and agencies and guides the activities of businesses, investors, local governments, and coastal communities. The Estonian Maritime Spatial Plan will be established at the beginning of 2021.

5.14.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The cooperation project Plastic Free Ocean of the **Estonian Green Movement** and the **Coalition Clean Baltic** is a follow-up project to the "Plastic Free Baltic Sea" campaign, funded by the Swedish Postcode Foundation. The project supports the implementation of the European Plastics Strategy and addresses the growing problem of plastic pollution in the Baltic Sea (and thus the problem of pollution of the world sea). Particular attention is paid to disposable plastic articles, microplastics, and related toxic substances.

In 2019, the **Keep Estonian Sea Tidy Association** completed the international project MARELITT, in the framework of which the possibilities of handing over abandoned fishing nets in ports were identified, and the significance of problems caused by fishing nets on the seabed in the Baltic Sea as a whole and in the Estonian marine area was assessed.

The Estonian Health Board supervises compliance with the requirements for bathing areas, and the best bathing areas that meet

the prescribed criteria are awarded the "Blue Flag" eco-label. The eco-label is managed by the Danish organisation Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). In Estonia, the member of this organisation is the **Estonian Nature Conservation Society**, under the leadership of which an Estonian committee has been formed, which makes decisions to award the "Blue Flag" in Estonia every year. The Estonian committee consists of representatives of the Estonian Nature Conservation Society, the Estonian Health Board, the Ministry of the Environment, the Association of Estonian Cities and Municipalities, the Estonian Marine Institute of the University of Tartu, the Centre for Applied Ecology, the Estonian Environmental Board, and the G4S Coast Guard. Last year, out of the seaside beaches, Pärnu, Pirita, and Pikakari beaches received the ecolabel "Blue Flag."

As a responsible and environmentally friendly company, the **Port of Tallinn** has consistently contributed to minimising the negative impact of its activities on the environment in its business and development activities. In setting environmental goals, the Port of Tallinn proceeds from the UN's Sustainable Development Goals and has set the corresponding environmental priorities for itself: clean air, clean Baltic Sea, energy efficiency, and sustainable use of natural resources. Sufficient capacities are provided in the ports of the Port of Tallinn to receive bilge water, sewage, garbage, and waste containing oil products and oil from ships visiting the port. Ship waste reception volumes have increased every year. Unlike many other European ports, the Port of Tallinn supports ships that have invested in exhaust gas cleaning equipment (scrubbers) to reduce sulphur compounds (SO_x) in emissions and accept scrubber generated waste at no extra charge. In, 2017–2019, approximately 90% of ship-generated waste was recycled. The Port of Tallinn contributes to ensuring the cleanliness of the Baltic Sea by helping to prevent the discharge of wastewater from ships into the sea. To this end, in the previous years, sewage pipelines on cruise berths and a micro-tunnel were completed in the Old City Harbour. Thanks to the sewage system built for cruise ships, cruise ships calling at the Old City Harbour of Tallinn can deliver wastewater in unlimited quantities and at no extra charge.



FOTO: PRIIDU SAART

The **Tallink Grupp** is one of the largest companies providing maritime transport services in the Baltic Sea region, whose activities affect the economy and society of the company's four home markets – Estonia, Finland, Sweden, and Latvia. In 2018–2019, the Tallink Grupp more specifically assessed its impact on the environment and the surrounding society in the context of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, adopted the company's sustainable development strategy at the end of 2019, and set primary goals across countries, in line with SDG. As a shipping company, the group's main focus is on reducing the environmental impact, and its goals include reducing emissions, reducing the use of chemicals in the company's operations, and reducing the use of plastics and paper across the group. In addition to the environment, Tallink Grupp's goals include the sustainable use of resources, especially the use of raw materials produced or procured using sustainable methods, preferably the use of local raw materials and products, and the introduction of circular economy principles in the company.

In 2015–2019, in cooperation with the Latvian Farmers' Parliament, the **Estonian Chamber of**

Agriculture and Commerce implemented the GreenAgri cooperation project with the goal of reducing nutrient leaching from agriculture into surface water and from there into the Baltic Sea, while maintaining the competitiveness of producers. Various activities were carried out within the project; for example, environmentally friendly practices were introduced and tested among farmers. During the project, 11 Estonian and 11 Latvian farmers applied innovative technologies and methods as a pilot company in cooperation with the best experts in the field, such as increasing the efficiency of liquid manure with a nitrogen inhibitor and preparing a fertilisation plan based on soil and manure analyses. During a trial period of almost 1.5 years, water, manure, and soil samples were collected, and a summary analysis of the effectiveness of the measures taken in reducing nutrient leaching was performed. A total of 578 agricultural companies from Estonia and Latvia participated in various events. Significantly raising farmers' awareness contributes to the implementation of environmentally friendly practices, including the achievement of sustainable development goals.

GOAL 15

Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss

15 LIFE ON LAND



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

Estonian nature is very diverse – there are coniferous and deciduous forests, a cliff and dunes, sandy and rocky beaches. Bogs and primeval forests, alluvial and wooded meadows, which have almost disappeared elsewhere in Europe, have been preserved in Estonia. More than half of the Estonian mainland is covered with forests. Different bogs make up almost a tenth of Estonia's area. The abundance of various habitats creates the preconditions for great biodiversity. In order to preserve the diversity of nature and ensure the favourable status of endangered species and habitats, a significant part of the territory of Estonia – 19.4% of the land area and 27% of the marine areas – has been taken under protection. The area of strictly protected forests makes up 14.1% of the total forest land, and the total area of protected forests is 25.4%.

A network of Natura 2000 sites has been established under the European Union Habitats and

Birds Directives to protect species and habitat types. There are 60 habitat types listed in the European Union Habitats Directive, 53 Annex II animal and plant species and 136 bird species listed in the European Union Birds Directive, for the protection of which site of community importance and special protection areas have been established, which together form the Estonian Natura 2000 network. 57% of habitat types and 56% of species are in favourable status, 37% and 27% are in inadequate status, 7% and 10% are in poor status, and the status of 7% of the species is unknown.

Under the leadership of the Ministry of the Environment, the Forestry Development Plan for 2021–2030 is being prepared. The Forestry Development Plan is prepared to reach a broad-based agreement to guide sustainable forestry, taking into account in an integrated way both international obligations and Estonia's social, economic, ecological, and cultural aspects and the need for the strategic development of the bio-economy.

Share of protected areas in the land territory

19,4%

Share of strictly protected forest land in forest land

14,1%

Emissions of acidifying pollutants

2,53

1000 tonnes of acidification equivalent

Share of species under Habitats Directive in favourable status

56%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
15.1. Share of protected areas in the land territory, %	18,7	19,4 (2019)
15.2. Share of strictly protected forest land in forest land, %	12,9	14,1 (2019)
15.3. Emissions of acidifying pollutants, 1000 tonnes of acidification equivalent	2,38	2,53 (2017)
15.4. Share of habitat types under European Union Habitats Directive in favourable status, %	52	57 (2019)
15.5. Share of species under Habitats Directive in favourable status, %	54	56 (2019)

5.15.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Restoration of terrestrial ecosystems has been one of nature's conservation priorities in recent years. Various support measures have been set up to restore habitats. The Nature Conservation Development Plan stipulates that at least 10,000 ha of various mire habitats must be restored by 2020. As at 2019, the restoration work has been completed on 7,600 ha of open marshes and work is underway on 13,000 hectares. Restoring bogs not only increases biodiversity, but also contributes to climate change mitigation. In 2017–2019, 5,000 hectares of semi-natural communities have been restored, and another 4,500 ha are being restored. The area of managed semi-natural communities has increased to 35,600 hectares through various agricultural subsidies. Restoration of river habitats, in particular the opening of fish migration routes, will help to increase the number of endangered fish species. The largest ongoing project is the restoration of the habitats of the Pärnu River basin, within the framework of which the Sindi Dam has already been removed, due to which a total of 1,500 km of spawning grounds for 22 fish species were blocked. The most important migratory fish is salmon, whose reproduction potential is estimated by scientists to be about 45,000–58,000 descending salmon juveniles per year.

To support biodiversity protection, **national and sub-national methodologies for the assessment and mapping of ecosystem services** are being developed in Estonia, which will be used to map and assess the baseline levels of benefits provided by the main terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

In order to combat alien species, clear regulations have been established at the Estonian and European level, which guide both prevention activities and the control of alien species and the inhibition of further spread. Since 2005, control of alien species of cow parsnip has been organised all over Estonia, 2,421 ha were controlled at the peak, and by the end of 2019, 622 ha of former colonies can be considered excluded. Although new sites are also found, it is clear that years of control will yield good results in the protection of Estonian nature.

There are several good examples in **species protection**, where the status of previously rare or already extinct species from Estonia (white-tailed eagle, natterjack toad, mink, etc.) has started to improve, and their abundance has increased due to consistent conservation measures. For example, while in 2000, the introduction of specimens from the European mink breeding centre to Hiiumaa began, by 2013, a large part of the minks of Hiiumaa had already been born in the wild and from 2016, no more artificially propagated animals, i.e. "fresh blood", would be brought to Hiiumaa. The animals have adapted there and started to breed well. Hiiumaa is the only region in the world where the population of the European mink has started to increase in the wild. Currently, against the background of the successful example of Hiiumaa, the restoration of the mink population in Saaremaa has also been planned.

Over the last 15 years, **new protection regimes** have been established for almost 400 protected areas. During the last five years, the area of protected areas has increased by 55,279 hectares, while about 4,000 hectares have been excluded from protection. Much work has been done to specify protection regimes – natural values in need of stricter protection – forest

and mire habitats have been re-zoned into the special management zone (75,200 ha). A significant amount of the increase in protected areas (26,700 ha) is made up of meso-eutrophic, boreo-nemoral, and eutrophic paludifying forests taken under protection in February 2019. This stems from both the goal set in the Nature Conservation Development Plan until 2020 and the Estonian Forestry Development Plan until 2020: to improve the typological representation of strict forest protection. In addition, from 2017 to 2018, the State Forest Management Centre has inventoried approximately 3,000 hectares of valuable habitats, and the representativeness of forest types is constantly improved during the renewal of protection rules and in the inventory of valuable habitats in state forests.

In 2018, Estonia joined the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilisation to the **Convention on Biological Diversity**. By joining the Nagoya Protocol, Estonia will primarily contribute to the protection of the world's biodiversity. Most of the world's biodiversity is in developing countries, which do not have the means to protect their genetic resources and receive fair compensation for their use. The Nagoya Protocol provides a framework for the protection of resources where both providers and users of resources can agree and reach mutually satisfactory solutions.

In order to promote sustainable forest management, the management of private forests is supported on the basis of the current Forestry Development Plan. The supports have enabled more active forest owners to renew and maintain their stands, thus creating a resource for the timber industry and energy and have contributed to the preservation of heritage culture and nature conservation. Estonian Private Forest Centre (PFC) pays the following supports for the development of private forestry: reforestation support, heritage culture preservation and exhibition support, private forest owners consulting support, forest land improvement support, forest inventory support, forest association support, forest certification support, Natura forest support, forestry measure (maintenance felling, lopping, prevention of game damage) and contracts are concluded for the protection of valuable habitats.



The most important change in 2018 was the addition of a new type of support – **support for forest certification**. In addition, the conditions for granting support for reforestation and support for advising private forest owners were changed. In the case of counselling support, it was determined that the application takes place only through the ARIB e-service environment. In the case of reforestation support, the requirement to have valid inventory data, which must have been valid at least at the beginning of the calendar year preceding the submission of the application, was relaxed. In order to qualify for the support of a forest association, the coefficients of performance indicators have been specified so that they would be more focused on efficiency, servicing forest owners, and silvicultural work. Forest certification is also considered as a new additional indicator.

In 2019, the share of private forest generation in the volume of regeneration felling has significantly increased. While the **Forestry Development Plan until 2030** aims to achieve a share of 40%, in recent years, it has been around 30%. In 2019, however, the share increased to 47%.

Key biotopes in commercial forests support the survival and spread of endangered species. Changes in 2015–2019: compared to 31 December 2015, both the number of keystone biotopes and the area have increased. As at 31 December 2019, 4,621 ha (18%) of private land, 21,296 ha (80%) of state land, other property (municipal, mixed and public property), and unregistered land cover a total of 562 ha (2%) of valuable habitats. In 2019, the Ministry of the Environment increased the budget for the protection of keystone biotopes by 80,000 euros, which multiplied the number of concluded agreements. In 2019, keystone biotope agreements were concluded with a total area of 126 hectares. As of the end of 2019, 641 hectares of forest land were covered by key biotope agreements in private forests, of which 237 hectares were owned by legal entities and 402 hectares by natural persons.

Data on all Estonian forests, both privately owned and state-owned, have been compiled into the new **state register of forest resource accounting**. Many data on forests are visible to anyone interested through the public application of the Forest Registry. In the Forest Registry,

forest owners have access to data related to their forest lands, such as data from forest inventories, forest notifications, and expert reports. It is also possible for the forest owner to submit an electronic forest notification.

In 2020, **remote monitoring** will be introduced to help assess and calculate forest resources. To this end, an information technology solution will be created, which will enable the compilation of raster maps of the species and height of Estonian woody vegetation, forest reserves, and clear cutting on the basis of multispectral satellite images and laser scanning data from aircraft (LIDAR). The necessary algorithms will be applied to satellite data in the remote monitoring services development centre ESTHub. With the help of the maps, it is possible to assess the forest resource and plan economic decisions at the stand level.

5.15.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

The **Estonian Fund for Nature (ELF)** stands for the protection of the richness of life and biodiversity. To halt the loss of biodiversity, the ELF contributes to the protection of endangered species and their habitats. The main focus is on the protection of the flying squirrel, bats, and amphibians. In order to develop a more positive attitude towards nature conservation, ELF is implementing the flagship public communication project “NaturallyEst-LIFE” on Natura 2000 nature reserves with the support of the European Union’s LIFE programme. In 2019, in cooperation with the University of Tartu, an extensive ethnographic campaign “Estonia is looking for cowslips” took place, in which more than 250 school groups participated, nearly 1,700 nature observations were made, and the gene type of 200,000 cowslips was determined. In order to preserve the communities and landscapes typical of Estonia, the association is engaged in the restoration of bogs damaged by drainage and the preservation of valuable bogs. Within the framework of the project, which will last from 2015 to 2021, 7,600 ha of bogs will be restored.

The **State Forest Management Centre (RMK)** has managed forests according to the principles

of sustainable forestry based on the goals of sustainable development. In 2017–2019, a total of 34,839 ha of forest land was renewed, i.e. an average of 11,613 ha per year, and an average of 21.5 million forest plants have been planted per year (a total of 64.5 million forest plants in three years). Habitat restoration has been carried out, which has been done in 2017–2019 in the total amount of 5,985 ha. Forest management tries to direct as much wood as possible to long-lived products, 50% of the roundwood sold by RMK is a log, on average 1.8 million m³ per year in 2017–2019, the lifespan of which will be extended by RMK's partners by way of valorisation, making planks, furniture, wooden houses, doors, etc. RMK has also carried out important information campaigns; in 2019, 1,300 people went to the forest to plant forests during the Climate Hero campaign. RMK visitor centres, Sagadi Nature School and Forest Museum, and Elistvere Animal Park are important to nature education centres; in 2017–2019, nature education was passed, and nature awareness of an average of 250,000 people a year was improved. RMK contributes a lot to the natural movement; on average, the hiking and study trails built by RMK in 2017–2019 were visited 2.6 million times a year. Since 2014, RMK has installed nature cameras showing live images in nature to find out more about the distribution and behaviour of animals. The webcams use infrared lights and an independent energy solution based on solar panels. Over the years, nature cameras have been installed to monitor animals such as deer, jackals, badgers, cranes, fish, and beavers. The image of Estonian nature cameras has been monitored online in 160 countries around the world.

The aim of the **Estonian Seminatural Communities Conservation Association** (ESCCA) is to ensure the survival of Estonian seminatural communities and the introduction of the values related to them to the public. Contributions will also be made to the collection of information related to seminatural communities both in the database managed by the association and in various national information collections. ESCCA organises annual campaigns in different parts of Estonia to restore, maintain, and introduce seminatural communities. In 2014–2019, ESCCA participated as a partner in the large-scale programme "LIFE to Alvars" for the restoration of Estonian alvars, co-funded by the EU LIFE



project, which was elected as the winner of the socio-economic impact category of Natura 2000 Award in 2018. Efforts have been made to protect and introduce Estonian nature more widely by compiling a new atlas of the distribution of Estonian plants, where the information gathered is available to everyone through the eBiodiversity portal.

5.15.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The aim of the **Estonian Fund for Nature** project “Cooperation between Estonian and Belarusian environmental associations for the protection of wetlands” (2017–2018) was to promote favourable environmental protection and responsible use in Belarus and Estonia by focusing on the implementation of several innovative flagship initiatives. The partnership implemented flagship initiatives on the protection of marshes in Belarus, the organisation of visits, the inventory of habitats, and the integration of expertise. The project was a continuation of a development cooperation project on the same topic implemented in 2015–2016 and dealt with development needs and innovation transfer opportunities, which were identified in close cooperation with the project partners.

In 2017–2019, the **Estonian University of Life Sciences** implemented a project in Belarus “Knowledge-based protection of the globally endangered greater spotted eagle in Belarus”. Based on Estonia’s experience, nature conservation was promoted in Belarus as an example focusing on the knowledge-based protection of the globally endangered greater spotted eagle. The extent of the most important risk factors identified so far (crossing and habitat loss) in Belarus was analysed using modern methods – GPS telemetry and molecular genetic analysis. During the joint fieldwork and seminars, the research and species protection methods used in Estonia were introduced to the Belarusian nature conservationists, the issues of the protection of the greater spotted eagles of Belarus were discussed, and a further suitable species protection strategy was jointly developed.

In 2019–2020, **Peipsi Centre for Transboundary**

Cooperation is implementing the project “Protection and Restoration of the Biodiversity of the La Nihalcea Water System and Increasing the Potential of Ecotourism” in Moldova. The La Nihalcea water system is located in the Ștefan Voda area and is part of the Lower Dniester wetland of international importance in the Ramsar list. The current ecological status of La Nihalcea is unsatisfactory – water quality is under pressure from agriculture and other diffuse pollution sources (phosphates, nitrates, etc.). The aim of the project is to improve the ecological diversity and protection of the La Nihalca water system by restoring the shores, coastal vegetation, water conditions, and creating preconditions for the development of ecotourism. Cooperation is carried out, and a memorandum of cooperation between different water users will be established, including cross-border cooperation with Ukrainian partners. Currently, the Moldovan non-profit organisation Purcar Development Fund has started working with the support of the GEF/UNDP Small Grants Programme. Estonian assistance is expected in organising training and seminars, expert knowledge on biological treatment methods, and assessing the status of the water body.

GOAL 16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development; provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions at all levels

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS



ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

In the field of violence reduction, the government aims to pay special attention to reducing violence related to and against minors, the fight against organised and serious covert crime, including corruption, drugs, high-risk economic crime, and trafficking in human beings, and the detection and prevention of domestic violence, especially recurrent violence. National priorities in the fight against terrorism and in the fight against violent extremism are set out in the Internal Security Development Plan 2015–2020, which is currently being updated.

In the framework of the fight against corruption, Estonia has acceded to various international anti-corruption conventions: the Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions, the UN Convention against Corruption, and the Council of Europe Criminal Law Convention on Corruption. The aim of the Estonian Anti-Corruption Strategy 2013–2020 is to promote awareness of corruption, increase the transparency of decisions and activities, and develop the investigative capacity of investigative institutions and prevent corruption that threatens security. The aim is also to enhance the confiscation of criminal assets and other proceeds of crime, in particular in relation to those convicted of organised and serious economic crime and corruption. In the Internal Security Development Plan 2020–2030, the objectives in the

field of the fight against corruption are related to maintaining the current level of procedural capacity of research institutions and paying more attention to the detection of high-impact corruption cases. It is also important to raise awareness in the private and public sectors and to mitigate the risks of corruption. In the ranking of the Corruption Perceptions Index of the international anti-corruption organisation Transparency International, Estonia was ranked 18th–21st out of 168 countries in 2015, with 73 points together with Ireland and Japan. With this indicator, Estonia leaves behind other Eastern European countries.

The Estonian government considers it important to ensure legal certainty and to strengthen and expand the legal protection of people in need and to facilitate access to qualified state legal aid. Currently, the state provides state legal aid to low-income persons in virtually all areas. In addition, the state provides general legal advice to people with an average and slightly above average income. There are separate projects for counselling people with special needs, victims of sexual violence, and the elderly. People's need for legal aid is higher; the limits are set by the budget.

In developing the exercise of public power, Estonia has followed the principles of openness and transparency, creating a corresponding

legal framework and making extensive use of modern technological solutions in public administration. The principles of cooperation between public authorities and non-governmental organisations have been agreed in Estonian Civil Society Development Concept approved by the Riigikogu in 2002, the aim of which is a society in which the organisation of public life takes place in open and mutually respectful cooperation between public authorities and citizens. Good Public Engagement Code of Practice obliges ministries to include non-state actors in policy-making at the earliest possible stage and to give stakeholders and the public sufficient time to express their views. Both the public sector and civil society itself can contribute to better implementation of the code.

Estonia has been a member of the Open Government Partnership (OGP) international initiative since 2012. In addition to non-govern-

mental partners, the government has invited Riigikogu and local authorities to participate to strengthen the openness of governance. Among other things, the priority of the Estonian OGP Action Plan 2018–2020 is to improve the awareness of local governments about the principles of open government to ensure more effective involvement of the population and the transparency of governance at the local level.

In order to provide better-quality services and keep the size of the government sector under control, the government has decided to implement a state reform, the important parts of which are to make the work organisation of both local governments and the central government more efficient, purposeful, and transparent. In order to strengthen local governments and to make local life even better organised for the people of Estonia, the government implemented an administrative reform in 2018.

Corruption
Perceptions Index

74

Share of persons
with unspecified
citizenship

5,7%

Share of people
deeming their
neighbourhood safe

94%

Share of victims of
violent crimes in
Estonia

1,5%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
16.1. Corruption Perceptions Index	70	74 (2019)
16.2. Share of persons with unspecified citizenship, %	6,2	5,7 (2018)
16.3. Share of people deeming their neighbourhood safe, %	n/a	94 (2017)
16.4. deaths due to assault per 100,000 inhabitants (attack)	2,4	1,9 (2018)
16.5. Share of victims of violent crimes in Estonia, %	1,8	1,5 (2018)

5.16.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Anti-violence activities are reported in Chapter 5.5.1.

In the fight against terrorism, Estonia is implementing a wide-ranging awareness and inter-agency cooperation project to detect radicalisation and mitigate its risks at an early stage. In-service training is organised for first-line officials, and under the leadership of the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board, a national support network is developed at the local government level. Cooperation with

various communities and religious associations is being developed. Estonia cooperates closely with various international counter-terrorism formats (UN, EU, EN, OSCE, NATO) and is involved in the active exchange of information in connection with the identification of foreign terrorist fighters or dangerous extremists and the mitigation of related threats. In order to mitigate the terrorist threat to objects with a high risk of attack, risk analyses, and security plans are being prepared, and the security of public spaces is being developed. Security measures at airports and ports have been enhanced, information exchange has been stepped up, and response capabilities and the safety of first responders have been developed. In 2017, the government decided to **join the European Centre of Excellence for Countering Hybrid Threats established in Finland** to develop its capabilities, agility, and readiness to cope in today's hybrid threat environment. With this, Estonia became a founding member of the European Centre of Excellence Countering Hybrid Threats.

In the field of corruption prevention, the state has launched a number of online solutions that increase transparency, such as the local government corruption risk assessment environment, e-learning for the prevention and avoidance of conflicts of interest, a self-assessment tool for entrepreneurs, etc.

At the beginning of 2018, the local government councils decided to establish a **county development organisation** (hereinafter MARO), which performs the tasks in the field of county development, public health, and security. In order to develop networking in increasing security in the county, cooperation agreements were concluded with all MAROs in 2018 for the implementation of the activities of the county security councils. In 2018, 15 security councils were established. The county security council was formed by a decision of the board of the county association of local authorities, by order of the council of the development centre, or by order of the rural municipality government.

In order to prevent repeated offenses of minors, amendments to the law came into force, reforming the treatment of juvenile offenders. The new system focuses on individuals who work with troubled young people so that they understand the consequences of their actions

and make amends. Complementary services and therapies (e.g. closed childcare institution service and multidimensional family therapy – MDFT) were also developed to provide more support and rehabilitation for children with severe behavioural problems.

Since 2017, **to improve the availability of free primary legal aid**, the state will offer free legal aid and counselling to people living in Estonia in 15 places all over Estonia. Free legal aid is provided to people with lower incomes. Legal aid is also provided in Russian and English, if necessary.

In addition, a **national family mediation service** is being developed to enable the conclusion of agreements on the welfare of children in the event of separation of parents, both out of court and at an early stage in court proceedings. As many parents are unable to reach an agreement on the further upbringing and/or maintenance of a child after separation, almost 4,000 cases (court costs approximately four million) are brought to court each year to resolve various issues concerning the child. The establishment of a national family mediation system will reduce the need for participation in court proceedings and legal aid. The use of family mediation as an alternative to court proceedings has had a positive effect in many countries and is often free of charge for families. With the implementation of family mediation services, court costs and mental health risks, as well as the negative impact of divorce on children's mental health, which is often caused by a stressful trial, is reduced.

In 2018, the creation of **Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035"** was started, and it will be completed in the spring of 2020. It is a cooperation strategy of different decision-making levels (Riigikogu, Government of the Republic) and an umbrella strategy for all sectoral development plans. In the course of compiling "Estonia 2035", the framework of strategic planning has been streamlined, and the culture of strategic planning has been developed. Due to Estonia's own development logic and priorities, and in accordance with the new political orientations of the European Union, the goals of sustainable development will be integrated into the central long-term strategy "Estonia 2035". This provides a solid basis for a more systematic and robust

reflection of sustainable development goals in sectoral strategies. Different levels up to the citizens were involved in the creation of the strategy. Fourteen thousand people responded to the opinion poll in terms of which Estonia they want to live in in 2035.

The **Open Government Partnership Action Plans for 2016–2018 and 2018–2020 were updated**. Within the framework of the Open Government Partnership Action Plan for 2018–2020, attention was paid to the improvement of local government governance, and the new action plan initiated extensive developments of state information systems that enable communication between citizens and the state.

Within a secure and protected Europe, the focus was on reducing migratory pressures at the European Union's external borders and on effective border management. A system for entering and leaving the European Union was adopted, and agreements were reached between the Member States on innovations in the European travel authorisation and travel information system and the Schengen Information System. Active efforts were made to address the migration crisis to reduce the root causes of migration and bring the Central Mediterranean migration route under control. During the Estonian Presidency, the Action Plan for the Central Mediterranean Migration Route was implemented, and a foreign investment plan was adopted. The Common European Asylum System was further developed, and agreements were reached between the Member States on the Qualification Conditions Regulation, the Reception Conditions Directive, and the Resettlement Framework. In addition, there was an active focus on the launch of permanent structured defence cooperation and on wide-ranging cooperation with the Eastern Partners, as marked by the Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels. Under the Estonian leadership, the cyber defence table exercise "EU CYBRID 2017" of the European Union Ministers of Defence was conducted for the first time within the framework of the presidency, and the procedure for the regulation establishing the European Defence Industrial Development Programme was completed.

5.16.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Various associations of volunteers have been established to ensure the security of the home: e.g. the **Estonian Assistant Police Officers Association**, which unites assistant police officers operating in Estonia, the **Voluntary Maritime and Lake Rescue**, whose main tasks are to organise cooperation between maritime and lake rescue units between voluntary and national structures, sustainable development, and training of a training system for volunteer maritime rescuers, and the **Rescue Association**, which is a network of voluntary rescue organisations to ensure a safe living environment in communities across Estonia.

Neighbourhood Watch is a community movement that involves the joint surveillance of residents' home areas to reduce anonymity and crime and to increase security and well-being.

Corruption-Free Estonia was established in 2000 as a sub-organisation of the international anti-corruption organisation Transparency International. The aim of the organisation is to draw public attention to the manifestations of public and private sector corruption. In recent years, the focus has been on corruption awareness among local government officials, corporate ethics, and transparency in lobbying.

The Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organisations unites non-governmental organisations operating in the public interest and works to ensure that there is an effective civil society in Estonia, where people want, can, and know how to manage social change through participation and cooperation. Advocacy is actively pursued, and the ability of NGOs to participate in advocacy is supported (various training, instructional materials, etc.). In 2017–2019, the Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organisations has contributed to increasing the advocacy capacity of non-governmental organisations, implementing a development programme, and continuing to share experiences and organise workshops in the form of a network. In addition, the Network of Estonian Nonprofit Organisations is also a partner in the development of a network of involvement coordinators for the state, the

establishment of strategic partnerships between ministries and non-governmental organisations, and the preparation and implementation of an open government partnership action plan.

Since 2013, an **Opinion Festival** has been organised every year, where ideas are exchanged on topics important to Estonian society and people. The aim of the festival is to bring together different perspectives and ideas so that as a result of the discussions, new knowledge would be born, new enterprises useful for the society would start, and the culture of discussion in Estonia would develop.

In 2016, the **Cooperation Assembly** launched the Citizen Initiative Portal. It is a digital platform for the joint creation and transmission of collective appeals directly to the Riigikogu. In addition, thanks to the open data, the platform can monitor the progress of its application and the reply letter. The Citizen Initiative Portal is a success story of Estonian e-democracy and an important link in promoting inclusive and open governance in Estonia. The citizens' tool for participatory culture and deliberative democracy has also been highlighted as a success story for OECD public sector innovation.

The Estonian National Youth Council unites youth organisations and forms of youth participation operating in Estonia, working to ensure that young people are socially active, participate in the activities of youth associations, and their activities have a socially significant impact. The Estonian National Youth Council runs the UN Young Delegate Programme, which aims to introduce young people to the UN institutions and to the goals of sustainable development in formal education and to represent Estonian youth in UN institutions.

5.16.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

In 2017–2019, the **Police and Border Guard Board** implemented the project “Increasing the capacity of the Moldovan police and supporting the improvement of traffic culture” in Moldova. The overall objective of the project was to develop the capacity of the law enforcement units of the Moldovan Ministry of the Interior,

in particular the police, to enhance cooperation between law enforcement agencies in the two countries, to improve human rights, to develop democracy and to support good governance. The skills of the Moldovan police for the safe conduct of high-level visits were developed. In addition, the emergency vehicle training system set up under the previous project was improved. As a result of the project, overall road safety in Moldova should improve, and the skills and the safety of officials organising the visits will improve with the improvement of the training system.

In Ukraine, one of the reforms of national importance is the reform of the area of administration of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The first police reform launched has been a success. Next, it is planned to implement the **reform of the work organisation of the Rescue Board**. Already since 2016, changes have been made to the plan in the rescue service, which would enable the involvement of volunteers in resolving crises. Involving volunteers in rescue operations would significantly reduce the time it takes to respond to crises and deliver aid, which in turn has an impact on the effectiveness of saving property and lives. The Praxis Centre for Policy Studies Foundation, in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and the Rescue Board of the Dnipro Oblast, will implement the flagship project on involving volunteers in 2019–2020 “Supporting reforms in the field of internal security: involving volunteers in the work of the Dnipro Rescue Board”. The good experience of the Estonian Rescue Board and specialists is used as an example in the development of the system.

A good example in this area is the **e-Governance Academy Foundation's project** “Implementation of open governance: New e-governance initiatives in Kutaisi, Batumi, Akhaltsikhe, and the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health of Georgia” (2016–2018). The aim of the project was to support the democratic development of local governments in Georgia and to increase the capacity of local governments to apply various methods and solutions (including e-solutions) to make governance more transparent and open. In the course of the project, various involvement methods and e-solutions used in Estonian municipalities were tested in three Georgian cities – Kutaisi,

Batumi, and Akhaltsikhe – and adapted to local conditions. The Georgian Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Health were also advised on the use of new e-solutions to increase transparency and citizen participation.

In 2017–2018, the **Eastern Partnership Centre** in cooperation with the Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA) and the Danish Anti-Corruption Initiative (EUACI) implemented the project “Strengthening the capacity and enhancing the sustainability of the Ukrainian Anti-Corruption Agency (NABU) (in cooperation with Danida and in the framework of the Danish Anti-Corruption Initiative (EUACI) by strengthening the investigative capacity of the National Anti-Corruption Bureau.” The aim of the project was to improve anti-corruption measures in Ukraine and thereby contribute to reducing corruption. The activities supported the Ukrainian Anti-Corruption Agency (NABU), a key anti-corruption organisation. During the training, expert assistance on the fight against corruption based on Estonian experience was distributed to NABU researchers, operational staff, and the Internal Audit Department. The focus was on investigative techniques, prosecution of corruption cases, and the implementation of civilian anti-corruption policies in line with international norms and best international practices.

A good example is the project “Development of the patrol service and command centre of the state police headquarters of the Chernihiv Oblast of Ukraine” implemented by the **Estonian Police and Border Guard Board** in Ukraine in 2018–2019. The aim was to develop the capacity of the Patrol Service and Command Centre of the State Police Headquarters of the Chernihiv Oblast in Ukraine, as well as to enhance cooperation between law enforcement agencies in the two countries and to improve human rights, democracy, and good governance in Ukraine.



Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

In its action plan for 2019–2023, the government has set itself the goal of being active in the protection and promotion of liberal fundamental values – freedoms, democracy, and human rights – in Estonia, the European Union, and outside the European Union, implementing bilateral and multilateral development cooperation projects. In order to reduce inequalities between countries, the aim is to promote diplomatic, economic, and cultural relations with other countries, including the provision of development aid and conducting development cooperation with all countries, if it is in Estonia's interests.

The agreement reached by the United Nations Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa recommends that all developed countries contribute 0.7% of the GNP to development aid and set a precise timetable for reaching this target. EU Member States have set a policy target of 0.7% of Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a share of the GNP by 2030. The countries that have joined the EU since 2004 have set a target of 0.33% of the GNP by 2030. The government aims to keep the share of the GNP allocated to development cooperation and humanitarian aid at least at the level of 2015 (0.15%) and to strive to achieve the level of official development assistance within 0.33% of GNP within the deadlines for achieving the sustainable development goals. Between 2004

and 2014, the share of Estonian development aid in GNP has increased significantly. While in 2004, the share of development aid in GNP was 0.02%, by 2018, the corresponding share had increased to 0.16%, to a total of 41.2 million euros. Bilateral cooperation was carried out for 16.5 and multilateral cooperation for 24.7 million euros. The budget of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs for development cooperation and humanitarian aid has been 11.9 million euros in recent years.

In providing apolitical humanitarian aid, Estonia proceeds primarily from specific needs. In recent years, Estonia has provided the most humanitarian aid to Ukraine, Syria and its neighbouring countries, and Palestine. In 2018, Estonia provided 3.1 million euros in humanitarian aid, of which 0.94 million in support of Ukraine.

In 2003, the Riigikogu adopted the principles of Estonian development cooperation, according to which Estonian development cooperation is aimed at ensuring peace, democracy, respect for human rights, and economic and social stability, and reducing world poverty in accordance with internationally accepted principles of sustainable development. Until the end of 2019, development cooperation was shaped by the Estonian Development Cooperation Development Plan for 2016–2019. From 2020, the basis of Estonia's development cooperation activities

is the new Foreign Policy Development Plan and the separate Development Cooperation And Humanitarian Aid Action Plan based on it. In essence, the provisions of the current development plan will be continued, including the further development of activities in the direction of the Eastern Partnership. The new goal is to develop and implement an action plan for Africa. It is planned to set up a development cooperation agency and bring the implementation and management of development cooperation within its competency. The formulation of development cooperation policy and multilateral cooperation would remain with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Based on Estonia's foreign policy goals and international agreements to contribute more

development cooperation funds to vulnerable countries, Estonia will continue to respond flexibly to the needs of other countries, especially LDCs and post-conflict countries, developing island states and landlocked developing countries in areas where Estonia has a clear added value to offer.

The need for development cooperation to ensure security and stability both in Estonia and in the wider world is also emphasised by the foundations of Estonia's security policy.

The government is pursuing a conservative fiscal policy, keeping the budgetary position in line with the Maastricht criteria, keeping public debt low, and the tax system efficient.

Share of Estonian official development assistance (ODA) in GNP

0,16%

General government structural balance:

Structural surplus 1,7% of the GDP

General government debt

8% of the GDP

Share of environmental taxes in total taxes

8,3%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
17.1. Share of Estonian official development assistance (ODA) in GNP, %	0,19	0,16 (2018)
17.2. General government structural balance, % of GDP	Structural surplus 0.3% of the GDP	Structural deficit 1.7% of the GDP (2019)
17.3. General government debt, % of GDP	10.2% of the GDP	8% of the GDP (2020)
17.4. Share of environmental taxes in total taxes, %	8,8	8,3

5.17.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

Support for Estonian development cooperation has steadily increased year by year. All bilateral projects are implemented in cooperation with local partners in the target countries. One of the foundations of Estonia's effective development cooperation policy is purposeful action in international organisations, where, despite Estonia's small size, it is possible to achieve influence in shaping international development and humanitarian aid policy. International organisations are indispensable in reducing global poverty, ensuring stability, and guaranteeing human rights. Taking into account Estonia's resources and diplomatic presence, financial support for the work of international

agencies is the most effective way to contribute to supporting the poorest and most vulnerable countries in both development cooperation and humanitarian aid. In this context, in addition to the European Union, Estonia also contributes to the activities of the UN system and its development-related organisations, as well as the World Bank and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Estonia has a representative office in several international development cooperation organisations, which enables them to actively participate in shaping their development cooperation policy and budget.

Every year, Estonia makes **voluntary donations in support of development cooperation and humanitarian aid** to, for example, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Food Program (WFP), the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF), and the United Nations Forum on Indigenous Peoples. In addition, targeted support is granted for thematic programmes of sub-organisations.

Moreover, Estonian public sector institutions actively contribute to the **EU Twinning and the Technical Assistance and Information Exchange (TAIEX) programmes**. The broader objective of twinning is to support the countries of the EU's Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA) and the European Neighbourhood Instrument (ENI) in establishing an efficient and modern administrative structure, including human resource development and management capacity building. In a consortium with the other EU Member States, Estonian public sector institutions are implementing twinning projects in Georgia, Moldova, Armenia, Belarus, Turkey, and Albania. In the field of education, Innove Foundation, in cooperation with Finnish and Lithuanian institutions, implements the project "Improvement and efficiency of the vocational education and training system" in Moldova. In cooperation with German colleagues, Archimedes Foundation, and the Estonian Quality Agency for Higher and Vocational Education are implementing the project "Increasing the

capacity to ensure qualifications and manage qualifications" in Georgia.

Together with Slovakia and Spain, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Labour Inspectorate are helping to improve standards of working conditions, employment relations, and health and safety at work in Georgia. In Armenia, the Ministry of Finance and the Eastern Partnership Foundation are helping to implement the **civil service reform**.

The Academy of Security Sciences, in cooperation with both Finland and the other Baltic States, is involved in **twinning to improve the field of internal security** in Turkey, where they are working to strengthen the institutional capacity of penitentiary institution staff training centres; in Belarus, supporting the Belarusian State Borders Committee in the implementation of the National Integrated Border Management Strategy and Action Plan; and in Albania, strengthening the capacity and efficiency of the country's Security Academy.

In June 2019, **Estonia was elected a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the years 2020–2021**. This is the first major achievement for Estonia, as a result of which Estonia will have a say in shaping and establishing the international order at the highest level in the coming years. It is important for Estonia to consolidate international law, ensure international peace and security, including a world order based on norms. Priority will also be given to the protection of human rights, conflict prevention, cybersecurity, and the links between climate change and the international security environment. It is also important for Estonia to improve the working methods of the UN Security Council and to make decisions more open and transparent.

In March 2019, the **4th UN Environment Assembly** was held under the Estonian Presidency, chaired by the Estonian Minister of the Environment Siim Kiisler. The Ministerial Declaration, adopted by consensus in the Assembly, reached the first global agreement to reduce single-use plastic products, in which countries agreed to significantly reduce the use of single-use plastic products by 2030. In addition, at the initiative of Estonia, it was agreed in the declaration that the United Nations Environment Programme would prepare a global environ-

mental data strategy by 2025, and countries will share environmental data on a comparable basis, using common standards.

To ensure **long-term financial stability**, the government decided to improve the structural budget position by 0.5 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) per year. In 2020, the structural deficit will be 0.7 percent of GDP, and in 2021 0.2 percent of GDP. The budget will reach a structural balance in 2022. In nominal terms, the general government budget will be in surplus in 2021 and 2022.

In parallel with **improving the structural budgetary position**, the government is increasing expenditures in the social and health sector to improve the situation of the most economically vulnerable.

General government debt has been on a downward trend for several years and is declining both in amount and as a share of GDP. While in 2019, the debt burden was 8.8 percent of the GDP, in 2020, the general government debt burden is 8 percent. In absolute terms, the general government debt will decrease from 2.4 billion euros to 2.3 billion euros this year. Including the share of the Treasury will decrease from 697 million euros to 524 million euros. According to the forecast, the general government debt burden will decrease to 7.6 percent of the GDP in 2021 and to 7.3 percent of the GDP in 2022.

Against the background of international money laundering scandals related to Estonia, the Government of the Republic instructed the Government Committee for the **Prevention of Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing** to analyse the current state of the prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing more broadly. In the last quarter of 2019, the government committee approved the analysis report and submitted proposals to the government to improve the prevention of money laundering and terrorist financing, including draft laws on the burden of proof, stricter licensing requirements for virtual currency service providers, and higher fines in the financial sector.

In the second half of 2017, from 1 July to 31 December, Estonia had the honour of **chairing the Council of the European Union for the first time in its history**. Preparations for the

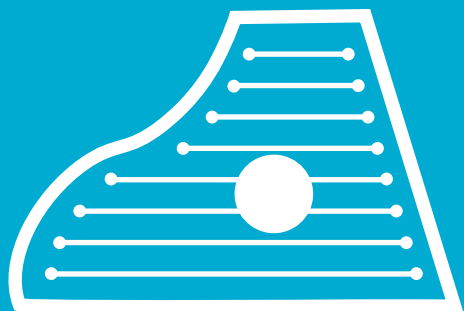
Presidency started already in 2012, but during the preparatory period in the first half of 2017, the last decisions on the organisation of high-level events, staff, and budget were taken. During the Presidency, Estonia focused on **the development of an open and innovative Europe**, reaching an agreement on, among other things, the VAT package for e-commerce and digital taxation. Next year's EU budget was also agreed, a European Public Prosecutor's Office was set up to investigate budget misuse more effectively, and significant progress was made in reforming the European Union's energy market. Under Estonian leadership, an agreement was reached to increase the volume of the European Fund for Strategic Investments and to extend the use of the fund until 2020. In addition, contributions were made to the conclusion of the EU-Japan Free Trade Agreement and to the success of the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference. One of the focus topics of the Estonian Presidency was **digital Europe and the free movement of data**. Therefore, Estonia paid special attention to drafts that support the development of cross-border e-commerce and e-services, accessible and secure electronic communications across Europe, and improving the availability of cross-border public e-services. Among other things, progress was made in **agreeing on a geo-blocking regulation**, which will remove location-based restrictions on the purchase of goods and services from e-shops in another Member State. The initiative on the free movement of non-personal data was well advanced, and the Tallinn e-government and 5G declarations were concluded. In addition to the above, Estonia created practical digital solutions for the Presidency and also contributed to the digitisation of the work processes of the European Union institutions. Under the leadership of Estonia, in October, European Union legislation was digitally signed for the first time in history.

5.17.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

In addition to promoting the European economy, Estonia considered it equally important to ensure an **inclusive and sustainable living environment and to create equal opportunities for all in Europe**. There is no doubt that the European Pillar of Social Rights, signed by the European Union institutions, will contribute to this, as will the agreement to set up a European Solidarity Corps and the breakthrough in agreeing on the Posted Workers Directive. Difficult negotiations took place on the European Union's climate and waste policy, which resulted in a consensus on reforming the European Union's emissions trading system.

In 2018, a **coalition was formed for sustainable development**. It is an inter-sectoral and cross-sectoral network of cooperation and involvement aimed at raising public and self-awareness of the world's sustainable development and development goals. To date, more than 20 organisations from the public, private, and third sectors have joined the coalition.

At the initiative of Tallinn University, the **Proovikivi platform** was created in 2018. It is an educational programme and platform that brings together young people and various community partners to solve our common tasks and, at the same time, contribute to achieving the goals of sustainable development of Estonia and the United Nations. For educational institutions, Proovikivi is an opportunity to connect teaching with real-life through project-based learning involving the community, and research and creative work. Since the autumn of 2019, Proovikivi has also been creating a web-based platform to support collaboration between the community and young people, increase innovation potential, help participants better understand local-global connections, and help measure the impact of joint projects.



Viability of the Estonian cultural space

ESTONIA'S GOALS AND GENERAL SITUATION

Estonian sustainable development strategy, "Sustainable Estonia 21", sets the viability of the Estonian cultural space as one of its important priorities. The aim is to ensure the preservation of the Estonian nation, language, and culture through the ages.

The assessment of the sustainability of cultural space is based on the following three criteria:

1. The extent of the Estonian cultural space: From the point of view of the sustainability of Estonian culture, the awareness and wide availability of Estonian culture in Estonia is of primary importance, as well as the increasing translatability and spread of Estonian culture outside Estonia.
2. The functionality of Estonian culture: the extent to which the Estonian language, Estonian cultural heritage, and Estonian traditions, patterns of behaviour, and communication are entrenched, necessary, and used in everyday life and in the functioning of various institutions of society.
3. Temporal continuity and plasticity of Estonian culture: the duration and suitability of cultural memory (tradition) in connection with new discoveries, new fields, new technical environment, new cultural phenomena, new relationships and ways of communication. Especially the ability to translate Estonian language and culture (also in a technical sense) and its translatability in a globalising multicultural environment.

The General Principles of Cultural Policy until 2020, adopted in 2014, has been the basis for national decisions in the field of culture until 2020. A new document, General Principles of Cultural Policy 2030 (Culture 2030), is currently being developed.

The Ministry of Culture, together with its agencies, works to preserve the Estonian national identity and to ensure and develop a viable media and cultural space. To achieve this, the Ministry develops, values, raises awareness, and disseminates the rich culture, heritage, media space, and cultural diversity of Estonia both in Estonia and abroad, and supports both professional activities and hobbies in the creative field.

A successful integration policy is also important for the survival of Estonian culture. To promote this, a development plan for the population and a cohesive society until 2030 is being prepared. The aim of the development plan is to create conditions to ensure national sustainability, make sure that Estonian society is integrated and socially cohesive and that people with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds actively participate in society and share democratic values.

In 2020, under the leadership of the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of the Interior, the preparation of the development plan Population and Cohesive Society 2021–2030 was started. The development plan sets goals and directs policy areas related to population sustainability, civil society, global Estonianness, and adaptation and integration.

Rate of natural
increase

-1384

Total fertility rate

1,7

Speakers of Estonian

652
thousand

Share of the
population attending
of cultural activities
among
20–64-year-olds

85,2%

MEASURES AND ACTIVITIES

INDICATORS

	2016	Latest known status (year)
18.1. Rate of natural increase	-1339	-1384 (2018)
18.2. Total fertility rate	1,6	1,7 (2018)
18.3. Speakers of Estonian, thousand	673	652 (2019)
18.4. Share of the population attending of cultural activities among 20–64-year-olds, %	n/a	85,2 (2017)
18.5. People participating in cultural events (incl. phy- sical activities), share among 20–64-year-olds, %	80 (2015)	n/a

5.18.1 CENTRAL GOVERNMENT LEVEL

On 24 February 2018, one hundred years passed since the establishment of the Estonian state. No country is born in a single day, and the creation of a country is preceded and followed by a number of important historical milestones, all of which deserve attention and remembrance. Therefore, the anniversary period of Estonia 100 was longer – from 16 April 2017 to 2 February 2020. The anniversary period of the Estonia 100 began in April 2017, when the 100th anniversary of the demonstration of Estonians who had played an important role in Estonian statehood in the former Petrograd and the unification of Estonian settlements into the national province was celebrated. The end of the anniversary celebrations is considered to be 2 February 2020, which marks the 100th anniversary of the conclusion of the Tartu Peace Treaty. The Tartu Peace Treaty ended the Estonian War of Independence, determined Estonia's eastern

border, and Soviet Russia recognised the independence of the Estonian state.

In order to promote Estonia's sustainability, the position of the **minister of population**, whose main areas of responsibility are the planning and coordination of population and family policy and the adaptation policy of new immigrants, the involvement of expatriate Estonian communities, the planning and coordination of civil society development, and issues related to population activities and religious associations, was created in the Government of the Republic in 2019.

In 2019, the **Cooperation Committee on Global Estonianness** was established with the aim of ensuring closer contact and cooperation between the Estonian state and its compatriots. The Cooperation Committee is led by the minister of population and its task is to analyse the policy of compatriots, to present proposals for compatriot policy, and to participate in the development and implementation of the global Estonianness programme prepared in 2020 within the framework of the Population and Cohesive Society Development Plan 2021–2030. The central task of the programme to be prepared is to help preserve the identity of the Estonian community abroad, to involve them more in Estonian social and cultural life than before, and to support the return of those who wish to do so.

The action plan **Estonian Language and Culture in the Digital Age 2019–2027** has been developed, through which the introduction of a digital dimension to research on Estonian language and culture is supported, and cooperation between fields is encouraged. This is important in ensuring the development and vitality of the Estonian language and culture in



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the digital space. 2020 has also been declared the Year of Digital Culture.

Various support measures have been set up **to promote entrepreneurship in the cultural and creative sectors** and to support the realisation of the sector's economic potential. The aim is to link cultural and creative potential to entrepreneurship to foster the growth of companies with new ambitious business models, improve their export capacity, and add value to other sectors of the economy through creative industries in developing business models, products and services, and sales and marketing.

In the field of integration, activities are carried out by **developing the integration and adaptation services of the Estonian state**. In the years 2019–2020, analyses that provide an overview of the services of nine service areas (immigration, citizenship, labour and business, media and the information field of social protection and health, education and Estonian language training, security and law and order, regional development and culture, sport and civil society) by four target groups (permanent residents of other nationalities, new immigrants, Estonians, and

compatriots) will be completed. The challenges related to integration are greater, especially in Tallinn and East-Viru County, where the share of non-native speakers is large or even predominant. With the aim of supporting the development of high-quality learning of the Estonian language as a foreign language and contributing to better integration of society, **the substantive activities of the Estonian Language Houses in Narva and Tallinn were started in the second half of 2018**. The houses were opened in 2019, and their task is to ensure access to high-quality, diverse, and flexible language learning and to facilitate the implementation of various cooperation activities in support of integration.

In recent years, the Citizenship Act has been amended several times so that people wishing to apply for Estonian citizenship can **study the Estonian language free of charge**, provide minors born in Estonia whose parents (or grandparents) have lived in Estonia before regaining independence the opportunity to **obtain Estonian citizenship in a simplified procedure**.

The highlight of the 2019 cultural year was the **XXVII Song and XX Dance Celebration "My**

Fatherland is My Love". The theme for the year, "Song Celebration 150. The Anniversary Year of Estonian Song and Dance", organised on the initiative of the Ministry of Culture and led by the Estonian Song and Dance Celebration Foundation, offered different ways to participate in the song and dance festival. In addition to the anniversary festival "My Fatherland is My Love" that took place in July, several museums opened various exhibitions and renewed permanent exhibitions. Various concerts took place and various educational programmes were carried out. In 2019, an analysis of the sustainability of the song and dance celebration tradition was completed. The study looked at the situation of choirs, folk dance groups, and music groups participating in the song and dance celebration movement and their instructors. It turned out that young people are not motivated by the profession of an instructor, salaries are low, and groups cannot make ends meet financially.

Special mention should also be made of the activities of the Estonian food introduction and sales promotion programme **"Estonian Food 2015–2020"**, which is intended to promote agriculture, fisheries, and food culture related to Estonian cultural identity, that has been present at all major open-air cultural events in 2017–2019, including Estonian food areas at the two latest song festivals. The stronger the cultural identity, the more people are prone to buy generally more expensive domestic food products. A strong identity comes from pride in local ingredients and cuisine. Shaping Estonian food culture as part of seasonal, Nordic cuisine, where raw materials come from pure local nature, is largely the message of the programme "Estonian Food 2015–2020" designed by the state and local NGOs.

5.18.2 ACTIVITIES OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS

Various non-governmental organisations deal with the viability of the cultural space, among which the activities of Estonian Chamber of Culture can be highlighted. In addition to representatives of creative associations (artists, architects, designers, musicians, journalists, theatre, etc.) and cultural workers, the organi-

sation also brings together representatives of the educational sector (lecturers, researchers, teachers, promoters of hobby education) and with its activities, EKK seeks to contribute to the formation of a safe, balanced and caring society. EKK organises annual conferences to link different aspects of culture and dissect development problems with presenters in these fields, for example, the conference "Culture and Environment" that took place in 2017, covering the importance of culture as a determinant of basic values in understanding and shaping the environment, and the conference "Work + Culture = Work Culture" organised in 2018, showing that culture, especially communication culture, plays an important role in the development of job satisfaction and happiness. A three-day education congress organised in 2018 together with the Academy of Sciences and the Ministry of Education and Research, which confirmed that culture is one of the basic concepts of education, both in setting goals and as a basis for building education had a particularly large scope and impact.

Many **village communities** operating in rural areas and supported by LEADER programmes, the local initiative programme (LIP), and local governments contribute to the Estonian cultural space and joint activities.

In 2018, the **100th anniversary programme of the Republic of Estonia** (Estonia 100 programme), prepared since 2014, in the implementation of which the partners were mostly non-governmental organisations, reached its culmination.

By the end of 2018, a total of almost 3,000 events had taken place at home and abroad within the framework of the Estonia 100 programme, and the people of Estonia have made almost 1,500 gifts to their community on the occasion of the anniversary. In the case of the events, the focus has been on the target group of children and young people, who will start shaping the future of Estonia in a few decades. Compared to previous practices, the volume of private funding related to the Estonia 100 programme was unprecedented, as initiatives and events have been supported by more than 100 companies – for example, there has been much support for the production of Estonia 100 film programmes, the purchase of musical instru-



ments for music schools, and the organisation of art exhibitions around the world.

More than 400 music education institutions and orchestras received almost 3,000 instruments in 2015–2018. The purchase of instruments was also supported by local governments and private donors. In the summer of 2017, the “Children’s Republic” took the celebration of Estonia 100 across the country. The major programmes were **Estonia 100 architectural programme “Good public space”**, the aim of which was to reconstruct public urban space in many Estonian cities. For example, the town squares of Valga, Põlva, Tõrva, Rapla, Võru, and Kuressaare and others are already open. Estonia 100 book series: To celebrate **Estonia 100, a book series** with 44 books was published, which tells the history of Estonia’s development through various fields. As a gift from the Estonia 100 committee and entrepreneurs, the book series reached 440 school and public library users with the largest readership in the counties. **Estonia 100 film programme**: a total of five feature films, one short film cassette, one high-budget

nature documentary, and one animated film were screened. Among others, films such as *The Little Comrade* and *Truth and Justice* were screened, the latter of which brought a record of more than 267,000 viewers to cinemas. The Estonia 100 film programme provided significant leverage to the development of the entire film sector, which benefited hundreds of filmmakers on the one hand and the Estonian cinema audience on the other. The drama series *Bank* also aired on ERR. Within the framework of the **Estonia 100 theatre programme “Story of the Century”**, 14 productions were staged with the participation of 844 people. The programme drew large and small theatres as cooperation partners. The **Estonia 100 art programme** included nearly 100 diverse art events that took place in different parts of Estonia and around the world.

5.18.3 INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

In 2016–2018, the **Estonian Literary Museum** implemented the project “Development cooperation between the Belarusian Institute of Culture, Language, and Literature and the Estonian Literary Museum”. The aim of the project was to increase the capacity of Belarusian humanity scholars and social scientists to use innovative research and analysis methods, open and sustainable IT solutions. The project gives the employees of the institute the opportunity to undergo an internship in Estonia and thereby acquire our usual work methods and settle into the research environment in English. Estonian researchers are doing internships there, working with local colleagues; in turn, they pass on their experience to those researchers who cannot come to Estonia for various reasons. This will increase the visibility of Belarusian humanities scholars in the world and improve the situation of the humanities and humanities education in Belarus and the prospects for the study of its culture.

As a good example, the activities of the **Peipsi Centre for Transboundary Cooperation** project “Development of Women’s Entrepreneurship and Handicraft Production in Călărași Region” (2018–2019) in Moldova focused on supporting women’s entrepreneurship, preserving local heritage culture, developing tourism, and supporting community cooperation. In cooperation with the non-profit organisation Casa Parinteasca, women’s entrepreneurship was supported in the field of handicraft, regional products, and tourism throughout the rural area of Călărași. A study trip to Estonia was organised and participation in the St. Martin’s Day Fair took place, training was held on local handicrafts, product development, and marketing, equipment for making tapestries and lace was acquired, several joint activities of regional handicraft producers were organised, such as a Christmas market and development of workshops for tourists. As a result of the project, women from rural areas who were able to start their own businesses were trained, using the common resources of the community and the support of Estonian experts.

6. NEXT STEPS

In the context of strategic planning, the most important milestone this year is the completion of Estonia's long-term strategy "Estonia 2035", which creates a strong basis for a more systematic and robust reflection of sustainable development goals in sectoral strategies. The strategy "Estonia 2035" sets strategic goals for the Estonian state and people for the next fifteen years and determines the changes necessary to achieve them. The strategy is the result of joint discussions, analyses, workshops, and opinion polls with non-governmental partners, experts, researchers, politicians, businesspeople, officials, and a number of other contributors to the country's future. Almost 17,000 people from all over Estonia have contributed to the completion of "Estonia 2035" in open co-creation in 2018–2020; 13,903 of them participated in an opinion poll, i.e. a survey of values, carried out on the Internet and in libraries, on the basis of which strategic goals have been formulated.

In the course of compiling the strategy "Estonia 2035", the framework of strategic planning has been streamlined and the culture of strategic planning has been developed. Due to Estonia's own development logic and priorities, and in accordance with the new political orientations of the European Union, the goals of sustainable development will be integrated into the central long-term strategy "Estonia 2035". The integration of sustainable development into various policies will also continue.

At the level of the European Union, Estonia, together with other European Union countries, agreed on the integration of sustainable development goals into the European Union's economic coordination instrument, which is more widely known as the European Semester. This means that in the future, the supervision of the fulfilment of the sustainable development goals will be centralised at the level of the European

Union, i.e. the importance of the sustainable development goals will increase both in Estonia and in the European Union as a whole.

We are also working to raise general awareness of the sustainable development goals. We will continue to participate in the European Sustainable Development Week and draw attention to the goals of sustainable development at the annual Opinion Festival in Estonia. We support the work of the Coalition for Sustainable Development and expand its scope. We intend to create a platform for sustainable development where both the government and the private sector, as well as NGOs and citizens, will receive information on sustainable development issues and take responsibility for achieving sustainable development goals. In autumn 2020, a biennial Sustainable Development Forum will be held, this time entitled "Cities and towns in a changing climate", which will also provide an overview of the results of this voluntary national report.

Estonia must continue to contribute to the promotion of innovative technological solutions that help to achieve the goals of sustainable development. For example, the development of digital technology and e-governance in Estonia has contributed to economic development, good governance, transparency, resource efficiency, and human development. Investments in green energy and energy savings will help revitalise the economy and support the development of green technologies. The government will continue its sectoral activities in the main bottlenecks identified on the basis of previous analyses. It is important to find effective solutions to raise public awareness of the 2030 Agenda and to contribute to achieving the goals through international cooperation.