

Cohesion Policy and Estonia

⚡ In 2014-2020, Estonia will manage **one operational programme** under EU Cohesion Policy, which will receive funding from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund and the European Social Fund (ESF).



How much will the EU invest in Estonia from 2014-2020?

For 2014-2020, Estonia has been allocated around **€3.59 billion** (current prices) in total Cohesion Policy funding:

- **€2.46 billion** for less developed regions (the entire country is classified as a less developed region)
- **€1.07 billion** under the Cohesion Fund
- **€55.4 million** for European Territorial Cooperation

Of this, the ESF will represent a minimum of **€443 million**. The actual share will be set in light of the specific challenges the country needs to address in the areas covered by the ESF.

Structural Funds (ERDF and ESF) eligibility 2014-2020

- Less developed regions
(GDP/head < 75 % of EU-27 average)
- Transition regions
(GDP/head between $\geq 75\%$ and $< 90\%$ of EU-27 average)
- More developed regions
(GDP/head $\geq 90\%$ of EU-27 average)

What are the main investment priorities for Estonia?

The investment priorities will be set out in a Partnership Agreement with the European Commission. The priorities are expected to include:

- research, technological development and innovation;
- promoting sustainable transport and removing bottlenecks in key network infrastructures;
- promoting social inclusion, combating poverty and any discrimination;
- investing in education, training and vocational training for skills and lifelong learning.

What results have been achieved so far?

The total allocation from Cohesion Policy funding for the 2007-2013 period was € 3.5 billion.

Since the start of the 2007-2013 funding period, the ERDF has helped Estonia to:

- create more than 6 800 jobs (including 400 new R&D jobs);
- support more than 1 100 Research and Technological Development (RTD) projects. As a result, around 21 000 m² of R&D institutions and around 13 600 m² of higher education institutes were built or upgraded;
- put in place more than 200 cooperation projects between enterprises and research institutions;
- implement energy efficiency investments in the housing sector, resulting in around 39% of energy saving in 600 buildings (which cover 22 100 apartments);
- construct a total of 2 000 km of broadband, which impacts 60 000 households (i.e. 135 000 persons or 10% of the Estonian population), 14 000 companies and 500 public sector institutions;
- support over 11 300 exporting enterprises;
- improve transport infrastructure, for example investments in railways rolling stock and the reconstruction of the Tallinn-Tartu railway line;
- invest in health infrastructure, facilitating access to high quality medical care;
- support 96 water management projects.

The ESF has invested almost € 400 million to improve job prospects with more than 775 000 participants (participation records) benefiting directly from different measures. For example, more than 67 000 people were trained through adult training courses. In addition, more than 20 000 public sector officials and 8 100 NGO employees were trained.

ESF also offered a vast variety of active labour market measures for the unemployed - counselling, trainings, business start-up subsidies, special measures for disabled etc. In total 140 000 people participated and ESF investment was € 74 million. Altogether, over 200 000 people participated in labour market-related ESF programs and projects.

Cohesion Policy success stories

ERDF projects

● **Renovation of the Seaplane Harbour of the Maritime Museum**

The old historic seaplane hangars in Tallin were renovated from 2009-2012, and were transformed into a popular maritime museum, which is now one of the most visited attractions in the city. The [Seaplane Harbour](#) is a good example of a project where public investment serves multipurpose objectives: preservation of cultural heritage, promotion of tourism, usage of environmentally friendly solutions (e.g. energy for the museum is produced from the sea water) and close cooperation with university scientists. In June 2013, the Tallinn Seaplane Harbour won [the European Union Prize for Cultural Heritage/Europa Nostra Award](#) as a grand prix laureate. The Seaplane Harbour is also nominated for the European Museum of the Year Award 2014, which will be announced in May 2014.

Total cost: €14 million (ERDF contribution: € 9.2 million)

- **A multifunctional ship to tackle marine pollution in Estonia**

Ports in the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic Sea are involved in the trans-shipping of oil and oil products, making them particularly vulnerable to the occurrence of major oil spills. As such, the Helsinki Commission (HelCom), which works to protect the marine environment of the Baltic Sea from pollution, has set targets for increasing the capacity of the Baltic Sea countries to deal with oil spills. Estonia therefore procured a new multi-functional ship able to tackle 0.6 km² of marine pollution in a 12 hour period. It is capable, under normal conditions, of removing the source of marine pollution within 48 hours. Under the care of [the Estonian Police and Border Guard Board](#), the ship also monitors and supervises the marine environment, while helping to prevent potential disasters.

Total cost: € 33.1 million (ERDF contribution: € 29.8 million)

- **Project for construction of the Nõlvaku kindergarten by Saue and Saku municipality**

The construction of the [Nõlvaku kindergarten](#) in Laagri, Harjumaa County is a remarkable project, as it is the first close-to-0-energy public/municipal service building in Estonia. It is also a positive example of how two local municipalities have cooperated and have been forward-looking.

Total cost: € 2 million (ERDF contribution: € 1.6 million)

ESF projects

- **Preparing the long-term unemployed to become IT specialists by special training and working practice (Foundation 'Vaata Maailma')**

The [Foundation 'Vaata Maailma'](#) provided high-quality and modern training in IT technology in order to respond to the lack of qualified IT specialists in Estonia. The participants had quality and modern professional training, carried out under an especially modified training program that was finished by final exams of the field. The duration of the training was 37 days followed by up to 2 months long working practice. Over 90% of the people who went through the 40-day work practice were employed immediately after the project.

Total cost: € 372 000 (ESF contribution: € 335 000)

- **Helping prisoners get back into employment**

Helping inmates maintain the habit of working and improve their qualifications while serving their sentence provides them with a valuable experience. In Ida-Virumaa, Estonia, [a project offered them job-based training in prison](#) and supported prisoners' access to jobs in the area. Thanks to the support of the ESF, prisoners received training in areas including sewing, assembling moccasins, welding, painting and woodworking. By summer 2012, 659 participants had already found a job, providing employers with a reliable workforce at little expense.

Total cost: € 1.1 million (ESF contribution: € 989 550)

Find out more about EU cohesion policy projects in Estonia

For more project examples, as well as links to the complete list of beneficiaries of EU cohesion policy funding, see the following websites:

- [European Union Structural Assistance to Estonia](#)
- [European Commission Regional Policy website](#)
- [European Social Fund website](#)
- [ESF best practices 2007-2013](#)