

# **EDUCATION, LABOUR MARKET AND CAREER GUIDANCE IN ESTONIA**

Foundation Lifelong Learning Development Innove

National Resource Centre for Guidance

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## ESTONIA IN BRIEF

Form of Government	parliamentary democracy
Capital	Tallinn, 397 150 (January 1, 2003) inhabitants
Currency	the Estonian Kroon (EEK)
Neighbouring Countries	Finland and Sweden across the Baltic Sea; Russian Federation, Latvia
Surface Area	45 227 km <sup>2</sup>
Population	1 351 000 (January 1, 2004)
Population Density	30 inhabitants per km <sup>2</sup>
Official Languages	Estonian
Religion	there is no state church, the largest one is Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the next in size is Apostolic-Orthodox Church; only 29% of the population have formalised their ties to a specific congregation
Labour Force	654 200 (333 600 men, 320 600 women), of whom 588 100 are employed and 66 100 (10.1%) are unemployed (2003)
Employment in Sectors	primary sector (agriculture, forestry) 6,2%, secondary sector (industry, construction) 32,5%, tertiary sector (service) 61,4% (2003)
Exports by Industries	machinery 27.8%, transport 14.9%, agricultural and food industry 9.2%, metal industry 9.2%, chemical industry 7.2%, textile industry 7.2%, mineral industry 5.6%, wood industry 2.7%, other 11.1% (2003).
Main Trading Partners	Finland, Sweden, Germany, Latvia, China.
GNP/per Capita	6286.6 USD <sup>1</sup> (2003)

<sup>1</sup> \* calculated according to the annual average exchange rate of the Estonian Central Bank (Eesti Pank)

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## INTRODUCTION

The aim of this brochure is to provide guidance counsellors with preliminary information about education, labour market and career guidance issues in Estonia.

The opening part introduces initial Estonian contact points and public services for further information on any of the main themes. The following two chapters elaborate the topics of education and labour market in more detail, and are intended to cast light on the most relevant aspects for guidance practitioners as approached from the international point of view.

Although the history of career guidance in Estonia goes back over 80 years, the significance attached to this field has not been consistently prominent nor its development stable. After recurrent destructions and constructions of the guidance and counselling structures at different times, Estonia is currently in a phase where the development of yet a new system has been under way since 1999/2000. For this reason, the main emphasis of the theme treatment in this brochure has been placed primarily on the process and changes of career guidance services from the start of the 20th century to this day.

Addresses of related organisations are brought out in the closing chapter to enable all interested parties contact them directly. For an electronic version of this booklet and other information on the developments in the Estonian career guidance field please check [www.innove.ee/teabekeskus](http://www.innove.ee/teabekeskus).

National Resource Centre for Guidance wishes to thank the Ministry of Education and Research, the Estonian Labour Market Board, the Archimedes Foundation and all colleagues from the Foundation Innove for their support and valuable contribution towards the production of the second edition of this brochure.

## 1. INFORMATION SOURCES FOR GUIDANCE PRACTITIONERS

### 1.1 INITIAL REFERENCE POINTS

#### **National Resource Centre for Guidance/Euroguidance Estonia**

National Resource Centre for Guidance/Euroguidance Estonia operates under **the Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development Innove**. Established in 1996, the Foundation carried the name of Foundation Vocational Education and Training Reform in Estonia till December 2003. The new name reflects expansion in the targets of the Foundation, and corresponds better with its everyday activities and programmes. The objective of the Foundation is to promote initiatives and activities of lifelong learning through Estonian and EU programmes in the area of human resource development. The mission of the Foundation Innove is to offer experience, advice and support to organisations promoting vocational education and training (VET) and lifelong learning (LLL), and to the learning members of the society. The activities of the Foundation are supported by an extensive network of international and local partners, including VET institutions in Estonia and abroad, relevant ministries, local and regional governments, and employer organisations. The 5-member Board includes representatives of the Ministries of Education and Research, Social Affairs and Economic Affairs and Communications.

The programmes implemented by the Foundation include:

- Phare Programme
- Estonian National Observatory
- Leonardo da Vinci Programme
- Estonian Business Education Programme
- National Resource Centre for Guidance/Euroguidance Estonia
- European Structural Funds

**National Resource Centre for Guidance/Euroguidance Estonia** was established in 1998. It contributes to the promotion of transnational mobility in education and training within the context of the Leonardo da Vinci programme in close collaboration with all other Euroguidance Centres in Europe. The main target group on national level is the Estonian network of guidance practitioners for whom Euroguidance Estonia operates as a reference point of various issues related to transnational mobility and career guidance in general.

### **Archimedes Foundation**

Archimedes Foundation was established in 1997 by the Ministry of Education to manage education and research programmes of the European Union in Estonia. The aim of the Foundation is to prepare Estonian education and research system as well as youth organisations for co-operation with the EU structures, also to reinforce Estonian participation in the EU and international education, research and youth programmes. These tasks include information provision, guidance and counselling, application processing, evaluation and dissemination of results.

EU co-operation programmes and networks like Socrates (Erasmus, Comenius, Lingua, Minerva, Grundtvig, Arion, Estonian ENIC/NARIC), Youth, Sixth Framework programme, COST, e-Content run under Archimedes Foundation.

Archimedes Foundation works closely with the Ministry of Education and Research, and with institutions involved in the internationalisation of the education and research field such as education institutions, research institutes, youth organisations etc.

## **1.2 PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **Ministry of Education and Research**

The Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for education, research, youth and language policy and planning. Its sphere of responsibility includes general, vocational, adult and higher education, also research and youth work. Educational and research co-operation agreements with other countries, and the management of the Eurydice programme are likewise among the responsibilities of the Ministry of Education and Research.

The Ministry of Education and Research is assisted in its role by a number of management and consultative bodies:

- **Higher Education Advisory Chamber** is a consultative body of representatives of higher education institutions at the Ministry of Education and Research dealing with the problems related to higher education.
- **Estonian Research and Development Council** is a consultative body in the Government chaired by the Prime Minister.
- **Estonian Science Foundation** is a consultative body of experts, representatives of the universities and of the Ministry of Education and Research deciding on the financing of the science projects.
- **Higher Education Quality Assessment Council** is a body responsible for the accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes.

The agencies that operate under the Ministry of Education and Research are:

- Language Inspection
- State Examination and Qualification Centre

- Schoolnetwork Bureau
- School Administration Bureau
- Youth Work Centre
- EENET

### **Ministry of Social Affairs**

The mission of the Ministry of Social Affairs is to create conditions in the society for shaping an environment that promotes good health, employment and social protection, and increases the quality of life of the people in Estonia.

The Ministry of Social Affairs develops and implements social, labour and health policy.

The agencies that operate under the Ministry of Social Affairs are:

- Labour Market Board
- Health Care Board
- State Agency of Medicines
- Social Insurance Board
- Health Protection Inspectorate
- Labour Inspectorate
- National Institute for Health Development
- Occupational Health Centre
- Public Conciliator's Office etc

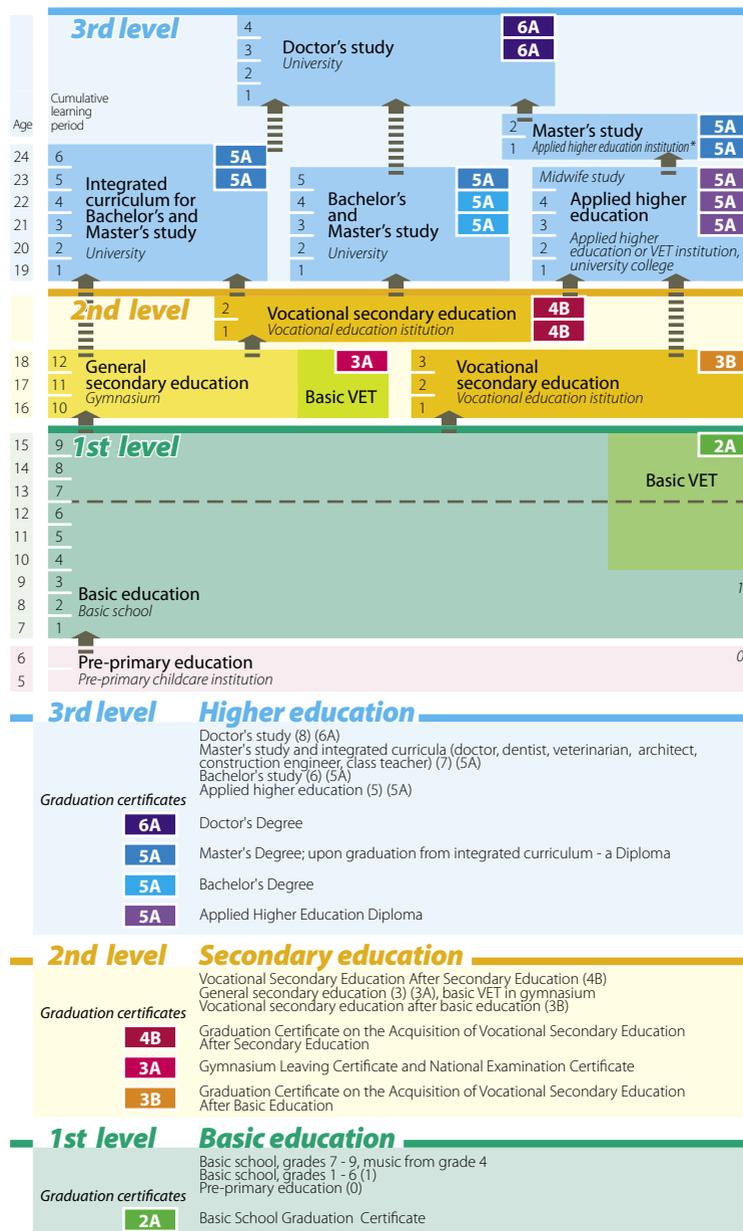
## **2. EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

### **2.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW**

The principal objective in the development of the Estonian education system and policy is to advance Estonian society into an open learning society where every person and institution has adopted the principles of lifelong learning.

The Act on Education, adopted in 1992, states the following general goals of education: to promote the development of personality, family and the Estonian nation, as well as of national minorities, of Estonian economic, political and cultural life and of nature preservation in the global economic and cultural context; to educate loyal citizens; and to set up the prerequisites of lifelong learning for everybody. Several changes have been instituted regarding the structure of education as well as the content of study programmes at all levels of education.

Diagram of the formal education and training system, and the duration of different levels of education:



**Key to diagram:**

**Pre-primary education** is provided mostly at kindergartens or other pre-school childcare institutions, at home or at preparatory groups at schools. The role of these institutions is to support and complement family's contribution in raising children by promoting their growth, development and individuality. Childcare institutions offer training until the age of seven. Pre-primary education is not part of compulsory education.

**Basic school** is an institution providing the first and second level (2A) compulsory general education (grades 1 – 9).

**Gymnasium** is an institution providing general secondary education (3A), (grades 10 – 12). National examinations at the end of gymnasium are the basis for continuing studies on a higher education level.

**Vocational education institution** is an institution providing vocational secondary education at upper-secondary and post-secondary levels (3B), and applied higher education (5A).

**Applied higher education institution** provides the first stage of higher education (5A).

**University** is an institution of learning and research for the acquisition of academic degrees, i.e. *bakalaureus* (bachelor) (5A), *magister* (master) (5A) and *doktor* (doctor) (6). University colleges provide applied higher education.

The diagram and certification codes (e.g. 2A, 3A etc) are based on International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) 97.

## 2.2 COMPULSORY EDUCATION

The 9-year compulsory basic education starts at the beginning of a school year (grade 1) after children have reached the age of seven, and continues until they have satisfactorily completed basic school (grade 9), or have reached the age of seventeen.

The academic year lasts from September until June. One school year comprises 175 school days, i.e. 35 weeks. School vacations are at the start of November (autumn vacation), end of December/start of January (Christmas vacation), end of March (spring vacation) and from June to the end of August (summer vacation). The precise dates for vacations are set each year through a regulation issued by the Minister of Education and Research.

One school week consists of five school days. The weekly schedule of lessons is set through the school's curriculum. The maximum number of lessons per week varies from 20 (grade 1) to 34 lessons (grade 9). The duration of lessons is 45 minutes. Recess must be at least 10 minutes. Generally there is at least one 15 minute or longer meal recess. The school day usually lasts from 8 am to 3 pm but in some schools in larger towns lessons may take place in an afternoon shift. Many schools provide after-school activities for their Level I pupils, sometimes also for Level II ones, which are free of charge.

At the first and in some cases the second stage (grades 1 – 4 and 4 – 6), pupils are taught by the class teacher, at the upper stage by subject teachers. Assessment may be verbal (analysis/assessment) or grading (grade). Competences are assessed only verbally. Knowledge, skills and proficiencies of pupils are graded using a five-mark system, whereby mark 5 is very good, 4 is good, 3 is satisfactory, 2 is deficient and 1 is weak. In grades 1 and 2, the assessments are mostly verbal. The

behaviour of, and care taken by the pupil, is assessed using the grades of exemplary, good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory.

The basic education aims at uniformity – the National Curriculum for the Basic Schools and Gymnasia ensures equal opportunities for all children to transfer from one grade to the next, and from one school to another, when minimum requirements are met.

After satisfactory completion of basic education, pupils obtain Basic School Graduation Certificate, and are entitled to continue their studies in gymnasia or vocational education institutions.

## 2.3 GENERAL SECONDARY EDUCATION

The Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act (1993) establishes gymnasium as the main structural unit of general secondary education, replacing the former secondary school.

General secondary education lasts for three years (grades 10 – 12) for pupils aged sixteen to eighteen years.

The requirements concerning secondary education, i.e. the educational standards, are established in the National Curriculum for the Basic Schools and Gymnasia. The National Curriculum determines the study objectives, the duration of studies, the relationships of the National Curriculum to the school electives, the list of compulsory subjects for selection and graduation requirements. The authorised minimum weekly course workload at gymnasium is 32 lessons. Some subjects may be taught in more depth to some groups of students, which means that schools can develop their own approach or course content in such fields as mathematics, languages, business etc.

Since 1997, in order to complete general secondary education, the gymnasium students have to pass national examinations, administered by the National Examination and Qualification Centre.

After completing general secondary education and passing three national examinations, pupils receive Secondary School Leaving Certificate from the school, and National Examination Certificate from the National Examination and Qualification Centre. These two credentials are valid together and qualify the student for all types of higher education.

## 2.4 INITIAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Vocational education and training can be acquired at two levels in Estonia: secondary and higher education levels. The acquisition of vocational secondary education after basic school lasts at least three years, after gymnasium 1 – 2,5 years.

### Vocational secondary education

Approximately 26% of the basic school graduates and 22% of the gymnasium graduates continue their studies at a vocational school to acquire vocational secondary education.

In academic year 2003/4, there were 71 vocational education institutions with 35 440 students in Estonia, 28 183 on the secondary and 7 257 on the higher education level. More than half of the VET schools provide programmes for both basic as well as gymnasium graduates, the rest provide programmes only for gymnasium graduates and some provide applied higher education programmes.

### Enrolment of students by training fields on October 1, 2003

Field of Training	Secondary vocational education			
	After basic education		After general secondary education	
Arts	166	2,3%	207	3,4%
Humanities			10	0,2%
Business and administration	527	7,2%	1415	23,1%
Computing	326	4,5%	630	10,3%
Engineering and engineering trades	2274	31,2%	911	14,9%
Manufacturing and processing	1144	15,7%	512	8,4%
Architecture and building	1146	15,7%	153	2,5%
Agriculture, forestry and fishery	404	5,5%	369	6,0%
Health			393	6,4%
Personal services	1153	15,8%	962	15,7%
Transport services	146	2,0%	121	2,0%
Environmental protection			82	1,3%
Security services			366	6,0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>7286</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>6131</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Applied higher education

See "Higher Education".

### Vocational qualifications

The graduation certificate of a VET school does not confirm an acquired vocational qualification but states that the person has covered a certain study programme at a certain level at a certain VET school. The situation is changing as the National Employee Qualification System is being developed at the National Qualification Authority. In line with the constantly increasing number of developed occupational standards, and the accreditation of examination centres and bodies, most of the VET school graduates can soon be expected to take the vocational qualification examination upon graduation. Those who pass the examination receive the Vocational Qualification Certificate, which

proves the qualification according to the national employee qualification system. First national qualification examinations in addition to school examinations were taken by VET school graduates in spring 2002.

To finish a programme at a VET school, students have to pass final school examinations. Those who complete a VET programme after basic school, graduate with Graduation Certificate on the Acquisition of Vocational Secondary Education after Basic Education. It is optional for them to also take the national general secondary education examinations. However, Certificate of National Examination is required upon admission to higher education institutions.

Those who complete a VET programme after gymnasium, graduate with Graduation Certificate on the Acquisition of Vocational Secondary Education after Secondary Education.

### **Applied higher education qualifications**

See "Higher Education".

## **2.5 HIGHER EDUCATION**

### **2.5.1 Types of institutions**

The Estonian higher education system is binary and comprises both universities and applied higher education institutions. Since 1995, also some vocational education institutions have started to provide higher education. Institutions providing higher education may be in state, public or private ownership. The administration of higher education is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education and Research.

Higher Education Standard 2002 sets the requirements of higher education in Estonia, and is a fundamental act concerning the granting

of education licenses and accreditation of the study programmes of educational institutions. It applies to all higher education levels and study forms independent of the legal status and ownership of the institution.

Students can study on full or part-time basis, which also determines their rights for free education, study loan and other study benefits. Students establish their status at the beginning of their studies. Later, the education institution can change the status according to how much the student has accomplished during the previous academic year. For full-time study, the student has to fulfill at least 75% of the annual course load set in the study programme.

### **University sector**

A university is a research, development, educational and cultural institution where various fields of study are taught on bachelor's, master's and doctorate levels. All universities have to follow the Higher Education Standard. Bachelor's study is the first level study in higher education. The first cycle concentrates on acquiring general job skills and knowledge. The main aim of the bachelor's study is to prepare students for master study. Master study is the second level study in higher education. The second cycle involves further development of professional skills necessary to pursue a job in a certain field. Master study is followed by the doctor study. Bachelor, master and doctor study programmes are all offered at the universities.

Public universities are autonomous under the administrative jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education and Research. This autonomy gives universities the right to independently determine their academic and organisational structure, the content of the teaching and research work, the organisation of teaching, the conditions for admission and graduation. In the academic year 2003/04, there were 6 public universities in Estonia with the total number of students over 40 711. Of the

6 public universities only the University of Tartu is a classical university. The other 5 are more or less specialised in certain field(s) – agriculture (Estonian Agricultural University); engineering (Tallinn Technical University); educational sciences (Tallinn Pedagogical University); arts (Estonian Academy of Arts); music (Estonian Academy of Music).

Private universities are financed from their own means but the state may participate in financing certain study programmes in the case of the public demand for the qualifications that they provide. In the academic year 2003/04, there were 6 private universities with 6 409 students. The majority of private universities provide higher education in the field of business administration, law and international relations.

All universities and study programmes are recognised by the state after quality assessment and accreditation.

Recent trends and developments in higher education sphere can be characterised by the strengthening of ties with European higher education space, and the adoption of a system which allows for an easy comparing of degrees. In June 2001, the Government approved the higher education reform proposal in accordance with the Bologna process. According to the proposal, Estonia was to adopt a two-cycle higher education system corresponding to the Anglo-Saxon Bachelor and Master degree system. Following the 2002 Amendment to the Law on University and Other Binding Laws, students are admitted only to the reformed *bakalaureus*-, *magister*- and *doktor*-study programmes starting from the academic year 2002/2003. In the new two-cycle system, *bakalaureus*-studies take three or four years, and *magister*-studies one or two years, as compared to the previous system of a four or five year *bakalaureus*-study. However, the total time required to earn a *magister*-degree, is at least five years.

### **Applied higher education sector**

Applied higher education is provided by applied higher education institutions, which belong to the structure of a university, and vocational education institutions according to the rules set in the Higher Education Standard.

Applied higher education institutions provide applied higher education programmes. They may also provide master study and vocational secondary education programmes after gymnasium if at least two thirds of the students are studying on the basis of the applied higher education programmes.

In the academic year 2003/04, there were 8 public applied higher education institutions in Estonia that were financed from the state budget, with the total number of students 4 648. All institutions of this type are specialised and offer higher education in the fields like engineering, teacher training, national defence, arts, music, transport, aviation etc. In addition, there were 17 private applied higher education institutions with 6 497 students. Private applied higher education institutions offer mainly programmes in the fields of business administration and theology. The private applied higher education institutions must have a teaching licence issued by the Ministry of Education and Research.

Applied higher education can also be acquired in vocational education institutions. In the academic year 2003/4, 11 vocational education institutions (9 public and 2 private) provided applied higher education with the total enrolment of 7 394 students (6 972 in public and 422 in private schools).

## 2.5.2 Qualifications

### a) at universities

- *bakalaureusekraad* – the first academic undergraduate degree awarded after *bakalaureus*-study. The *bakalaureus* programmes last for 3 – 4 years with the total capacity of 120 – 160 credit points (180 – 240 ECTS credits).
- *magistrikraad* – a post-graduate degree awarded after 1 – 2 years of study with the total capacity of 40 – 80 credit points (60 – 120 ECTS).
- *bakalaureuse- ja magistriõppe integreeritud õpe* – integrated programmes of bachelor's and master's study to develop the knowledge and skills for working in the chosen field or continuing in the doctor study;  
e.g. the *Medicine* and *Veterinary Medicine* study programmes last for 6 years and the total capacity of the programmes is 240 credit points (ECTS 360); the *Pharmacy, Stomatology, Architecture* and *Class Teachers* study programmes last for 5 years and the total capacity is 200 credit points (ECTS 300).
- *doktorikraad* – the highest level study in higher education to develop further the knowledge and skills for independent scientific or professional work in the field. The programmes last for 3 – 4 years with the total capacity of 120 – 160 credit points (180 – 240 ECTS).

### b) at applied higher education institutions

- *applied higher education diploma* – the first level study in higher education. The study programme includes at least 30% of practical training. The duration of study is

3 – 4 years with the total capacity of 120 – 160 credit points (180 – 240 ECTS credits).

### c) at vocational education institutions

- *applied higher education diploma* – the first level study in higher education. The study programme includes at least 30% of practical training. The duration of study is 3 – 4 with the total capacity of 120 – 160 credit points (180 – 240 ECTS credits).

## 2.5.3 Foreign applicants

### Academic requirements

It is up to the universities and other institutions of higher education to decide whether a foreign applicant meets the academic requirements for enrolment in a higher education course. International students aiming at a degree from a higher education institution in Estonia must usually apply for admission on the same terms as Estonian students.

The general admission requirement for foreign applicants is at least the secondary school leaving certificate that is equivalent to the Estonian Secondary School Leaving Certificate or an equivalent recognised qualification attesting the completion of secondary school education. Applicants must be eligible for higher education in their own country.

There is a selection procedure for most higher education institutions and study programmes. The specific requirements depend on the particular higher education institution and on the field of study. These may include a number of entrance examinations, an interview or consideration of the grades on the State Examination Certificate and/or on Secondary School Leaving Certificate. However, there are also institutions that do not require entrance examinations or interviews from international applicants at all.

The required documents for application are usually:

- completed application form
- certified copies of certificates/degrees/qualifications giving access to higher education
- academic transcripts
- statement of purpose (explaining the motivation for applying)
- three or four photos
- copy of the identification pages from the passport

Admission to the study programmes is administrated by the higher education institution.

The deadline for handing in applications varies by higher education institutions but is usually the end of June or the beginning of July. Applicants should contact directly and in due time the institution where they wish to study.

In addition to the above described general application procedures, many universities participate in international bilateral agreements between partner institutions which enable students of these institutions to take part in student exchanges. There are usually a number of different exchange programmes facilitating the mobility of students. Further information on application conditions and procedures is available at the home university.

Nineteen Estonian higher education institutions also participate in the European Community action programme SOCRATES/ERASMUS, the framework for the support of European activities of higher education institutions, including the exchange of their students and teaching staff. Every participating institution has its own ERASMUS co-ordi-

nator who provides academic information for prospective ERASMUS exchange students.

International students who plan to study at the host institution for up to one year either at the graduate or postgraduate level are termed as visiting students. They can request further information on application conditions and procedures from the home university and/or prospective host university.

More information on mobility issues within the higher education sector can be obtained from [www.smartestonia.ee](http://www.smartestonia.ee).

### **Visas, residence and work permits**

All students admitted to an educational institution in Estonia must have a **valid passport** for the period of study. Citizens from ca 60 countries, including the EU and EEA states, USA, Canada and Japan, can enter Estonia visa-free. Others can obtain a visa from the nearest Estonian Consulate or Embassy. For further details please check the website of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs [www.mfa.ee/eng](http://www.mfa.ee/eng).

International students who intend to study in Estonia for a period longer than three months, need to apply for a **residence permit**. The citizens of the EU countries, USA, Switzerland, Iceland, Norway and Japan can do this in Estonia, others have to contact the nearest Estonian Embassy or Consulate in their home country. It may take up to three months to get a residence permit (usually about one month).

A residence permit for study may be issued for a period of up to one year but no longer than the estimated duration of the studies. If an international student continues his/her studies in the same educational institution, his/her residence permit may be extended by one year at a time but not for longer than six years all together.

Students who have received a residence permit for study in an educational institution in Estonia, may work in Estonia but have to apply for a **work permit** at the Citizenship and Migration Board.

Further information on the application procedures, documents and fees concerning visas, residence and work permits can be obtained at the nearest Estonian Embassy or Consulate, from the web site [www.smartestonia.ee](http://www.smartestonia.ee) or from the web page of the Citizenship and Migration Board [www.mig.ee/eng/residence/study/](http://www.mig.ee/eng/residence/study/).

## **2.6 EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

In Estonia, everybody has a right for education and training. Vocational Education Institutions Act stipulates the rights for education of students with special needs. There are special schools, classes and groups for students with special needs, however, integrated studies for all students are increasingly encouraged throughout the entire education system. Those students who participate in vocational or professional training, are provided with individual study-plans which are subject to changes.

## **2.7 DISTANCE LEARNING**

Distance education has a well-developed base and structure in Estonia. Through the Phare Multi-Country Programme for Distance Education two training centres were established in 1995. Since then, most universities have developed and are practising web-based courses both in formal as well as in continuing professional education. Public universities like the University of Tartu, Tallinn Technical University, Tallinn Pedagogical University, as well as private universities like the Estonian Business School and the Concordia Audentes International University

Estonia have gained considerable experience in distance learning and teaching, and web-based courses are actively taught every year.

At most universities it is still possible in some fields to apply for distance learning in a traditional way – through correspondence courses.

## **2.8 LANGUAGE ISSUES FOR FOREIGNERS**

The official language of instruction in Estonia is Estonian. Children who do not speak Estonian at home can begin Estonian language studies at pre-school. Normally, such studies start at the age 5 – 6 but if requested by parents, teaching may also begin earlier. Of the pre-school education institutions 13% have Russian and 0,3% have English as the language of instruction.

Basic and secondary education can be obtained either in Estonian or in Russian. There are also some private schools that teach in English. In schools where the language of instruction is other than Estonian, Estonian is taught as a second language, as a compulsory subject, starting in grade 1. If the mother tongue of the pupil is not the same as the language of instruction at school, it is possible to study the mother tongue as an elective subject if an application is made to the head master by the parents of at least 10 pupils with the same mother tongue.

The Ministry of Education and Research in co-operation with relevant institutions is currently elaborating the regulatory and budgetary framework for the education of children of future migrant workers coming from EU Member States, who will most evidently need some further instruction in English. It is the aim of the Ministry of Education and Research to have developed a support framework for Estonian-medium schools to be ready to receive the children of migrant workers,

starting from September 1, 2004. Such support framework is planned to include:

- the system of individual study programmes;
- teaching Estonian as a second language on the basis of an individual study programme or in admission classes;
- support studies for up to 3 hours per week;
- mother tongue studies, if requested;
- admission to a pre-school education and/or a school preparation group for children up to 7 years of age.

At the higher education level, it is possible to take courses also in Russian, English or in some other language. The extent and number of international courses taught in English are growing constantly, especially due to the intensive student exchange through the Erasmus programme. The recent joining of the EU will also have a significant impact on such developments. The international courses can either form a component in programmes (for example Baltic Studies programmes at some universities) or be complete degree programmes for either bachelor or master level students.

### Higher education institutions

Higher education institutions offer Estonian language courses for foreigners but these are usually meant for their own foreign students. Intensive Estonian language courses are provided during one or two semesters for students wishing to apply later to the faculty. In many cases it is also possible to take intensive language and culture courses during the summer – many universities organise such courses for their future exchange students. Everyone interested in the Estonian language and culture is free to apply for them.

The extent and level of instruction vary from beginners' courses to advanced programmes. Likewise, the length and cost of the courses can be very different. A 70 hour Estonian language course at the University of Tartu costs around 400 EUR. Language course prices at different institutions tend to start from 200 EUR on the average.

Within the Erasmus programme, Estonian language summer courses are organised for Erasmus exchange students. These courses are free of charge for prospective students.

### Other organisations

Estonian courses for foreigners are also offered by various private institutions. They are open to all foreigners, fees vary between organisations.

### Estonian abroad

The Estonian language can be studied in institutions of higher and general education, in Sunday schools and through language courses in several parts of the world. A unit called the Language Division is engaged in issues of teaching Estonian as a native language and as a second language, and also of introducing the Estonian language and culture outside Estonia.

Today, Estonian is taught in 36 higher education institutions of 16 countries either as a separate major or minor subject for Finno-Ugric philologists, students of Baltic Studies programmes etc. The longest tradition of teaching Estonian is in Finnish, Swedish and Hungarian universities, having commenced there already over 100 years ago. At the academic level, the Estonian language, culture and history are taught also at the University of Toronto (Canada), London University School of East European and Slavonic Studies (United Kingdom) etc.

The only Estonian general education school located outside Estonia is the Second Secondary School of Pechory. Non-Estonian general education schools with a large proportion of Estonian lessons are the Estonian Schools of Riga and of Stockholm, Roihuvuori School of Helsinki, Upper-Suetuk Basic School in Siberia, Alexandrovka School in the Crimea and schools of the villages of Salme and Sulevi in Abkhazia. Children living in Finland or Sweden can learn the Estonian language with state support in the case if their parents request such lessons and if there are at least four children with similar needs in the area.

## 2.9 EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR ADULTS

According to the Adult Education Act (1993), adult education in Estonia is classified as:

- formal adult education;
- work-related training;
- popular adult education.

### Formal adult education

Formal adult education means basic, secondary or higher education acquired outside the daytime study form or full-time study. It is offered by the regular education system – in gymnasia for adults, vocational education and higher education institutions.

Learning activities in schools are carried out in the form of daytime study, evening courses and distance learning. There is one age limit here – only people with basic education or people who have passed the minimum permitted school-leaving age (17) may take up studies outside the daytime study form.

### Access to higher education

Both applied higher education institutions as well as universities provide flexible study form for adult learners for acquiring higher education. Acquisition of higher education through part-time studies usually involves a tuition fee.

In the Open University system, it is possible to combine university study programmes and modules according to an individual study plan. The purpose of study can be either professional development or aspiration towards an academic degree. The Open University provides the opportunity to study on the basis of a higher education programme (diploma is granted upon graduation) using various study forms, for example E-learning.

Those wishing to obtain university degree through Open University instruction are required to have completed their secondary education or equivalent education level giving access to higher education, or a certain level of higher education in order to continue studies on the next stage. General requirements are the same as for the full-time students.

Within a certain period – usually longer than in the case of full-time students – and after the fulfilment of the same graduation requirements, Open University students are awarded a university qualification.

### Work - related training

Work-related continuing and re-training is provided at work places or training institutions. A training institution can be a vocational education institution, higher education institution or a private training provider.

Continuing vocational training is usually provided in the form of payable courses, charged fees are paid by the party that commissioned the training.

Estonia has currently over 1100 private and voluntary associations who have a licence to provide training for adults. According to the Private School Act (1998), all private training institutions whose volume of study exceeds 120 lessons must apply at the Ministry of Education and Research for an education licence. Training courses are offered in all parts of the country although the training providers tend to concentrate into bigger towns.

### **Popular adult education**

Popular adult education is provided by various non-formal training centres, folk high schools and culture centres which are non-profit making and belong to the third sector. These training centres are supported annually from state budget.

Most of the training takes place in the form of courses, often also in study groups. The most popular courses in these education institutions are arts and culture, language and computer courses.

### **Financing of adult education**

The expenses of work-related training of civil servants and teachers will be appropriated in the state budget, amount cannot be less than 3% of the yearly salary fund for teachers and 2 - 4% for civil servants.

Courses for registered unemployed are ordered and financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs. Local governments may finance work-related training of adults, but usually work-related training and popular adult education is financed by the interested persons themselves, by people who either participate in training or their employers.

Acquisition of basic and general secondary education through evening courses and distance learning or as an external student is tuition free. In addition, the state finances a certain number of study places for acquiring secondary vocational education.

Work-related continuing training or retraining courses are conducted on the basis of self-funding by participants or firms with interest in the training.

Although a large share of training involves a tuition fee for the learner, the state does support people's participation through the current tax system. According to the Income Tax Act, people are entitled to an exemption from income tax to the extent of the amount spent on education and training.

### **Availability of educational leave**

According to the Adult Education Act, an employee who works on the basis of an employment contract or is a civil servant is entitled for a study leave. Study leave is granted on the basis of the employee's application and the education institution notification.

Study leave is granted for those in formal education system, for those who are acquiring basic and general secondary education in the evening, in distance or external study form, vocational secondary education on the basis of basic education in the evening or distance study form, vocational secondary education on the basis of secondary general education on part-time basis or in external study form, and higher education on part-time basis or in external study form. The length of the study leave for acquiring formal education can be 30 days a year, additional 28 days can be granted for the completion of basic education, 35 days for secondary education, 42 days for defending the bachelor degree, or 49 days for defending the master degree or doctor

thesis. These rules do not apply for full-time students as full-time study is considered to be the main occupation of that person.

The employer is obliged to pay average salary to the employee on the study leave for ten days. The rest of the study leave must be compensated at least on the level of the minimum wage.

The period of study leave for work-related training can be at least fourteen calendar days per year, while the employer must pay an average salary rate for this period.

For participating in popular adult education, the length of the study leave can be up to seven days per year, but employers are not obliged to pay salary for these days.

#### **Administration of adult education**

According to the Adult Education Act, the Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for general co-ordination of adult education and training provision. In January 2003, the structure of the ministry was changed and adult education division was created in order to increase the ministry's role in adult education system development.

In March 2004, Government approved the new body of The National Council of Adult Education. The Council is a consultative body of the Estonian Government in the area of adult education. The Council consists of the representatives of ministries, the largest non-governmental organisations, adult educators' organisations, and employee and employer organisations. It co-ordinates the organisation of adult education and proposes the state's priorities in this field.

## **3. LABOUR MARKET**

### **3.1. LABOUR MARKET INSTITUTIONS**

The governing labour market institution in Estonia is the **Ministry of Social Affairs**. The main functions of the Ministry of Social Affairs include planning social policy and solving social problems in the following principal spheres:

- employment of the population and income policy;
- protection of people's health and medical care;
- social security and social insurance.

Within the Ministry, the Deputy Secretary General in the field of Labour Policy is responsible for labour market issues, and the Labour Market Department, Working Environment Department and Labour Relations Department are in charge of working out the policy in this field.

**The Estonian Labour Market Board**, established in April 1991, works under the governance of the Ministry of Social Affairs. The Labour Market Board is an operational body whose main functions are:

- to administer labour market services, bringing together employees and employers, e.g. collecting information on vacancies; employment mediation; providing information on opportunities for training activities; providing direct employment training, training stipends, subsidies and community placements;
- to organise unemployment registration, regulate the payment of benefits to the unemployed and supervise the entire process.

Starting from year 2004, the Estonian Labour Market Board will be one of the implementing agencies of the European Social Fund. It will have the responsibility for two measures – the implementation of active labour market measures, and social inclusion.

The Estonian Labour Market Board has a network of local state employment offices. Each of the 15 counties plus the capital city Tallinn has at least one employment office. State employment offices implement the governmental labour policy, register unemployed persons, provide employment services and pay state unemployment benefits in their respective region.

### 3.2. LABOUR MARKET POLICY

The Ministry of Social Affairs has been in charge of preparing Employment Action Plans every year since 2001. These plans provide an overview of the problems and challenges connected with the Estonian labour market, and of the labour market policy initiatives and guidelines necessary to improve the situation. The Employment Action Plans have been developed in close collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Internal Affairs and with social partners.

The structure of the Estonian Employment Action Plans has been based on that of the European Employment Guidelines. Action Plan 2003 had three chapters – labour market policy in Estonia, main development patterns during last years and results of measures of previous Action Plans. In addition, it contained a section on new activities.

The most important activities outlined in the Action Plan 2003 are the following:

- reduction of youth unemployment and long-term unemployment;
- creation of legislation to support active ageing;
- development and adaptation of vocational education system to the needs of entrepreneurs and other target groups;
- development of skills in the context of the “new labour market” and lifelong learning;

- supporting activities which promote regional and local employment;
- improvement of adaptability of enterprises by lifelong learning.

In accordance with the provisions of the Accession Partnership, the European Commission is in the process of carrying out employment policy reviews in the candidate countries. The starting point in the Employment Policy Reviews is to agree on a Joint Assessment Paper, which focuses on the fundamental challenges in the field of employment.

Joint Assessment of Employment Priorities in Estonia was prepared by the Ministry of Social Affairs in co-operation with European Commission, and was signed in March 2001. This document provided an overview of the labour market situation in Estonia and listed its main priorities. The achievement of activities and objectives pointed out in the Joint Assessment Paper is monitored every year.

Having accessed the EU, it has become possible for Estonia to use the resources of the European Structural Funds in order to advance the Estonian economic situation. For that reason, the Estonian Government approved the National Development Plan for the Implementation of the EU Structural Funds in 2003 – 2006, in March 2003. One priority in this development plan is human resource development, aimed at increasing and using Estonia’s labour force potential in a more effective way. Resources to address this priority will be based on the European Social Fund (ESF). Two measures under this priority are targeted directly at the enhancement of labour market and employment in Estonia. It is their general objective to achieve more extensive and efficient prevention and alleviation of unemployment and poverty, and the increase of social inclusion.

### 3.3. LABOUR MARKET MEASURES

Since October 2000 social protection of the unemployed is regulated by two new Acts – **Social Protection of Unemployed Act** and **Labour Market Services Act**.

The main changes implemented through these Acts are:

- the prolongation of the period for which unemployment benefits are paid from 180 days to 270 days;
- broadening of the definition of the category “registered unemployed” which carries entitlement to labour market services.

According to the Act, a person is registered as **unemployed** after filling in an application for employment at a state employment office, if he/she meets the following requirements:

- is between the age of 16 and the age of retirement;
- is not employed or engaged in activity equal to work;
- is seeking employment.

Social protection of the unemployed in Estonia is provided by the state (i.e. is financed from the state budget and constitutes a part of the social protection system). Unemployment benefits are granted to those registered unemployed who meet the additional criterion of having been employed or engaged in activity equal to work for at least 180 days in the last 12 months. Compared to other European countries, the unemployment benefits in Estonia are very low: since January 1999, the unemployment benefit has been 400 EEK, which is just 6% of the gross average wage.

January 2002 marked the official introduction of the compulsory **unemployment insurance** in Estonia, regulated by the Unemployment Insurance Act. Benefits have been granted since January 2003. Insured

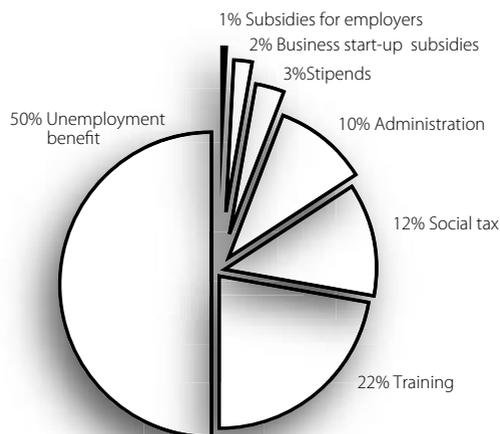
persons have the right to receive unemployment insurance benefits if they are registered in a local employment office and are active job seekers. The amount of the benefit depends on the calculated average salary of the insured person, and amounts to 50% of the average salary during the first 100 days, and to 40% of the average salary after that.

Duration of receiving this benefit depends on the length of the insurance period. For instance, in the case where a person has an insurance period shorter than five years, he/ she is entitled to receive this benefit for up to 180 days.

All persons who are registered as unemployed are eligible for the following labour market services:

- informing about labour market situation and opportunities for labour market training;
- job mediation;
- labour market training and stipends;
- employment subsidy to start a business;
- employment subsidy to employers to employ persons who are less competitive in the labour market;
- community placement;
- vocational guidance.

In 2004, the Ministry of Social Affairs has initiated the elaboration of a new Concept of Labour Market Measures with the aim to analyse the content and current provision of labour market services in order to develop a new employment strategy. Key focus will be placed on individual approach.

**Graph 1. Expenditures on labour market policies in 2002**

In 2002, expenditure on labour market policies in Estonia accounted for 0.18 % of the GDP, which is very low compared to the EU and Central and Eastern European countries. Active labour market measures comprise about 38% of the total labour market expenditure. The most important active measure both in terms of participants and in terms of expenditure is labour market training. In 2002, expenditure on training accounted for 22% of the total budget.

### 3.4. LABOUR MARKET SITUATION

Since the onset of transition, the Estonian labour market has been characterised by important structural changes, in particular the fall in the number of employed workers, and the reduction in the participation and employment rates. The labour market was strongly affected by the decline in growth in 1998 – 1999, with the unemployment rate measured according to ILO methodology jumping from 9.8% in year 1998 to 13.6% in year 2000. Since year 2001 unemployment has started to decrease but was still quite high – 10.7% – in the second quarter of 2003.

Employment in Estonia fell substantially in the early years of the transition, in line with the contraction of economic activity. By 1993, total employment stood at 708 000, some 15% down on the 1989 level of 838 000. Employment went on falling after 1993 despite the recovery in the economy, reaching 568 300 in 2000. In 2001 – 2003 situation has been improving and the number of employed persons has been slowly rising.

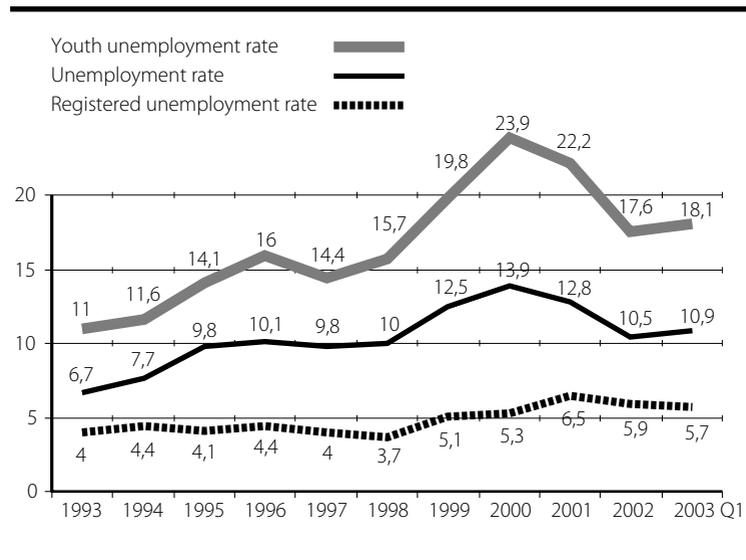
At the same time, very rapid productivity gains were made over the period of 1994 – 2000 when GDP per employed person rose by 42%.

The employment rate fell sharply from approximately 79% in the late 1980s, then stabilised at 65% in the years 1995 – 1998. With general economic recession in the years of 1998 – 1999, the employment rate also fell again to 60.7% in year 2000. By year 2003 it has risen by one percentage point.

The fall in the employment rate has affected both men and women. The male rate in year 2002 was estimated to be at about 66% and the female rate at about 57.8%. The male rate is now 7 percentage points below and the female rate slightly above the respective rates for the EU.

Labour supply has fallen substantially since 1991, reflecting both demographic trends and some decline in labour force participation. The working-age population (15 - 64) fell from 1.07 million in 1991 to 0.91 million in 2002. Most of the fall in the working-age population took place between 1991 and 1994, reflecting the high level of out-migration during those years. At the same time, labour force participation has been also falling.

Unemployment is slightly higher among men (10.5% in 2003) as compared to women (10.2%). Situation is different among young people aged 15 - 24 years – unemployment rate for women (26%) is much higher than for men (16.9%). Labour force participation, at the same time, is higher among men as compared to women.

**Graph 2. Unemployment rates between 1993 - 2003 I quarter**

As in the other countries, youth unemployment is higher than adult unemployment and the age unemployment gap is similar with the EU figures – in year 2002, the difference in Estonia was 7.1 percentage points, while in the EU corresponding figure was 7.0 percentage points.

Long-term unemployment has been a growing feature of the labour market, with the proportion of the unemployed who are without work for more than one year rising from 30% in 1995 to 51% at end of 2001. With the overall improvement of the labour market situation also the proportion of the long-term unemployed has fallen to 42% in the second quarter of 2003.

Finally, regional disparities in employment have been reflected in the growing regional divergence in unemployment as well. The highest unemployment is found in the South East and North East Estonia, and the lowest in Tartu and Saare.

## 4. CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Career guidance has been practised in Estonia for over 80 years. Similarly to the rest of the world, the development and nature of this field has been dependent on the interaction of several factors.

Mere recognition of the necessity and significance of career guidance is not sufficient, the results in the area are determined by the state of the society, and its readiness to address these issues. An essential prerequisite here is the existence of industry and the related labour market, where the two participants – the employers and/or employees – are both interested in more efficient production and personal well being of people.

Throughout the entire history the attitude of the state authorities has had a considerable impact on the development of career guidance in any country. The authorities determine the distribution of the state funds allocated to the development of this field. In a totalitarian state, some sectors may be prohibited altogether or alternatively – their development is held back. Any reorganisation of economy, at the same time, can bring about such reorganisation of all structures that some ‘babies may get thrown out with the bath water’. Such was the case with career guidance in Estonia after the re-establishment of independence at the beginning of the 1990s.

Career guidance has historically also been closely related to psychology, thus one of the most vital influence factors for the field was the level and the development prospects of the psychological sciences in the country. Studies in the field of psychology as well as teaching psychology at institutions of higher education ensured availability of specialists with required qualifications, and set the paradigm on the basis of which the people engaged in career counselling organised their work.

The following chapter provides an overview of the history of vocational guidance in Estonia and outlines the main aspects of service provision and trends as they stand in the summer of 2004.

## 4.1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

### 4.1.1. The first period of independence

Around 1920s, Estonia began to recover from the chaos resulting from the collapse of the Russian Tsarist Empire, the Red Revolution and the consequent War of Independence. Next to agriculture, industry started to develop rapidly and like in other countries that had experienced industrial revolution, it brought to Estonia the need to improve labour efficiency. Employers needed assistance in finding high quality workforce.

During that period, the **experimental psychology studies** at the University of Tartu were carried out at a remarkable level for the time. These studies supported – primarily with respect to the development of methodology – also vocational counselling activities. The objective was to approach the entire topic of vocational guidance from the scientific point of view.

Judging from the publications in the press, it may be observed that the basic issues of vocational guidance at the beginning of the 20th century have remained valid to this day.

Comprehensive consideration of one's **personality** was deemed vital when his/her suitability for a certain job was assessed. According to the traditions of psychology of the time, the person's memory, attentiveness, ability to combine etc were studied. Attention was also paid to one's adaptability and his/her flexibility of thinking, with test assignments used to assess these abilities. Consideration of any contraindications to the person's health was deemed important.

On the other hand, importance was likewise attached to the **satisfaction with the job**. In addition to the abilities, one's inclinations were researched as well. It was believed that the person's work results were better when he/she was engaged in a job that suited both his/her abilities as well as was interesting for him/her.

Availability of objective **information about actual work conditions** was considered an important precondition of the careers guidance process. It was emphasised that vocational schools should acquaint the students with their schools and fields of study better. With respect to the further educational path of a child, the roles of both the careers guidance counsellor as well as those of teachers and parents were considered essential. Modern elements may likewise be detected in the attempts to strengthen co-operation relations between careers guidance counsellors, schools and employment offices.

The young Republic of Estonia made considerable efforts to create a **nation-wide counselling system**. The predominant point of view stated that counselling services must be accessible to young persons free of charge. In 1925 the first careers guidance counselling bureau in Estonia was established in Tartu upon a joint initiative of the local town and county governments. The purpose of founding of such an institution was to offer young town and country people assistance in finding service places suited for their abilities. Soon a similar bureau was founded in Tallinn.

It can be said that practical activities in the field of careers guidance were rather successful and well thought-through. For instance, the newspaper Postimees quotes the following in 1925: "The Ministry of Education has received a letter from the Consul of Austria residing in Tallinn, which expresses the Consul's interest in the organisation of careers guidance in Estonia".

**Scientific research work** was likewise carried out in the field of careers guidance. The Master's thesis of Aleksis Kallitsa, entitled *The School and Careers Guidance, Particularly in View of Estonian Circumstances*, and completed in 1933, discusses the majority of the principal careers guidance issues. The work considers the necessity of careers guidance at schools, analyses work education and issues related to familiarisation of youth with different vocations. The author finds that the students need to be provided with an overview of requirements applicable to various vocations, and to describe the appealing vocation as it happens in the real life, so that a young person would be able to evaluate his or her options. It was recommended to establish workshops for students, and to organise shows of vocational reality. Instructions for providing vocational education were suggested, beginning from the first grade students.

#### 4.1.2. World War II

Before World War II, the Soviet Russia occupied Estonia and all careers guidance activities in Estonia were suspended. War times, as well as the times of Stalinist terror put a stop to the activities in the field of careers guidance, the same happened in the field of (applied) psychology. The post-war country introduced **obligatory work postulate**, while personal development of individuals and of personal needs were at the same time considered a taboo, these topics being altogether prohibited and condemned. In addition to that it was necessary to emphasise the **principle of equality** (of personality related preconditions) whereby the workers' and collective farmers' social status were officially very highly valued. All activities and enterprise in the mental sphere were considered third-grade. Combined with the extremely hard economic conditions of the time, it created a situation where there was no soil to nurture careers guidance.

#### 4.1.3. Restoration of career guidance in the 1960s

Only after the death of the dictator Stalin the activities in the field of vocational choice were resumed. The party ideology and rhetoric changed. During the period of seeming prosperity of the 1960s and the first years of the 1970s, when communism seemed to be only at an arm's distance, it became important to emphasise the party's concern about the happy future of the youth. The report of the Central Committee to the XXII Congress of the Communist Party of Soviet Union (CPSU) pointed out that the Soviet school must – in addition to all other tasks – prepare the young persons for a conscious choice of profession. Although this was merely plain party rhetoric (slogans), it motivated many hopeful people. A new generation with no memories of the times of terror had emerged. The atmosphere of the so-called thaw period offered some room for reasonable thinking. Intellectuals in Soviet republics as well as in the rest of the so-called Socialist camp sensed this. Psychology came to be recognised as a scientific discipline again, and the universities begun to teach the field. People who had acquired the respective education started to act eagerly.

The business life of the state was controlled completely by the planned economy regime. Understandably any vocational guidance activities were also subject to **centralised direction**, and all the resources came entirely from the state.

Proceeding from the party guidelines, a number of acts and regulations were passed, which dealt – in a rather general way – with the need to improve careers guidance work targeted at young persons.

The existence of social procurement with respect to careers guidance was at the time questionable as the careers options were limited within the totalitarian state. The eloquent rhetoric often manifested a simple need to guide people to one or another sector of public economy. Jobs

were guaranteed to people by the state, thus there was no actual need to be concerned about the topic and the word career had a rather negative connotation. The activities were targeted at young persons and were focussed on the assessment of their abilities, manifesting in various fields, by testing.

In 1968, **vocational counselling centres** were established within the departments of education in Tallinn and Tartu, shortly afterwards in Kohtla-Järve and Pärnu. In 1969, the Minister of Education of the Estonian SSR approved the “Statutes of a vocational counselling centre in town (region)”, which specified the main tasks and staff (manager, methodologists, doctor) of a vocational guidance centre, as well as the tasks and required qualifications of the personnel.

For discussing and resolving main issues, each vocational counselling centre had a **methodological council**. This council comprised the manager of the centre (the chairperson of the council), the methodologists, the doctor and a representative of the department of education. The manager had the right to invite employees of schools, members of parents’ committees, specialised doctors, as well as representatives of institutions, companies and organisations to participate in the work of the centre.

Although the guidelines for the work of vocational counselling centres were uniform, the actual work performed was different in many ways. For instance in Tartu a lot of attention was paid to **introducing vocations at enterprises**. Schools were given a plan of excursions, pupils attended if they were interested. It was recommended that students who visited vocational counselling centres brought with them references issued by the school.

The centres were also involved in **research work**. At the Tallinn Institute of Polytechnics, tests of mathematical aptitude as well as various researches were carried out with applicants for several years, serving as the basis

of forecasting academic success of the university students. Scientific degrees in the field of careers guidance were likewise defended.

#### **4.1.4. Career guidance during the stagnation period of the 1970s and in the last years of the Soviet Regime**

In the 1970s, careers guidance activities were carried out according to a similar model, although the general development trends of the State were demonstrating signs of stagnation. The planned economy was exerting rising pressure, centralisation restricted freedom of local decision-making. The system of mandatory assignment to jobs was used both in institutions of higher education as well as in vocational schools, careers guidance was part of the planned economy. Mission-minded intellectuals, working in the field of careers guidance, tried to do their job as well as possible in these circumstances, manoeuvring between serving the interests of the state and the humanist approach.

In 1970, careers guidance was made **compulsory at schools**. On January 25, 1971, the instructions for vocational orientation at general education schools in the Estonian SSR were confirmed by the decree of the Minister of Education. In the course of an eight-year school programme, a 42-hour vocational orientation programme came to be delivered at class teacher’s lessons. The instruction also described the obligations of people working at schools in the organisation of vocational orientation. Teachers could find assistance in the publication “Methodological Recommendations for Vocational Orientation of Students”, which included a chapter on the school’s work with parents in preparing the children for the selection of a profession. The official objective of the vocational orientation at schools was to ensure the graduates’ conscious, independent and voluntary choice of profession.

In 1970, the **Council of Youth Vocational Orientation** was established. Its purpose was to co-ordinate the vocational orientation activities in

the entire republic and to issue relevant recommendations. In order to help young persons to continue their education and to choose their future profession, altogether 24 vocational counselling centres were established in other towns and regions. The employees of the vocational counselling centres, mainly psychologists, received a good careers guidance education for the time.

The **vocational counselling centres** co-ordinated careers guidance at schools, organised information events and training for teachers. They collected statistical data related to vocational choice. Every spring the centres participated in the work of careers guidance committees, where students' decisions regarding pursuit of further education or employment were considered, while the actual behaviour of students was analysed again in the autumn. The activities of careers guidance committees were also confronted with criticism, because they were considered harassment of students with respect to their choice of career. The committees had access to information about the number of students admitted to vocational schools, and to which specialities. The study places of vocational schools were planned according to the needs of the national economy. The graduates were later assigned to work. As it was impossible to take everyone's wishes into consideration, the careers guidance specialist, being a public official, had to make compromises with his/her conscience and assign young persons to those jobs that the state needed. Vocational counselling centres were dispersed in 1988.

In 1970, a branch of the Soviet Union Scientific Research Institute of Labour Education and Vocational Orientation with four employees was established at the Scientific Research Institute of Pedagogical Sciences. The topics of the scientific research work were related to careers guidance.

During this period a considerable number of **publications** dealing with careers guidance and choice of profession were issued, some of

which were targeted at young people while others aimed at assisting teachers who dealt with careers guidance.

In 1973, a **careers guidance office was formed at the Tartu State University** to function until 1994. The principal task of the office was to draw job descriptions for various study fields. At the foundation of the office, the management of the university set the office staff an objective to direct university applicants from the humanities, where the admission competition was high, to science specialities (physics, chemistry, mathematics), where competition was insufficient. The task seemed a rather unrealistic one, and for this reason the employees of the office started to research the issues: in 1974 a **research** was carried out in four departments, in 1975 it included already 99% of the university entrants. The entrants filled an interest related questionnaire, and the vocational preferences and general aptitude test (GATB). Data of the academic merits at secondary school and university were used, as well as information from the references given to the entrants. Re-assessments were carried out in 1983 and in 1986. In 1985 – five years after graduation – all participants were sent a questionnaire in which they answered questions regarding their work and studies. During the following years similar studies were carried out in co-operation with the sociological research work of the laboratory of educational sociology of the Tartu University.

During the first half of the 1980s, the careers guidance office of the Tartu State University changed into a **careers counselling centre**. The centre employed several psychologists who had graduated from the university. Their services were available to all secondary school graduates in Estonia. Class teachers booked times in advance for admission of large pupil groups. Young people were **tested** according to general aptitude tests and with short questionnaires composed according to the theory of J. Holland. The biggest importance was attached to the individual personality-focussed counselling session, carried out in the

form of a dialogue and built on the results of the testing. Formerly, the test results had been discussed individually with the pupil and they had been compared to objective information, proceeding from the principle "Do no harm!" Gradually, with the increase of experience and knowledge, counsellors came to be able to afford themselves a more intervening approach in the benefit of the client. Since there was no strictly formulated state order with respect to the outcome of the work, it was possible to essentially **shift from careers guidance** (orientation of young persons towards the jobs set by the planned economy) **to careers counselling** that was supporting a young person in finding a job/way suitable personally for him or her. The respective personnel of the university also organised courses for the staff of the vocational counselling centres, the ideas of personality-focussed counselling were spread among the psychologists of the vocational counselling centres (who were continuously facing the need to make compromises between the state order and supporting individuality of young persons).

Since the end of 1987, careers guidance of young people in the Soviet Union was carried out completely centrally, a uniform nation-wide and centrally financed system, managed from Moscow, was created. In the Estonian context, it meant the **establishment of an all-Estonian counselling system** with the **centre in Tallinn** (the Estonian Centre of Career Guidance) and with a **division in Tartu** that served South-Estonia. The latter was integrated with the existing careers guidance office of the university. The new structure, comprising specialists now gathered in two major centres, allowed to set the sights to new quality targets. The most remarkable event of that period was the organisation of **practitioners' training**, which was based on western-style careers counselling principles. This allowed to compare the existing situation with that of the developed world, and to receive specialised tuition. Personal and professional contacts with colleagues supported the comparison of the content of careers guidance in different countries. Opportunities arose to invite professors and trainers from abroad. This initiated the

development also of the other areas of applied psychology, which – in turn – had a rapid positive impact on counselling as most of the practitioners then were specialised in psychology.

#### 4.1.5. Career guidance after the restoration of independence

After regaining its independence, the State of Estonia had to rebuild its economy. Private enterprise appeared, having received its initial impulse already in 1985 with the rise of co-operative enterprise during the Perestroika. Immediately after regaining independence, however, numerous other problems attained primary importance for the state and **interest in career guidance declined**. Public procurement for this field was suspended, choosing a profession and finding a job after graduation became the concern of the youth themselves. The centralised public career guidance was replaced by several alternative organisations engaged in counselling.

Reorganisation of the economy also brought **adults and the elderly**, who had lost their previous steady jobs, among the target groups of career counsellors. People were given an opportunity to plan their actual careers, either in Estonia or abroad. Having the obligation to take this responsibility proved a challenge for many.

In year 1993, the Ministry of Education **dissolved** the main national guidance resource centre, i.e. the Estonian Centre of Career Guidance that had been created in 1987, and had co-ordinated guidance related activities in the country. This led to the gradual **perishing of the unified system**. Although career services continued to be provided at a minor scale in some institutions across Estonia, their development was neither systematic nor recognised. The following six years between 1993 and 1999 marked the period of virtual non-existence of official career guidance services in Estonia.

## 4.2. CURRENT SITUATION

By today, the employers have understood the importance of high-quality workforce and the majority of young people are motivated to study. The authorities' interest in the field has been revived and although both financial means and human resources allocated to the provision and development of the services are modest, the initial legislative framework has been established and strategies for further enhancement of the system are being discussed. The interest of the private sector in career development and guidance issues is likewise growing – expressed both through the increasing number of personnel mediation services as well as through the concerns of the human resource departments in companies.

The former staircase-image of one's career has come to be gradually replaced by the one of a road passing through life and encompassing all contexts that people operate in and all roles that they take. Estonia is now facing the task of both starting the systematic implementation of this understanding from the very early age as well as of responding adequately to the consequences arising from this. Combined with the ever-changing needs of the labour market, and the expanding borders, those new trends pose enormous challenges to the guidance and counselling practitioners. The latter are furthermore faced with the need to employ modern working tools and techniques, including the ones in the field of ICT. Such web-based guidance and career information means are gradually being developed both in the public as well as in the private sector in Estonia.

Since the restoration of career guidance to the national agenda, the co-ordination of the field in Estonia has been divided between two ministries: the Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for the provision of services to young people whereas the main target group of the Ministry of Social Affairs are the unemployed.

**Qualification.** In June 2001, the career counsellor occupational standard was approved by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which at the time was responsible for the development of the qualification system in Estonia. However, no official training in career guidance has so far been provided in Estonia. Only numerous short and long-term courses, sometimes also under the leadership of foreign experts, organised for the practitioners both within the labour market as well as the education sector have served to meet the most urgent training needs. Tallinn Pedagogical University has applied for the official approval of the two new training programmes in guidance in 2003 but due to administrative issues with the Ministry of Education and Research they have not been officially launched yet. One of these programmes is aimed at the currently practising counsellors and the other at the students of psychology, pedagogy or social sciences who wish to minor in career guidance. Further training programmes and modules in careers to train both those still formally in training as well as already practising subject teachers, class teachers, vocational teachers, career co-ordinators, youth workers and counsellors, are planned to be elaborated within the European Social Fund framework.

### 4.2.1. Guidance and counselling in the education sector

#### Legislative framework

In the education sector, the provision of guidance services is regulated by two main laws. The Education Act of the Republic of Estonia (RT I 1996, 51, 965) stipulates in § 7 vocational guidance of children and youth to be the responsibility of local governments. According to the Youth Work Act (RT 1999, 27, 392) § 5, the county governor is responsible for the organisation of guidance and counselling of young people in the county by contracting a respective institution or specialist. Resulting from the latter, the Ministry of Education supported the establishment of 16 regional Youth Information and Counselling Centres (YICC) in

years 1999/2000 with premises and equipment (including 1 computer) within the framework of the Criminal Prevention Programme.

### Guidance as part of youth work

The emergence of the **Youth Information and Counselling Centres (YICC)** network marked the rebirth of a national career guidance system in the education sector. By today, the number of regional centres providing similar kind of YICC services has grown to 24, of which 17 (one in each county plus two in Harju and Tartu counties) are still partly funded by the Ministry. As the state funding has been modest and by far not sufficient for full-time operation, all centres have constantly had to invest substantial time and energy into resourcing additional financial means through projects, other funds etc. Support of local governments to YICC-s has likewise been very different in different regions. The unstable financial situation is complemented further by the different juridical ownership of the centres (altogether 5 different types, including local governments, educational institutions, non-profit organisations, foundations and a sole trader). The combination of the above-named two factors has been the main hindrance to the systematic development of the provided services and the unification of the network members under one and clear organisational identity.

The most recent positive initiative on the part of the Ministry of Education and Research, was the establishment of a working group to develop common guidelines of operation that cover the minimum requirements set for all centres funded by the Ministry. At the current moment, the range of service provision, i.e. the number of service providers versus the number of clients in the county (from 1:1180 to 1:18000), the qualification and number of practitioners in each centre (from 1 to 15), the size, conditions, equipment and accessibility of the premises, and the extent and content of activities provided within the region, vary considerably. As career guidance has so far formed only an undefined part of the YICC-s, there are still several centres which place

greater emphasis on information provision and not so much on counselling. Equal access of all young people between 7 to 26 years of age to career guidance is hence still seriously challenged.

Another cross-Estonian national network that services young people as its main target group, is the network of **open youth centres (OYC)**. In 2004, it comprises over 150 bases across the country with the aim to continue this expansion process. The main aim of OYC-s is the encouragement of youth participation in society and the provision of facilities for different youth activities outside formal curriculum, work and family.

Although not directly involved in career guidance, the OYC-s are seen as one of the main partners in disseminating basic career information to young people. Furthermore, they are one of the most potential venues for the YICC to deliver guidance related outreach services to young people. Examples where YICC and OYC are situated in the same building (altogether ca 4 – 5 cases) provide good co-operation models.

On the initiative of the Estonian Youth Work Centre, **youth information fair Teeviit** (meaning signpost) is being organised every year in December. This fair has become one of the major information events on the national level, comprising ca 150 exhibitors from among the educational institutions, youth and training related organisations, and attracting ca 20 000 visitors annually. Similar local fairs take place on a smaller scale across Estonia.

### Guidance within educational settings

Within **general education**, career education has formally been provided as a **cross-curricular theme** in the National Curriculum for Basic Schools and Gymnasias since 1996. The National Curriculum is the basis for the elaboration of the schools' own curriculum. Recent comprehensive investigation, carried out by the Ministry of Education and Research in 2003, on the state of actual application of careers

education showed that only 83% of the respondent schools had the career development theme included in the subject programmes. It has to be noted that the response rate of 37% to the named investigation remained very low, with only 196 schools out of ca 530 sending in their filled questionnaires. The given data should therefore be treated as not completely representing the entire state of practice within general education. However, on the basis of responses to other topics in the questionnaire as well as indicators from other sources, it can be concluded that the current standard and extent of the delivery of career education has been less than satisfactory, and requires extensive enhancement with a matter of urgency.

Starting from September 1, 2004, a new Act will come into force officially stipulating the cross-curricular theme *Professional Career and Its Development* to be part of the National Curriculum, and to be implemented by all general education schools. With the current lack of training and proper support materials this poses a big challenge for all teachers. In some cases, the school managements have started the preparation process by identifying staff members responsible for the co-ordination of the career development activities in the school in general. Further development of such a network of **career co-ordinators** in all schools is an aim set by the Ministry of Education and Research for 2004. At the current moment, career practitioners in many YICC-s have already initiated series of trainings and information seminars for the network of career co-ordinators in their region. Better resourced YICC teams have also provided their support to the respective networks in more remote areas of the country where the staff at the local YICC consists of only one person or where the YICC services have been rather information and not so much guidance oriented.

In addition to the cross-curricular theme, **designated career lessons** have been provided in many schools by teachers with either personal initiative or in some cases with some form of respective short-term

training. These lessons are usually provided as elective courses for the students in the last years of either basic or upper secondary school. In some cases, similar kinds of activities are also carried out by **class teachers in their weekly tutorials**. Historically, class teachers have been the ones with the main responsibility for their students' future career management skills.

According to the National Curriculum, the aim of all forms of career education in school is to help the students to gain more knowledge about themselves, the opportunity structure (jobs and learning), decision making and transition management skills that enable them to smoothly enter and navigate in the modern world of work, and fully realise their potential as active members of the society. Practical implementation of this aim has so far been mostly focused on the information provision about learning opportunities and different professions. Self-exploration has often been limited to participation in group testing carried out by visiting career counsellors from YICC-s. Although very popular among students and teachers alike, and enabling YICC practitioners to deliver at least some form of guidance service to an entire class of students at the same time, testing should in the future remain only one of the portfolio of methods to be used within career education and guidance in schools, with greater emphasis to be placed on experiential and interactive techniques.

In addition to the cross-curricular theme, the elective career lesson, the class teacher's tutorial, and the support services of a career co-ordinator and the visiting career counsellor from the regional YICC, career education and guidance activities in schools are sometimes also supported by the **school psychologist**. Starting from the beginning of 1990s when the Union of School Psychologists came to be founded, school psychologists are today employed in ca 33% of all general education schools on either full-time or part-time basis. Although mainly focussed on personal issues, there are several examples where

school psychologists also deliver career lessons or where they have been nominated as career co-ordinators of their school.

In **vocational education establishments**, the provision of career services was practically non-existent till school year 2002/3. The last couple of years have seen a major reform in the network of vocational schools whereby in some counties or towns several schools have been merged into one regional training centre (RTC), which also provides training courses for adults. Some of these new RTC-s have introduced the provision of career services to a certain extent – either in the form of specific lessons (eg job seeking skills etc) or through testing and feedback, provided by the visiting YICC career counsellor. However, whereas the latter try to service most general education schools in the county, their co-operation with vocational education institutions has so far been more occasional than systematic.

According to the new National Development Plan for 2004 – 2006, vocational education institutions are to establish the availability of permanent career services to their students. Although so far perceived as the ones already having made a career choice by embarking on vocational education and training, the participation, achievement and drop-out rates of the VET students as well as their high proportion among the unemployed suggest an urgent need for good career guidance in VET schools. Likewise, effective preparatory work has to be done in order to assist the graduates' transition into the world of work.

**At tertiary level**, career services operate in 5 Estonian universities. In addition to career consultation and counselling, they often act as a bridge between employers and students, by organising relevant lectures and seminars, company presentations, by providing job mediation and practice, and giving the opportunity to join the job-seekers database. The clients of these centres comprise students, alumni and the teaching personnel. In respect to the university's quality assurance

system, the career centre's utmost important activity is the collection of feedback from the labour market (first destination surveys, employer questionnaires). Services in higher education institutions are established on universities' initiative; there is no central regulation.

### **Supportive initiatives**

On the national level, the Ministry of Education and Research operates in close co-operation with two organisations in the development of career education and guidance. The **Estonian Youth Work Centre**, working directly under the Ministry, is primarily concerned with different forms of information and helps to put into practice programmes and projects in the field of youth work. Its tasks include the organisation of the annual youth information fair, the co-ordination of social-pedagogical youth work, special youth work, local history study projects, international relations, adventure pedagogy etc.

Within the Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development InnoVe, formerly known as the Foundation VET Reform, the **Estonian Euroguidance Centre** has been actively involved in the development of the national guidance system since 1998. Being part of the European Euroguidance network, it has contributed to the promotion of mobility, the enhancement of the European dimension in career guidance and the exchange of good practice. With guidance practitioners as its main target group, the centre's main activities include the development of different ICT applications in guidance; the strengthening of co-operation and information exchange within the institutional network in the fields of guidance, education, training, youth work and labour market policy in Estonia; and participation and encouragement of other relevant bodies in European project co-operation. In addition to organising seminars and trainings, Euroguidance Estonia also publishes a variety of handbooks and other printed materials in support of guidance, maintains a resource library, responds to information requests and participates in a range of related working groups

and fairs each year. Following Estonia's accession to the EU, Euro-guidance Estonia has been entrusted by the Ministry of Education and Research with the implementation of the entire career guidance development section within the European Social Fund programme.

In the context of international co-operation, the guidance system in Estonia has benefited and still benefits from a number of different programmes. One of the first extensive initiatives after the restoration of independence was the **Open Estonia Foundation Career Centre** project in 1997 – 1998. Within this framework hundreds of teachers and school psychologists from all across Estonia received some training in career guidance. Since the second half of the 1990s, the **Leonardo da Vinci** programme has likewise offered many possibilities for guidance practitioners to participate in the exchanges and learn from their European colleagues. In spring 2004, the Estonian practitioners had a possibility to take part in the international career guidance exchange project **Academia** already for the third time. Over the last four years, 37 practitioners from different European countries have visited Estonia within this exchange, while 30 Estonian specialists have had a chance to take part in week-long study visits abroad. In addition to international exchange projects between university career services, a somewhat longer and more comprehensive project was managed by the Tallinn University of Educational Sciences called **Adult Guidance, Education and Train the Trainers (AGETT)**. Including partners from several RTC-s and the Estonian Non-Formal Adult Education Association, the main aim of this project was to develop training programmes and modules for future practitioners and specialists in many different related fields.

In addition to the Leonardo da Vinci programme, Estonian activities in the field of career guidance have also been supported through the **Phare human resource development projects**, taking place between 2002 and 2004. A separate component on the development of career guidance services included the elaboration of a services

provision model in Estonia, the production of printed materials, the development of web-based interactive guidance tools, the training of counsellors and expert advice on the counsellors' training programmes, as prepared by the Tallinn Pedagogical University. The activities have been implemented by the project teams, including British, Finnish and Estonian experts.

#### 4.2.2. Guidance and counselling in the labour market sector

##### Legislative framework

Under the Ministry of Social Affairs, largely psychology-based vocational counselling has been provided in employment offices since mid-1990s, although initially there was **no respective legislation** to regulate the services. The initiative for creating the position of a vocational counsellor came from the ground level – from the regional employment offices where the necessity for this kind of activity was felt acutely. There were several objective reasons for this. Rapid changes of economy brought along the emerging of new professions, which required new qualifications and created the need for retraining and in-service training for a large number of people. The obligation to find one's way on the rapidly changing labour market, the ability to assess one's potential and resources for finding work, and readiness to take decisions became evident for many people of working age.

Vocational guidance and counselling services in the second half of the 1990s were available only in major centres, and they were provided with a strong inclination towards psychology. No counselling related statistics was collected and no essential analysis was carried out.

On October 1, 2000, the **Labour Market Services Act** came into force, stipulating vocational counselling to be an official labour market service. 12 new vocational counsellor positions were created that fall. By today, vocational guidance and counselling is offered in all

employment offices across Estonia, although in some smaller counties the counsellor is employed only on part-time basis. The provided services are regulated further by two directive documents. The Instructions for Providing Vocational Counselling Services was issued in 2001 by Director General of the Estonian Labour Market Board, and provides guidelines for the service providers. The Standard of Public Services, at the same time, describes the rights of the clients as to what are they entitled to expect of the different labour market services, with vocational counselling being one of them. The latter document has been up-dated in 2004.

### Service providers

Today, there are 18 vocational counsellors working in 16 employment offices across Estonia. 14 of these counsellors have a higher degree in psychology, 2 in pedagogy and 2 in social work. It is a set requirement of the vocational counsellor position in the employment office to have a university degree, preferably in one of the above-named three fields.

Similar to the education sector, no official initial training has been so far provided for the counsellors working in the labour sector. The Estonian Labour Market Board organises regular further training sessions for them with the aim to harmonise and raise the professional skills of all specialists in the sector. In addition, the Board invites employment office counsellors 3 times a year to participate in information days where new materials and methods are being introduced, and where practitioners can discuss administrative questions and exchange experiences.

### Target groups

The right to receive vocational counselling services within the labour market sector is limited only to the unemployed, to persons who have received a notice about the termination of their employment contract, and to official job seekers who have registered themselves at employment offices. At the same time, information about vacancies,

the general situation on the labour market and the possibilities of training, is provided to anyone interested.

**Main target groups** of vocational counselling comprise above all people who:

- have no qualifications;
- have no previous work experience and whose knowledge of the working environment is limited;
- have not worked for a long time and whose vocational qualification has thus become obsolete;
- who cannot work in the field they have been qualified for due to health contraindications;
- cannot find work that matches the acquired vocational qualification due to the lack of demand on the labour market.

The number of people belonging to minorities and requiring vocational counselling services is likewise steadily growing. On the other hand, also employers, who are interested in finding appropriate labour force, can make use of the counselling services.

Long-term unemployed, young unemployed between 16 and 24 years of age, elderly people, people with disabilities and young mothers returning to the labour market after an extended period of absence due to either raising the family or other reasons, are classified as **risk groups**. Various additional support measures and programmes have been initiated to help their re-integration to the labour market.

In 2003, vocational counselling services were provided to 8894 people which amounts to ca 9 % of the total number of the unemployed. As to the structure of the service users then ca 25% was constituted by young people aged 16 – 24. Statistics also show that women are more

active counselling service users than men, the respective proportion being 70% against 30%. The biggest percent of service users (37%) are with general education background.

### Methods and activities

Vocational counselling is carried out both as individual work as well as in group sessions. In the case of an **individual interview**, a pre-registration is required with the maximum waiting time of 2 weeks. One session usually lasts for 1 hour during which time the counsellor can apply a whole range of different methods. Depending on the needs of the client, the counsellor either helps to specify the client's educational and job related aspirations, maps the existing qualifications, assesses professional suitability, informs about the labour market situation and different training possibilities, advises on how to make rational and well-informed decisions concerning employment and training, and/or provides instructions about job seeking. The counsellor has a set of various methodological materials at her disposal, including workbooks, questionnaires and tests in both electronic and printed formats. In order to re-integrate the risk groups more efficiently to the labour market, individual activity plans have been taken into use with them since 2003. The same applies to unemployment insurance benefit applicants with the aim to activate their job seeking process.

Various **group information and counselling methods** are employed in the case of people with similar needs or difficulties. The size of a group is usually around 10 – 20 people, and one session on a specific theme lasts between 1 – 3 hours.

In addition to individual and group counselling, the clients of the labour sector can also use **self-service** possibilities. All employment offices are equipped with computers where job seekers have access to Internet, where they can search for information and vacancies, register themselves in databases, fill in application forms, and prepare

other documents necessary to apply for a job. They can also test their professional suitability with the help of computerised tests. In order to further improve accessibility to labour market services, the development of an Internet-based self-information system was started by the Estonian Labour Market Board in 2003. Besides work and training mediation, this new system also includes career information, professional suitability testing and e-learning possibilities.

In 1998, the Labour Market Board purchased some methodological instruments, i.e. **tests** (Holland vocational preferences questionnaire, General Aptitude Test Battery GATB, Myers-Briggs Test Inventory MBTI – test for the determination of behavioural and communications preferences) for the vocational counsellors, working at that time within the system. These tests are still in use today.

## SUMMARY

### Strengths

- Both the Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Social Affairs have understood the importance and the necessity of guidance services;
- Several Acts have been passed and documents elaborated that regulate the provision of services in the labour market sector, including the aims, tasks, clients, quality criteria and standards of service provision;
- Higher education requirement and co-ordinated further training of labour market sector counsellors has resulted in the harmonised level of their professional skills;
- New methodological materials and guidance tools are constantly developed in both electronic and printed formats, including

handbooks for counsellors and teachers, workbooks and exercises for students and job seekers, different tests and websites;

- Co-operation on regional level between guidance practitioners of labour market and education sectors is growing, concerning above all the exchange and dissemination of information, and participation in common training and information events;
- Guidance community is committed to providing high level services;

### Weaknesses

- The Ministry of Education and Research and the Ministry of Social Affairs have not formally agreed on a way forward on major strategic policy issues in guidance, including a clear division of tasks, the determination of target groups and long-term development objectives;
- As a result, the two guidance systems that are in existence in Estonia today, tend to operate separately and do not allow for the establishment of neither a coherent and collaborative service provision nor the effective development of guidance in Estonia in general;
- The provision of guidance services in the education sector is insufficiently regulated in policy documents; service delivery standards and quality assurance criteria have not been developed yet;
- As a result, guidance centres in the education sector suffer from variable levels of juridical ownership, instability of funding, lack of human resource, the range and quality of provided services;
- There are no officially accredited initial training programmes for guidance staff in either sectors, likewise little training in career issues is available for both already practicing as well as future teachers;

- Low wages in the sector make it difficult to recruit and keep highly qualified specialists;
- Guidance of adults already in employment and career guidance of people with disabilities are both underdeveloped;

### The way forward

- A joint formulation of a national strategy on the development and implementation of career guidance services for different target groups in Estonia, including changes to legislation, if necessary;
- Implementation of systematic career education on all levels of education, provision of support to school staff through the development of training possibilities and materials;
- Further development of high quality web-based guidance tools and other resources for different target groups, including working adults, people with special needs etc;
- Acknowledgement of a guidance practitioner as an important contributor to the implementation of lifelong learning, and the establishment of strategies and structures to enable respective lifelong service provision;
- Establishment of proper training for all parties involved in the provision of any form of career guidance;
- Continuous co-operation with EU and EEA countries to keep pace with the latest developments in the guidance field, learn from international experiences of best practice and promote further mobility of both end-users as well as practitioners.

## USEFUL ADDRESSES

### I PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

#### Ministry of Education and Research

(Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium)  
Munga 18, Tartu  
50088 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 735 0222  
fax (+372) 735 0250  
hm@hm.ee  
www.hm.ee

#### Ministry of Education and Research School Network Administration Office

(Haridus- ja Teadusministeeriumi  
Koolivõrgu büroo)  
Tõnismägi 11, Tallinn  
10119 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 628 1220  
fax (+372) 628 1275  
kvb@hmb.ee

#### Research and Development Council of Estonia

(Eesti Teadus- ja Arendusnõukogu)  
Rahukohtu 3, Tallinn  
15161 ESTONIA  
sekretariaat@tan.ee  
www.tan.ee

#### Estonian Science Foundation

(Eesti Teadusfond)  
Kohtu 6, Tallinn  
10130 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 6996 210  
fax (+372) 6996 211  
etf@etf.ee  
www.etf.ee

#### Higher Education Quality Assessment Council

(Kõrghariduse Hindamise Nõukogu)  
Koidula 13a, Tallinn 10125  
10130 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 6 962 424  
fax (+372) 6 962 427  
hillar@archimedes.ee  
www.ekak.archimedes.ee

#### State Examination and Qualification Centre

(Riiklik Eksami- ja Kvalifikatsioonikeskus)  
Sakala 21, Tallinn  
10141 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 646 1677  
fax (+372) 646 1676  
info@ekk.edu.ee  
www.ekk.edu.ee

### Student Career Centres in Higher Education

#### Tallinn Pedagogical University

(Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikool)  
Narva mnt 25, Tallinn  
10120 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 640 9127  
fax (+372) 640 9116  
klaur@tpu.ee  
www.tpu.ee/career/

#### Tallinn Technical University

(Tallinna Tehnikaülikool)  
Ehitajate tee 5, Tallinn  
19086 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 620 3518  
Fax (+372) 620 2020  
carol@edu.ttu.ee  
www.ttu.ee

#### University of Tartu

(Tartu Ülikool)  
Ülikooli 18, Tartu  
50090 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 737 6205  
fax (+372) 737 5153  
tamargit@ut.ee  
www.ut.ee/career

#### Estonian Agricultural University

(Eesti Põllumajandusülikool)  
Kreutzwaldi 64 – 236, Tartu  
51014 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 731 3175  
fax (+372) 731 3175  
seliste@eau.ee  
www.eau.ee/4765

#### Estonian Business School

Lauteri 3, Tallinn  
10114 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 665 1365  
career@ebs.ee  
http://career.ebs.ee

## II PUBLIC LABOUR MARKET INSTITUTIONS

### Ministry of Social Affairs

(Sotsiaalministeerium)  
Gonsiori 29, Tallinn  
15027 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 626 9301  
fax (+372) 699 2209  
info@sm.ee  
www.sm.ee

### Citizenship and Migration Board

(Kodakondsus- ja Migratsiooniamet)  
Endla 13, Tallinn  
15179 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 612 6979  
fax (+372) 631 3744  
kma@mig.ee  
www.mig.ee

### Estonian Health Insurance Fund

(Eesti Haigekassa)  
Lembitu 10, Tallinn  
10114 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 620 8430  
fax (+372) 620 8449  
info@haigekassa.ee  
www.haigekassa.ee

### National Institute for Health Development

(Tervise Arengu Instituut)  
Hiiu 42, Tallinn  
11619 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 659 3900  
fax (+372) 659 3901  
tai@tai.ee  
www.tai.ee

### Estonian Labour Market Board

(Tööturuamet)  
Luha 16, Tallinn  
10129 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 625 7700  
fax (+372) 625 7702  
tta@tta.ee  
www.tta.ee

### Estonian National Health Protection Inspectorate

(Tervisekaitse Inspektsioon)  
Paldiski 81, Tallinn  
10617 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 694 3500  
fax (+372) 694 3501  
kesk@tervisekaitse.ee  
www.tervisekaitse.ee

### Estonian National Labour Inspectorate

(Tööinspektsioon)  
Estonia pst 5, Tallinn  
10143 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 640 9080  
fax (+372) 640 9085  
ti@ti.ee  
www.ti.ee

### Social Insurance Board

(Sotsiaalkindlustus Amet)  
Lembitu 12, Tallinn  
15092 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 640 8120  
fax (+372) 640 8155  
ska@ensib.ee  
www.ensib.ee

### State Agency of Medicines

(Ravimiamet)  
Ravila 19, Tartu  
50411 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 737 4140  
fax (+372) 737 4142  
sam@sam.ee  
www.sam.ee

## III OTHER RELEVANT ORGANISATIONS

### Foundation for Lifelong Learning Development Innove

(Elukestva Õppe Arendamise Sihtasutus Innove)  
Liivalaia 2, Tallinn  
10118 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 699 8080  
fax (+372) 699 8081  
innove@innove.ee  
www.innove.ee

### PROGRAMMES

- Phare Programme
- European Structural Funds
- National Resource Centre for Guidance/Euroguidance Estonia
- National Observatory
- Leonardo da Vinci Programme
- Business Education Programme

**Archimedes Foundation**

(Sihtasutus Archimedes)

**Office in Tallinn:**

Koidula 13a, Tallinn  
10125 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 696 2418  
fax (+372) 696 2426  
arch@archimedes.ee  
www.archimedes.ee

**Office in Tartu:**

Väike-Turu 8, Tartu  
51013 ESTONIA  
phone (+372) 730 0324  
fax (+372) 730 0336  
tartu@archimedes.ee

**Estonian Youth Work Centre**

(Eesti Noosrootöö Keskus)  
Uuslinna 10, Tallinn  
11415 ESTONIA  
phone (372) 638 0757  
fax (372) 638 0756  
entk@entk.ee  
www.entk.ee

**EDUCATION PROGRAMMES**

- Socrates Estonian National Agency (Grundvig, Minerva, Arion, Erasmus, Comenius, Lingua, Eyridice, ENIC/NARIC)
- Higher Education Quality Assessment Council
- Youth
- National Scholarship Programme Kristjan Jaak

**SCIENCE PROGRAMMES**

- Sixth Framework Programme
- ERIS - Estonian Research and Development Information System
- COST
- e-Content
- National Competition for Young Estonian Scientists' Papers
- Various projects

**European Union Information Centre**

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**IV GUIDANCE AND MOBILITY WEB SITES****EUROGUIDANCE NETWORK****[www.euroguidance.org.uk](http://www.euroguidance.org.uk)**

The Euroguidance website offers information on the activities of the network and provides direct access to each network member. In addition, one can find links to up to date information on the development of the European dimension within guidance, education and vocational training, and transnational projects.

**CEDEFOP WEB PAGE ON GUIDANCE****[www.trainingvillage.gr/etv](http://www.trainingvillage.gr/etv)**

Link *Guidance* under *Projects* and *Networks* is a resource both for the provision of information on recent European Union policy developments in guidance and for the exchange of views. Includes links to relevant initiatives, working groups, news, publications, events etc on the European level.

**PLOTEUS****<http://europa.eu.int/ploteus/portal>**

PLOTEUS is a portal on learning opportunities throughout Europe. The information can be found under five major headings: learning opportunities, education systems, exchanges, contacts, and moving to a country. One of the most important functions of the portal is to guide young people to national education web sites by providing a list of schools.

**FIT FOR EUROPE****[europe-online.universum.de](http://europe-online.universum.de)**

Fit for Europe provides information about vocational training, education and work in all countries of the EU, and contains numerous useful links to relevant web sites. The information is available in seven languages, in addition, a language test can be taken in 11 languages. In 2003, a new development phase has started with the aim to widen the range of participating countries.

**ON THE MOVE****[www.onthemove-eu.hi.is](http://www.onthemove-eu.hi.is)**

On the Move is an interactive programme designed to be used by all young people currently considering mobility in Europe. It is a dynamic guidance tool, which can be used in the process of clarifying ideas and needs in relation to transnational experiences. The aim is not to provide ready answers but rather to help young people focus their questions and identify where they might best address these questions.

**ESTIA****[www.estia.educ.goteborg.se](http://www.estia.educ.goteborg.se)**

ESTIA website is a tool for guidance practitioners dealing with enquiries concerning working, training, studying and practical living issues in different European countries.

### **EURODESK**

**[www.eurodesk.org](http://www.eurodesk.org)**

Eurodesk is a network of information points across 25 European countries that co-operate together to provide information for young people on funding programmes and opportunities to work and study in Europe.

### **EURES**

**<http://europa.eu.int/eures>**

EURES is the European Job Mobility Portal that provides information on jobs and learning opportunities in the European Union, the European Economic Area and Switzerland. It is supported by the network of more than 500 EURES advisers in the participating countries who offer information, guidance and placement to both job-seekers and employers interested in the European labour market.