

# Adult education programme 2015-21

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

STRATEGY/ACTION PLAN

 ESTONIA

## Timeline



ID number 28172

## Background

Adult education programme was one of the nine (eight since 2019) programmes implementing the Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020.

## Objectives

The aim of the programme was to motivate adults to learn and to create high-quality, flexible learning opportunities that consider the needs of the labour market.

## Description

The programme was adopted in 2015 and comprises three measures:

- reintegration of adult dropouts into formal education and creation of preconditions for their retention in, and acquisition of, formal education;
- increasing access to non-formal training and improving the quality of training;
- development of the occupational qualifications system and creation and support of lifelong learning formats in adult education.

Under the first two measures, the adult education programme provided training courses to adults without secondary education and/or professional training, or with outdated skills. The target for 2020 was to have 66 500 adults participating in flexible training courses for the low-qualified, less competitive or other disadvantaged groups, and to have 53 500 of them completing successfully. The programme has been successful in targeting less competitive or disadvantaged groups of learners with 70% of all learners belonging to such groups.

Under the third measure, the quality of occupational qualifications system was developed.

The programme budget for 2015-19 was EUR 22.4 million from the EU (ESIF) and the State budget.

## 2015 Approved/Agreed

## 2016 Implementation

## 2017 Implementation

## 2018 Implementation

## 2019 Implementation

Since 2015, all three measures of the programme were being implemented as planned. As a result, the participation rate in lifelong learning has increased in recent years. In 2019, 20.2% of the population aged 25-64 participated in lifelong learning. The share of adults with lower levels of education in lifelong learning has increased to 9.1% in 2019 compared to 4.1% in 2015.

## 2020 Implementation

In 2020, the implementation of the Adult education programme continued. However, both the participation of the adult population (age 25-64) and the share of adults with lower levels of education in lifelong learning have decreased: from 20.2% in 2019 to 17.1% in 2020 and from 9.1% to 6.5% respectively. The decrease was likely due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which led to many training courses and other forms of non-formal learning being cancelled or postponed. For many people, participation in lifelong learning was also complicated by their deteriorating economic situation.

## 2021 Completed

Following the COVID-related fall in 2020, the participation rate of adults in lifelong learning has risen again to 18.4% in 2021, thanks to rapid adaptation to digital tools and environments.

The progress made in 2021 is described in other policy developments corresponding to the main activities of the programme (see policy developments in initiatives to support adult key competences and participation in lifelong learning, and Estonian qualifications system).

For progress as of 2022, see related policy developments.

## Bodies responsible

- Ministry of Education and Research

## Target group

### Learners

Adult learners  
Older workers and employees (55 - 64 years old)  
Unemployed and jobseekers  
Persons in employment, including those at risk of unemployment  
Low-skilled/qualified persons

## Thematic categories

### Governance of VET and lifelong learning

Further developing national quality assurance systems

### Supporting lifelong learning culture and increasing participation

Providing for individuals' re- and upskilling needs

## Subsystem

IVET CVET

## Further reading

[ESF webpage - The ESF in the news -Training programme extended](#)

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[Cedefop ReferNet Estonia \(2015\). Estonia: supporting adult participation in lifelong learning \(LLL\)](#)

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[Adult education in Estonia](#)

## Related policy developments

2024 **Design**

### Developing the professional qualifications system and jobs-and-skills forecasting

The following measures are foreseen:

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#### Type of development

Practical  
measure/Initiative

#### Subsystem

IVET CVET

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