

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. 52% of 7-16 year-olds and 12% of 17-26 year-olds attend.

Open youth centres

280 youth centres all over Estonia provide a safe space for young people.

Youth camps

10% 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

Active young people can take part in youth associations and organisations.

Youth participation

Young people can make their voices heard through 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 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 in and have a voice.

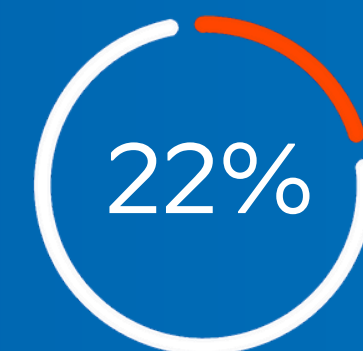


Our goal is to make Estonia a country that young people **want to live in and lead.**

We want to increase young people's trust in state. From a 57% trust rate in 2022, the goal is to reach 70% by 2035.

Facts & numbers

Youth work creates conditions for diverse development of all young people.



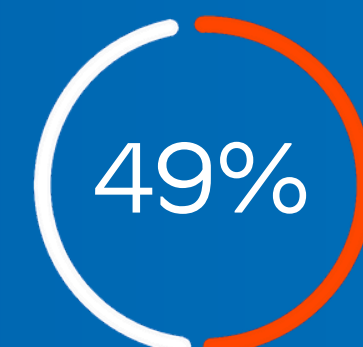
22% of Estonia's population are young people aged 7 to 26, equalling 295,624 individuals (2025)



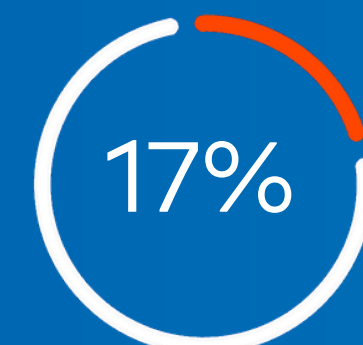
90% of those involved in youth work are very satisfied with the experience (2020)



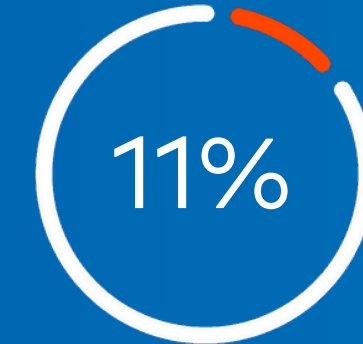
280 Number of youth centres in Estonia (2024)



49% of 16-17 year-olds voted at the last local government elections (2025)



17% Youth unemployment among 15-26-year-olds (2024)



11% NEET* young people aged 15-26 (2024)

* NEET — not in employment, education or training

Key characteristics

- + 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.

