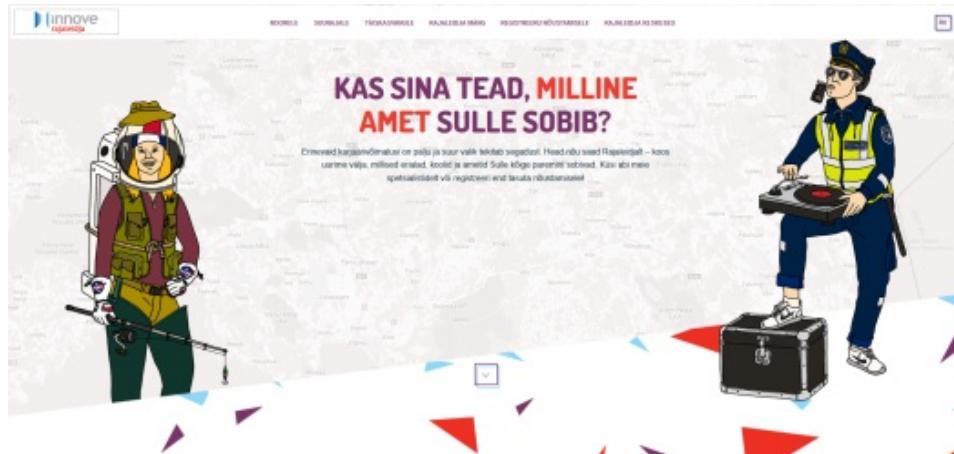


Pathfinder Service

**Estonia****Founding year:**

2001

Geographic level:

Regional

Stakeholders involved:

Parents, Teachers, Career coordinators are key target groups, cooperating with practitioners; Public Authorities / Institutions are the LMI principal sources; Companies, professional associations, individual professionals contribute to LMI production.

Target groups:

Guidance Counsellors
School Students/Parents
Teachers/ Professors
Young people

Is the initiative a Single Access Point? :

No

Providing organisation:

Foundation Innove, Agency for Lifelong Guidance

URL:

[View PDF version](#)

Stakeholders roles:

Businesses
Parents and Teachers
Public Authorities & Institutions
Teachers and Career Coordinators

Challenges Addressed:

Exchange and knowledge transfer (among educational professionals, guidance counsellors, etc.)
Facilitation of transition from school education to career selection
Improve matching between skills and jobs
Improvement of guidance/ employment services
Promote self-assessment
Raise awareness on guidance
Tackling unemployment

Challenges Addressed description:

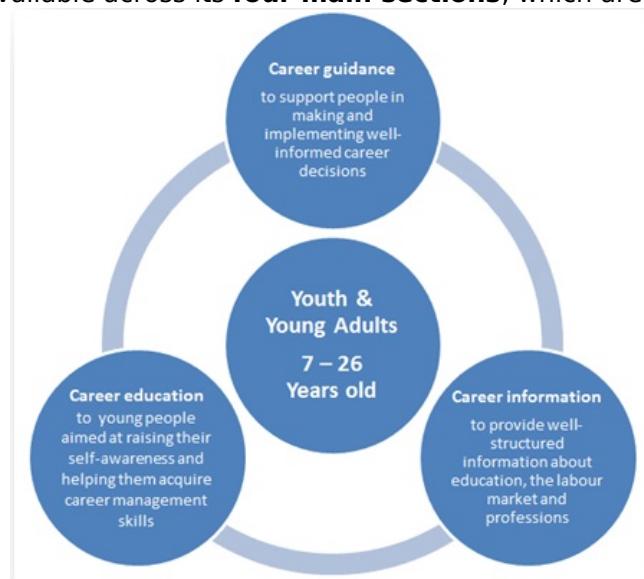
Pathfinder serves as a unique resource of labour market information, integrated and utilised in the context of the practice. Via its simple, user-friendly and creative interface, users and professionals can access the LMI openly available across its **four main sections**, which are dedicated to:

1. **youth**;
2. **adults**;
3. the **Pathfinder Game**;
4. **practitioners, teachers, career coordinators**.

The portal also offers users with the opportunity to search for, identify, contact and/or schedule an appointment with a Pathfinder practitioner close to them in order to receive further support.

Policy objectives:

Access to Lifelong Guidance Services
Assessing the effectiveness of Lifelong Guidance Provision
Assuring the quality of Lifelong Guidance Provision
Career Management Skills
Funding Lifelong Guidance Services
ICT in Lifelong Guidance
Improving careers information
Improving employability and supporting older workers
Raising the skills and qualifications of adults
Raising the skills and qualifications of young people
Strategic Leadership
Supporting people at risk and disadvantaged groups
Training and Qualifications of Guidance Practitioners



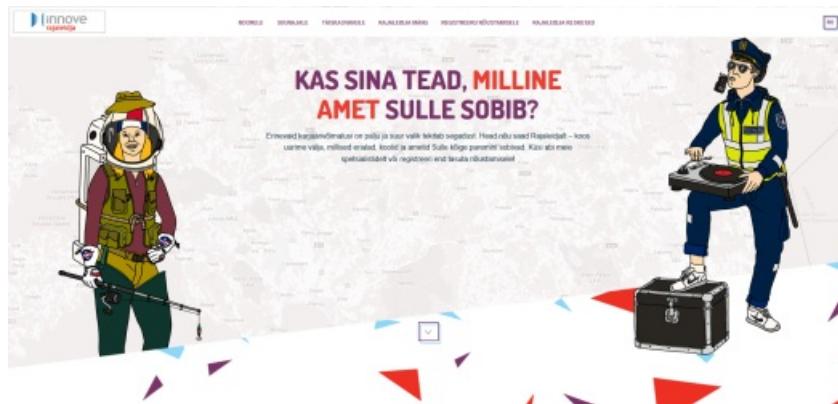
INNOVATIVE ASPECTS OF LMI description:

The practice leverages several sources to collect and offer reliable and up-to-date labour market information. The Estonian Qualifications Authority serves as a vital resource of insights into the different professions available in Estonia and through the **OSKA initiative**,

provides:

- an aggregate report on labour market developments and changes transpiring in labour requirements, with dominant **labour market trends over the next 10 years**;
- **sectoral reports** on the analysis of different sectors' needs in terms of demand and skills, including recommendations for training requirements.

Additional sources of labour market information include data and papers provided by public authorities and institutions. The labour market information collected is appropriately processed and translated into an easily comprehensible format for the target groups.



INNOVATIVE ASPECTS OF LMI:

Blended counselling
Occupational information
Personalised educational advice
Real time LMI

INNOVATIVE USE OF ICT description:

- The platform on which the Pathfinder career planning portal is implemented utilises the **Saurus Content Management System** (CMS) as well as the **Zend framework**.
- The basic technological infrastructure includes **mid-size rackable servers** as well as a **central data storage**, upon which a VMware Hypervisor runs and enables the CMS of the platform to be seamlessly and constantly operational.
- **Information security** is safeguarded via a dedicated framework, titled "Three-level IT baseline security system", ensuring that data availability, integrity and confidentiality are kept at a high level.



INNOVATIVE USE OF ICT:

Interactive online tools
Online counselling
Online wiki
Open source

Results and impacts obtained:

In numbers, **288 956 unique users** utilised the portal in 2016, a number corresponding to

almost 22% of the Estonian population.

From qualitative aspect, Pathfinder contributes towards:

- **empowering users** to develop career management skills;
- **breaking down stereotypes** of gender and age and promoting **equal opportunities** for career guidance in Estonia;
- **enhancing the capacity of practitioners** to better support their targeted groups;
- **reducing early school leavers rates** within the Estonian education system;
- fostering closer **collaboration amongst guidance professionals** and **stakeholders**.

Evaluation processes:

- **follow-up survey** addressing users shortly after their experience with Pathfinder's services;
- Users, practitioners and stakeholders provide feedback through the dedicated contact point available at the **portal**;
- The Agency conducts **surveys** on a larger scale every few years.



■ Success Factors:

- **Reliable** and **up-to-date LMI** delivered **for free** addressing the diverse needs of its targeted groups;
- Focus on **CMS development**;
- **Regional yet centrally-coordinated approach**;
- **Combination** of **face-to-face** and **digital** career guidance and information services;
- Emphasis on ensuring the qualifications of Pathfinder **practitioners** and on continuously enhancing their knowledge and skills;
- **Trustworthy brand** in the national lifelong guidance system;
- **Collaboration** amongst **guidance stakeholders** at regional and national level;
- **International cooperation**.

■ Points of Attention:

- **Scattered** and **complex** labour market **information**.
- **Lack of awareness** about the Pathfinder services.
- **Limited national financial resources**.

Socio-economic-political context:

Pathfinder is utilised by the national government as a key means of achieving its long-term

goals and plays a pivotal role in the national lifelong guidance system. The practice is well-aligned with national and EU policy guidelines contributing towards reforming and improving the national guidance system of Estonia.

Financial requirements:

Co-funded by EU and Estonian government: EUR 30 348 were allocated to the technical development of the portal between 2012 and 2016, and EUR 4 200 for its technical maintenance on an annual basis. Other cost categories include personnel, content development etc.

HR requirements:

230 professionals are involved in the implementation of the practice.

Pathfinder practitioners are qualified with at least a Bachelor's degree in a relevant field of education and their qualifications have to comply with the respective occupational qualification standards. They are further trained through continuing training activities, aiming at safeguarding the quality of their services.

ICT elements:

Pathfinder utilises the Saurus Content Management System and the Zend framework.

Pathfinder practitioners were offered a dedicated international training course in 2016 on the role of ICT in lifelong guidance.

Non-ICT elements:

Users have the opportunity to search for, identify, contact and/or schedule an appointment with a Pathfinder practitioner close to them in order to access quality and more personalised support.

Parents are vital allies, while teachers and career coordinators play a leading role in the integration of career guidance within the Estonian education system. Data and information published from public authorities and institutions serve as the principal source of LMI, while businesses contribute to the LMI provided.

Future developments & Trends:

- Major renovation of the web portal to introduce layout improvements, LMI presentation and self-help tools available online;
- Novel digital guidance delivery method through an online chat function, enabling users to directly contact suitable Pathfinder practitioners;
- Communication and information acquisition and advances in the field of guidance at national and international level;
- Participation of the Agency in several initiatives, in the context of international cooperation.

Type of initiative:

Public

Politico-administrative domain clusters:

Improving educational/ occupational guidance processes

