

Activities

Estonia's youth sector is a kaleidoscope of opportunities inviting young individuals to engage, learn and be supported in a multitude of ways.

Hobby activities

Many engage in hobbies in schools, youth centres, and youth associations.

Hobby education

Over 800 hobby schools. 54% of 7-16 year-olds and 11% of 17-26 year-olds attend.

Open youth centres

299 youth centres all over Estonia provide a safe space and are used by 31% of Estonian young people.

Youth camps

11% of Estonian young people participate.

Youth projects

Youth meetings, youth initiatives, Erasmus+ & European Solidarity Corps participants.

Support for NEET young people

Youth work services in local municipalities

Work camps

Multiple organisers, thousands of participants.

Youth associations

11% of all Estonian young people belong to youth associations and organisations.

Youth participation

20% of young people participate in local youth councils, action groups or student councils.



Core principles of Estonia's youth sector

- + Recognising the unique needs of young people
- + Understanding and informing about youth issues
- + Upholding youth autonomy and rights
- + Treating young people as equal partners
- + Promoting active and meaningful youth inclusion
- + Fostering youth development and self-realisation
- + Valuing every individual young person



The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for the development of youth and talent policy, youth work and hobby education in Estonia. The Education and Youth Board is responsible for the implementation of youth policy.



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Youth empowerment in Estonia



Discover Estonia

In Estonia, the law recognises the rights of youth and student councils, and **young people can vote from the age of 16**. The nation's evidence-based and data-driven youth sector aims to create an Estonia where young people want to live and have a voice.

Our goal is to make Estonia a country that **young people want to live in and lead**.

We want to increase young people's trust in state. From a 53% trust rate in 2016, the goal is to reach 70% by 2035.

Facts & numbers

Youth work creates conditions for diverse development of all young people. **As many as 90% of those involved in youth work are very satisfied** with the experience.

21%

of Estonia's population are young people aged 7 to 26, equalling 288,117 individuals. ⁽²⁰²³⁾

73%

of the 7–19-year-olds participate in hobby schools or hobby activities ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾

299

Number of youth centres in Estonia ⁽²⁰²¹⁾

20%

of 7-26-year-olds don't participate in any form of youth work or hobby education ⁽²⁰²⁰⁾

14%

Youth unemployment among 15–26-year-olds ⁽²⁰²²⁾

10%

NEET* young people aged 15–26 ⁽²⁰²²⁾

* NEET — not in employment, education or training

Key characteristics

OECD considers Estonian youth policy to be **one of the best in Europe**. Estonian youth sector development plan won the "Future Policy Award 2019" acknowledgement from the World Future Council.

- + Young people have a say in decisions that affect them: **voting rights start at age 16** in local elections.
- + The rights of **student** and **youth councils** are enshrined in law.
- + **Hobby education**, an integral part of the youth sector, provides its own curricula that enable broad self-development options in areas including music, arts, sports, and technology.
- + With three Bachelor's and one Master's programmes, Estonia prioritises **professional youth work education**.
- + State-coordinated but youth-driven **youth information portal** provides crucial information on education, career, relationships, health, etc, and is widely used.
- + **Diverse support for young people**: From tackling NEET challenges to special programmes for talented young people.
- + **Quality of youth work** is supported by a quality assessment model actively used by local governments.
- + Estonia's youth sector's future is directed by **Youth Sector Strategy 2035**, developed in collaboration with all stakeholders.



