



Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium

Estonian Ministry of Education and Research

The education tree shows your possibilities of moving within the Estonian educational system in order to facilitate the attainment of your goals. All the branches are verdant – you can climb from branch to branch, harvest fruits, become employed and return by means of lifelong learning.

It is important to have a goal – a profession or vocation that interests you and makes you a living – this way you can choose the right branches for climbing!

Good luck and success!

Educational possibilities in Estonia

Until the age of 7 you usually go to kindergarten, which means that you obtain preschool education.

In grades 1–9 you obtain basic education.

In grades 7–9 in addition to obtaining basic education, it is possible for you to get prevocational training in basic school.

For persons without basic education who have passed the minimum school-leaving age (17 years) it is possible to continue their education in vocational schools on vocational training programmes (within 0,5–2,5 years one obtains vocational skills) or in upper-secondary schools for adults.

If you have basic education, then you have four choices to continue your studies.

- Upper-secondary school – for general upper-secondary education (3 years).
- Upper-secondary school with prevocational training – for general upper-secondary education and some vocational skills (3 years).
- Vocational school – for vocational secondary education (at least 3 years).
- Vocational school – only for vocational training without secondary education (1–3 years).

If you have (general or vocational) secondary education, then you have three choices to continue your studies.

- Vocational school – for vocational training (0,5–3 years) or professional higher education (3–4,5 years).
- Professional higher education institution or university's college – for professional higher education (3–4,5 years).
- University – for academic higher education (Bachelor's (3 years) → Master's (2 years) → Doctorate (3–4 years)).

Full-time studies take place at universities and institutions of professional higher education both free of charge and on a fee-paying basis.

If you already work, then in formal education you can

- finish your studies of basic or upper-secondary education in the form of evening courses, distance learning or as an external student;
- acquire vocational secondary education in part-time studies;
- acquire higher education in full time studies (distance learning), part time studies or as an external student.

General or vocational education is free of charge, higher education in part-time studies is on a fee-paying basis.

Being employed you have one of the following options

- to take part in professional training for adults in many private schools, vocational schools, higher education institutions, universities etc;
- to go to informal training related to your hobbies or interests in folk high schools, training centres and culture centres.