



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND RESEARCH

Estonian Presidency
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YOUTH POLICY AND YOUTH WORK IN ESTONIA

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Definition of Youth

- The Estonian Youth Work Act (2010), the main legal instrument in the youth field, defines **youth** as between 7 and 26 years of age.



Population in Estonia

- The **total population** in Estonia was estimated at 1.32 million people in 2017, according to the latest census figures.
- The population of Estonia represents 0.02 percent of the world's total population which arguably means that one person in every 5206 people on the planet is a resident of Estonia.

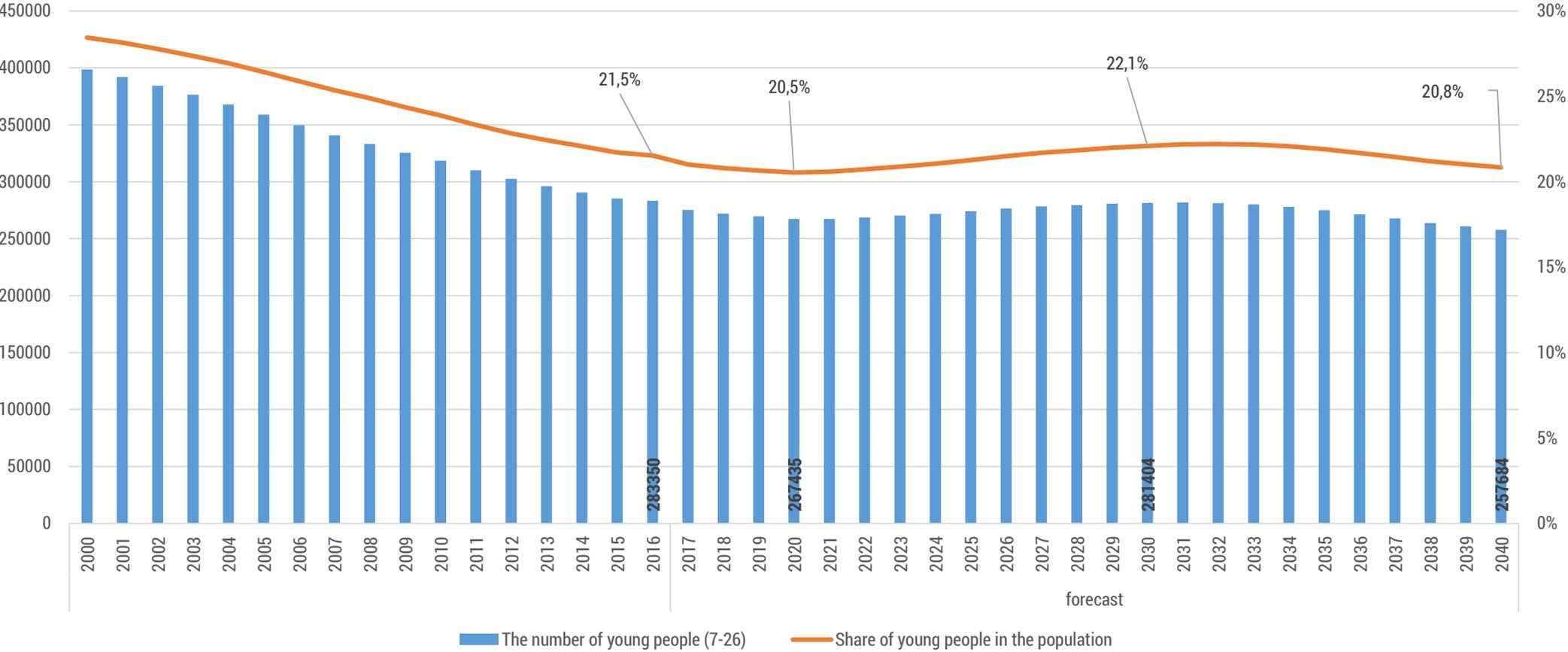
Facing stagnant population growth



Statistics on Youth

- There are 278.867 **young people** in Estonia.
- The share of young people in the total population is at 21%; it had its peak (i.e 29%) in 1996-2001.
- As in many other European countries, the **share of youth** population is decreasing. According to the forecasts of Statistics Estonia, this decrease will continue until 2022, when the share of young people in the total population will gradually start to increase again.

Young People in the Population



Policy and Legislation

- Youth policy of Estonia is based on the 2010 **Youth Work Act** and the 2014 **Youth Field Development Plan**.
- The Youth Field Development Plan 2014-2020 followed the **Youth Work Strategy** 2006-2013 that in turn came after the **Youth Work Development Plan** 2001-2004.
- As such, the Youth Field Development plan integrates the general area of youth policy with the narrow area of youth work, setting goals, measures and indicators of efficiency.

Goals of the Youth Field Development Plan

- Young people have **ample opportunities** for self-development and self-realisation, which supports the formation of a cohesive and creative society.
- Young people have **more choices** to better unlock their creative and developmental potential.
- Young people are at **lower risk** of exclusion.
- Youth participation in **decision-making** is more supported.
- Youth field operates more efficiently.

Underlying Principles for the Period 2014-2020

- Measures are planned and taken with the **heterogeneity** of young people in mind.
- Health of young people is supported as well as values and attitudes that promote **healthy lifestyles**.
- Youth field contributes to social inclusion and fosters **caring attitudes** towards the surrounding environment.
- Youth field contributes to **socialisation** process of young people and promotes their **transitions** and **coping strategies**.

Organisation of Youth Work

- Youth Work Act provides the legal basis for the organisation of youth work, defined as the **set of conditions** created to promote the **diverse development** of young people that enable them to **be active** outside their families, formal education and work on the basis of their **free will**.
- Youth Work Act sets out which institutions are responsible for youth work, and its financing.

Youth Work Provision

- Youth work is organised by different **institutions** and in different **settings**, i.e youth organisations, youth councils, youth centres, hobby schools, youth camps, youth projects and programmes, extra-curricular activities in school.
- The main level of organisation of youth work is **local government**, which decides **objectives** of youth work that shall be implemented in its territory as well as determines **means** and **methods** for that, including budget.

Nature of Youth Work Provision

- Youth work is provided in close **partnership** with young people by involving them in the **decision-making** process.
- Providing favourable **conditions** for non-formal learning the **needs** and **interests** of young people are taken into account.
- Young people are **willing** to be involved in youth work.
- Young people are treated **equally** regardless of their individual characteristics. Their **initiative** is supported.

Public Institutions

The creation of one central coordinating unit (ex. a Ministry of Youth) has not been the goal of strategic documents, but rather an **integrated youth policy** based on **information exchange** between various actors, the latter being coordinated by the **Youth Affairs Department** in cooperation with the Estonian Youth Work Centre. Both offices are set within the **Ministry of Education and Research** (MoER), identified in the Youth Field Development Plan as the governmental authority responsible for its implementation.

Administrative Field of the MER

Estonian Youth Work Centre, founded in 1999, employs a staff of 24 people and, additionally to the implementation of the Youth Field Development Plan, performs other functions that arise from the Acts of Riigikogu or that are entrusted to the centre by the minister.

Youth Agency, a department of Archimedes Foundation founded in 1997, employs a staff of 21 people and is responsible for capacity building in the youth field with a special focus on international cooperation, having been for 20 years the implementing body (Estonian NA) for EU Youth Programmes in Estonia.

Youth Field Finances 2017

- Ministry of Education and Research: EUR **17,9** million – *State Budget, Gambling Tax Funds, EU Funds*
- Estonian Youth Work Centre: EUR **10,1** million – *State Budget, Gambling Tax Funds, EU Funds, Norwegian/EEA Grants*
- Youth Agency (Archimedes Foundation): EUR **5,4** million – *State Budget, EU Funds*
- Local Governments: EUR **100** million – *State Budget*
- Parents: EUR **25** million

Youth and Representation

The **Estonian National Youth Council** (ENL) is the **representative body** for youth, and an umbrella organisation for non-profit groups that deal with young people or perform youth work. ENL delegates representatives from youth associations to the **Council of Youth**, a governmental **advisory body** on youth issues, which advises the MoER in order to better implement the goals of the Youth Field Development Plan. ENL advocates for youth interests in **legislation** and better **financing** for youth organisations.

Youth Participation

- ENL represents and supports the interests of 56 **youth associations** across Estonia, and uses its collective experience to act on issues that impact on young people.
- There are 14 regional and 61 local **youth councils** to address issues of relevance to young people, and 191 **student councils** that represent students' rights at all education levels.
- In 2016, 1354 young people and 209 policymakers took part in **youth cafés** to discuss the issues young people face.

Other Facts and Figures

- There are 263 open **youth centres**, 597 **hobby schools**, 87 **youth camps** and 54 youth **work camps** in Estonia.
- There are 140.000 young people involved in youth work, 74.000 of those in **extra-curricular activities** in school.
- More than 3800 young people and youth workers a year take part in **Erasmus plus projects** in the field of youth.
- There are more than 5000 **youth workers** in Estonia.
- Quality **training** is provided to 1.500 youth workers a year.



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Thank you for your attention!

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