Non-formal nature education system in Estonia

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Keskkonnaamet / Environmental Board

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Estonia

- Country of forests and wetlands (70% of territory)
- Population density: 31 inhabitants/km²
- Urban population: 69%
Environmental education network in Estonia

**Formal**
Schools & kindergartens
Cross-cutting theme since 1996 „Environment“ and since 2002 „Environment and sustainable development“ in national curriculum

**Non-formal**
Nature centres
(Curriculum based environmental education programs for students)

**Financing**
Environmental Investment Centre
(simplified applying system)
Non-formal nature education

Public
1. Environmental Board
2. State Forest Management Centre
3. Nature schools

NGO
Providers rely on schools who receive funding from national environmental fund – Environmental Investment Centre
Nature & environmental centres

EESTI LOODUS- JA KESKKONNAHARIDUSKESKUSED
www.keskkonnaharidus.ee

Keskkonnahariduse portaalis www.keskkonnaharidus.ee:
- üle 140 loodus- ja keskkonna-hariduskeskuse
- üle 1000 erineva öppeprogrammi
- öppematerjali
- videopank
- uudised, sündmused
- keskkonnahariduse võrgustik

Keskkonnahariduskeskused:
- Keskkonnaamet - 17
- Riigimetsa Majandamise Keskus - 18
- Musement - 19
- MTÜ, SA, FIE, KOV-asutus jm - 90
*andmed keskkonnahariduse portaalist 08.2018
Environmental education department

- 15 counties
- 18 specialist
- Programs indoors/outdoors
- Junior Ranger
- Events such as Nature Conservation Month, Open Nature Centres Day, Information Days
- Facebook page, webpage, expo, information materials
Study programs statistics (2017):

- 1352 programs
- 26759 participants
- Topics: Nature conservation, environmental use, waste management, alien species, water protection etc.
- 20 people/group, 45-90 minutes

Over the past years, the volume of programs has decreased due to fundings, decrease in number of specialists in certain fields and increase in work load.
Potential customers

- 634 kindergartens with 68,331 kids
- 518 general education schools with 143,550 students
- 41 vocational schools with 25,000 students
- 24 colleges and universities offering higher education with 51,092 students

Totally educational system involves 287,973 students – 22% of the population.
High support for environmental education in 2010-2015

- new buildings for environmental centers
- renovated centers
- renewed exhibitions and equipment
- teacher training and public awareness
- teaching tools, exhibitions for borrowing
- environmental education webpage
- virtual tracks
TEACHING TOOLS AND MATERIALS FOR FREE BORROWING


MORE INFORMATION:  http://www.keskkonnaharidus.ee/oppematerjalid/oppevahendid/

CLAY HOUSE MODEL
FAIR TRADE GAME
PEAT BOX
LOTTE NATURE GAME
WHERE IS LIFE MORE SUSTAINABLE?
MEADOW SUITCASE
Exhibitions

- Nature protection
- Gulf of Finland
- Waste management
Junior Ranger program

- Lahemaa NP - 2004
- Vilsandi NP - 2012
- Matsalu NP - 2013
- Karula NP - 2014
- Soomaa NP - 2015

Around 100 (local) children every year (summer course, autumn and spring seminars)
The Discovery Trail will guide you to notice that there is more to the world than it seems at first sight. Each track has its own meaning, but they are all about caring for our future and sustainability. Come and look more closely at the wild nature or history of your home town, glance at the sky above you, discover bugs or rocks in the nearby park - it all comes together in the realization that we are part of nature and our every action leaves a trace. Exciting discovery!

Smart trail / https://avastusrada.ee/en
Eco-schools program

Foundation for Environmental Education
http://www.fee.global/

Globally:
✓ 51000 educational institutions from 67 countries

Estonia:
✓ 54 educational institutions (August 2018)
✓ Schools, kindergartens, hobby schools, environmental education centres
Eco-schools structural elements

✓ 7 steps methodology - series of carefully engineered measures to help schools maximise the success of their Eco-School ambitions

✓ Integrating Eco-Schools Themes in the school studies

✓ Applying for Green Flag
Environmental education and awareness action plan 2019-2022

1. Need for change!

2. Cooperation memorandum in 2017 to create environmental education action plan.

3. Find solutions for efficient and sustainable development in environmental education.
Challenge 1 – schools rely too much on external funding

- 2014: 496 children, 8050 programs
- 2015: 2045 children, 29450 programs
- 2016: 6996 children, 95000 programs
- 2017: 5118 children, 103789 programs
- 2018: 6256 children, 119039 programs
## Challenge 2 – motivating youth to become Junior Rangers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges</th>
<th>Problems</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Having fun and exciting program is not enough</td>
<td>Few children</td>
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<tr>
<td>Needs systematic approach and a leader</td>
<td>Participation fee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mouth-to-mouth advertisement</td>
<td>Other activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Means of communication</td>
<td>Is not sexy or „bling-bling“</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peer pressure</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Challenge 3 – engaging inhabitants to increase their environmental awareness

- eBiodiversity, [http://elurikkus.ut.ee](http://elurikkus.ut.ee)
- NatureGate, [http://e.loodus.ee/](http://e.loodus.ee/)
- Environment Compass, [www.keskkonnakompass.ee](http://www.keskkonnakompass.ee)
- Other Apps: Estonian birds, amphibians, fishes, mushrooms etc
Challenge 4 – Quality of programs

• Estonia is in the process of working out a method in order to qualify priority themes of environmental education providers.

• Program quality will be assessed externally and will be linked with funding.
Thank you for your attention!

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