



**Baltic Agenda 21- Education  
WG III**

**Report B  
NGO Report**

# **Estonia**

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**Tallinn, 2001**



**1. What is your organisations definition of Non-Formal Adult Education (NFAE)?**

Estonian

Non-formal adult education is a part of education being **possessed through organised educational activities, aiming to a certain target group and taking place on the base of programs what are compiled by the experts according to the needs of society or clients' request** – *accepted by The Association of Estonian Adult Educators(AEAE) Andras*

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**Non-formal education is besides the compulsory school system. It is oriented to the labour market and organized and financed by employers (state organizations, commerce). Non-formal education includes**

- **professional, occupational, special and re-training**
- **in-service training**
- **training for unemployed people**

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Estonian Parliament adopted Adult Education Act in 1993, limiting adult education as

- **general education**
- **work-related education**
- **popular education**

In practical terms the “work-related” education is a tool for *non-formal* adult education. Also popular education has an important part in education for sustainable development and is generally defined as *informal* adult education.

**2. What kind of and how many NGOs (regional + environmental National member organizations) belong to the NFAE sector?**

2 types of NGOs could be mentioned considering the NFAE for sustainable development.

- a) **Organisations providing adult education.** 468 organisations have been listed in the database of AEAE ANDRAS (due 1998) as adult educational organisations. All of them have declared to have adult educational activities as primary activities of their organisation
- b) **Environmental NGOs** have also educational activities. Usually it is a voluntary or project-based work.

In the NGO database ([www.ngonet.ee](http://www.ngonet.ee)) there are 252 organisations listed to provide education and training, and 54 organisations, which have identified themselves as working in environmental field (table 1).

## ***2.1. The main national “umbrella organisations” belonging to the NFAE sector***

### **Estonian Popular Adult Education League (EPAEL)**

The organisation (1994) is a non-governmental organization joining education oriented NGOs. EPAEL follows the traditions and ideas of the Estonian Union of Education (1924-1940). The aim of the EPAEL is to support the people's educational expectations and maintaining the traditions of national culture through the members' activities. EPAEL joins the energy of the members for supporting, empowering and distributing of the popular education ideas.

Organisation develops close cooperation with Estonian Ministry of Education participating in political decision-making. One task of the Association is to create the favourable working conditions for the popular education schools.

The other part of the activities covers different projects providing training for the member organisations and NGOs - training for trainers. The main issue of the courses is culture and education.

The Association joins 72 member organisations and 51 schools. EPAEL is an extensive organisation, which includes the other umbrella organisations like **Open Education Association** with 33 member organisations.

The schools are mostly private owned or municipal educational institutions providing training on very different issues (education for life, bookkeeping for farmers, courses on EU policy etc.)

### **The Association of Estonian Adult Educators ANDRAS (AEAE)**

is an Estonian non-governmental organisation, which unites the representatives of different branches of adult education and aims at increasing the competence of its' members in the field of andragogics.

Joins 81 member organisations, 2 honorary members and 3 individual members. The aims of the organisation are:

- To integrate activity in the field of adult education in Estonia;
- To upgrade and preserve the professional level of adult educators;
- To organise the training for member institutions in Estonia and abroad;
- To gather and disseminate information;
- To carry out research in the field of adult education;
- To cooperate with the European adult education institutions.

### **Village Movement “Kodukant”**

Union of the non-governmental organisations joins the village societies and the other organisations interested in rural life and village development. The movement started in the 1980-ies in connection to the independence movement and village days in countryside.

The goal of the Village Movement Kodukant is to support the maintaining and development of the villages, rural economy and national culture.

Kodukant has 20 member organisations.

*As mentioned before the environmental NGOs play an important role in education for sustainable development.*

**Friends of the Earth-Estonia (1988)** is a non-governmental, non-profit environmental organisation. It was founded during Soviet occupation. Its first campaign was a protest against the opening of a large phosphorite mine in northeast Estonia, which would have brought irreversible damage to environment. As a result of the campaign, FoE-Estonia rapidly developed into a nationwide grassroots organisation. Currently, Friends of the Earth-Estonia is focusing on the environmental problems also providing information on environmental issues.

**3. How many persons are actively annually involved in the NGO (regional + evt. National member organizations)**

**Estonian Popular Adult Education League (EPAEL)**

- 1) 72 member organisations
- 2) 3 Board members, 9 trustees
- 3) 3 persons in office

**The Association of Estonian Adult Educators (AEAE) ANDRAS**

- 1) 81 member organisations, 2 honorary members and 3 individual members
- 2) 5 Board members
- 3) 4 persons in office

**Village Movement Kodukant**

- 1) 20 member organisations
- 2) council – 16 members
- 3) 7 Board members
- 4) 4 officials

**Friends of the Earth-Estonia**

is a membership-umbrella organisation with 14 regional grassroots groups. 3 officials.

Usually one organisation may be involved into different umbrella organisations and databases.

*According to the Human Development Report 1999 44% of the non-governmental organizations had more than 100 members. The urban associations are larger – of the active associations in the larger cities 60% have more than fifty members. In smaller towns there were only 49% of such organizations, and 40% in the countryside.*

**4. What types of non- formal education activities are carried out?**

Educational activities vary greatly including seminars, lectures, training courses, study circles, summer schools, workshops, projects, exhibitions, info campaigns etc. but also educational publications and web pages.

**The Association of Estonian Adult Educators (AEAE) ANDRAS**

Organising both formal and non-formal education activities. Work-related training has an important part of the non-formal education.

**Estonian Popular Education League**

Large scale of different non-formal education activities

**Kodukant** develops very different activities like rural days, village days, training courses etc. Educational events on different issues (sustainable development and planning of rural areas, ecological land use) have important role among them. Kodukant mediated a wandering **exhibition “Sustainable Pathways”** (European Network of Experiences in Sustainable Development) in Tallinn in 1998.

Folk high schools in the villages provide information on different issues like farming economy, culture, handwork, but also agriculture and sustainable development.

### **Friends of the Earth-Estonia**

Ongoing environmental education and fostering of participation of Estonian citizens has been made possible through partnerships with 13 working (including sustainable development) groups, local and national governments, and international NGOs. Mostly the lectures are provided. One-day informal events are focused on certain environmental issues introduced by different lecturers.

A wider **project “Capacity building for the implementation of Agenda 21 in Estonia”** was implemented by Estonian Institute for Sustainable Development during 1997-2000. Number of educational events (including an Educational Forum) has been taken place within the frame of this project.

There are some **local Agendas** initiated by NGOs (such as “Kabli rand”). Usually these grassroots initiatives strongly promote the social and educational aspects of sustainable development. A close cooperation with schools has been established when working on a local Agenda.

### ***5. What kind of support is given from governments or other public or private local/regional/national or trans-national bodies to the NGO/non-formal adult education sector?***

Act on Adult Education sets the NGO activities in educational field. The legal status of Estonian NGOs proceeds from the Non-Profit Associations Act and Foundations Act (1996).

Financial support to the NGOs might be given through different channels like

- State Budget
- Contracts with Government (MoEd)
- Funds – such as Fund for Environmental Investments, Estonian Gambling Council, Fund for Culture, Coalition Clean Baltic, UNDP (closing in Estonia), Council of Nordic Ministries, EU programmes (Sokrates, Archimedes, Grundvig) etc.

Educational activities carried through by NGOs are typically project-based.

### ***6. Which trans-national documents and governmental initiatives support NFAE (in your NGO) for sustainable development? Give brief information about he contents and contexts.***

According to **the Estonian Constitution (1992)** the Estonian natural resources are national riches, which will be used in sustainable way (economically). Everyone has a duty to preserve the human and natural environment and compensate for damage caused to the environment by him or her.

Estonian Government adopted **Act on Sustainable Development** in 1995. This Act sets sustainable use of natural resources. The purpose of sustainable use of natural environment and natural resources is to guarantee an environment meeting human needs as well as necessary resources for economic development without causing significant damage to the environment and maintaining natural diversity.

The Estonian Government approved the **National Environmental Strategy of Estonia (NES)** in 1997

Strategy is based on internationally accepted principles like

- the integration of environmental requirements into the development strategies of other sectors;
- the reflection of environmental requirements in other legal acts concerning general economical and social life.

The Strategy sets 10 priority goals for environmental policy, the first of them is raising of **environmental awareness and stimulate environmentally friendly consumption patterns**. In addition to priority environmental goals attention is also focussed on environmental media.

On the basis of NES **the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP)** was adopted in 1998.

NEAP is built up according to the 10 priority goals indicated in NES.

To stimulate of environmental awareness and environmentally friendly consumption patterns there are listed 67 different actions. Some of these actions are addressed also to NFAE and NGO sector.

The **Estonian National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan** was compiled in 1999, but not officially yet adopted. The document resulted as work of 10 separate working group and education was one of them. Strategic aims were set up the Estonian biodiversity protection strategy and the action plan until 2005.

Different aspects of education (including the role of NFAE and NGOs) were observed and analysed in this document. Document gives number of suggestions for educational work.

According to **the new school curriculum** (since 1997) environment is included into all subjects and all levels at school. Setting up the goals and general standards this curriculum covers also a part of the NFAE sector.

Minister of Education and Minister of Environment signed a **Statement of Co-operation (2000)** where they drafted an action plan for both ministries for common activities in environmental education for sustainable development.

The **Local Agenda** are made up and approved by local authorities (Kuressaare, 1997, Tartu, 1998). These documents stress on the relevance of education of all its forms and levels.

Table 1: The Estonian NGOs on the base of the spheres of their activities  
(<http://www.ngonet.ee>)

<b>Sphere of activity</b>	<b>Number of organisations</b>
Democracy and international understanding	81
Philanthropy and voluntarism promotion	34
<b><i>Education and training</i></b>	<b><i>252</i></b>
Hobbies and recreation	300
<b><i>Environment</i></b>	<b><i>54</i></b>
Culture and arts	244
Professional associations and trade unions	129
Economic development	45
Media and telecommunication	20
Regional and community development	105
Politics	12
Agriculture and rural life	52
Religion	24
Defence policy and security of citizens	35
Social welfare and health	185
Sports	94
Advocacy and Rule of Law	177
Human Rights	27
(Other)	88

One organisation may have several functions in different spheres, so they could be listed more than one time. Also this list does not include real estate associations what makes the number of NGOs in Estonia over 14 000.

#### **List of Abbreviations**

SD	- sustainable development
NGO	- non-governmental organisation
MoEdu	- Ministry of Education
MoE	- Ministry of Environment
EPAEL	- Estonian Popular Adult Education League
AEAE	- Association of Estonian Adult Educators
FoE	- Forum of Education