

Estonia

There were 1.34 million people living in Estonia on 1 January 2011, of which 16% are foreigners. The vast majority of the foreign population is longstanding and arrived to Estonia as internal migrants from different parts of the Soviet Union during Estonia's occupation until 1991.

In the context of the severe economic crisis which has hit Estonia particularly hard (a decline in GDP by 5.1% in 2008 and a further 14.9% drop in 2009), net migration has been negative over the past few years, albeit less than in the two other Baltic countries. According to Statistics Estonia, about 3 900 persons migrated to Estonia in 2009, while almost 4 700 persons emigrated from Estonia. The main emigration countries have been Finland (59% of all emigration in 2009), the United Kingdom (9%) and the Russian Federation (6%). The distribution was roughly the same over the past few years.

Since Estonia's accession to the EU in 2004, return migration has accounted for a large proportion of immigration to Estonia. In 2009, returning Estonian citizens made up about 43% of all immigrants, slightly less than in the two preceding years. There are several measures aimed at promoting return of Estonian migrants. Financial return support is available already since 1992 and in 2010, a specialised web site aimed at connecting Estonians living abroad with possible employers in Estonia was put in place.

Among the slightly more than 2 200 immigrants with a foreign nationality who entered Estonia in 2009, 23% (or 505 persons) were Russians. The other main nationalities were Finns (14%) and Ukrainians (10%). There were no major changes in the size and composition of migration flows compared with 2008.

After Estonia regained its independence in 1991 it was decided to define citizens of Estonia through legal succession in accordance with the 1938 Citizenship Act and thus established the principle of *jus sanguinis*. On this basis, Estonian citizens were defined as those who were Estonian citizens prior to 17 June 1940 (the beginning of the occupation by the Soviet Union) and their descendents. Others who were not granted Estonian citizenship on the basis of the above principle had the opportunity to become naturalised Estonian citizens, register as Russian citizens or apply for a citizenship of their country of origin (e.g. Ukraine, Belarus etc). There is a large group of people who have not determined their citizenship status by acquiring Estonian, Russian or any other country's citizenship. In 1992, shortly after independence, around 32% of the

Estonian population had not determined their citizenship status. Estonia has put a lot of effort into trying to decrease the number of persons with undetermined citizenship by active promotion of Estonian citizenship and indeed, their number has declined, e.g. since 2002 by more than 40%. Still, by early 2011, this group represented slightly more than 100 000 persons, 7.5% of Estonia's population.

Persons with undetermined citizenship make up almost half of all non-Estonians living in Estonia on the basis of a residence permit (which excludes citizens of the European Union). Among the non-citizens with a foreign nationality, the overwhelming majority are Russians (almost 90%) and Ukrainians (5%).

Naturalisation numbers were highest in the early 1990s, peaking in 1996 with almost 23 000 persons, but have been declining since then. Since 1992-2010 more than 152 000 persons have become naturalised Estonian citizens. In 2010, about 1 200 persons were naturalised. After persons with undetermined citizenship living permanently in Estonia (90% of all applicants), the main groups were citizens of the Russian Federation and Ukraine.

Estonia operates a system of quotas for labour migration. The quota for the respective calendar year is set annually by the government within a maximum framework of 0.1% of the permanent population; for 2011, the quota has been set at about 1 000 persons, i.e. 0.075% of the permanent population. In 2010 the quota was set at roughly the same level and was fulfilled only by 82%.

On 1 October 2010, a revised Aliens Act entered into force. The changes were modest and mainly aimed at enhancing the transparency of the immigration system.

Like its Baltic counterparts, Estonia has not been a main destination country for asylum seekers; in 2009 there were only 40 applications. Most applicants for asylum over the past decade were from the Russian Federation (about 16%), Afghanistan (12%), and Iraq (11%).

For further information:

www.politsei.ee/en/

www.tootukassa.ee/?lang=en

www.stat.ee/en

www.meis.ee/tagasiranne-eng

www.sisekaitse.ee/eass/the-academy/emn/

Recent trends in migrants' flows and stocks

ESTONIA

Migration flows (foreigners) National definition	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level ('000)			
					2000-04	2005-09	2009			
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>										
Inflows	..	0.7	1.4	1.7	..	1.3	2.2			
Outflows	..	0.5	0.4	0.5	..	0.4	0.7			
Migration inflows (foreigners) by type	Thousands		% distribution		Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners					
<i>Permit based statistics (standardised)</i>	2008	2009	2008	2009						
Work	..	..	..	..		
Family (incl. accompanying family)	..	..	..	..		
Humanitarian	..	..	..	..		
Free movements	..	..	..	..		
Others	..	..	..	..		
Total	..	..	..	..		
Temporary migration	2005	2008	2009	Average				Inflows of top 10 nationalities as a % of total inflows of foreigners		
<i>Thousands</i>				2005-09						
International students	..	..	..	..		
Trainees	..	..	..	..		
Working holiday makers	..	..	..	..		
Seasonal workers	..	..	..	..		
Intra-company transfers	..	..	..	..		
Other temporary workers	..	..	..	..		
Inflows of asylum seekers	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average	Level				
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2000-04	2005-09	2009			
					0.0	0.0	36			
Components of population growth	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level ('000)			
<i>Per 1 000 inhabitants</i>					2000-04	2005-09	2009			
Total	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Natural increase	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Net migration	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Stocks of immigrants	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level ('000)			
<i>Percentage of the total population</i>					2000-04	2005-09	2009			
Foreign-born population	18.4	17.5	16.7	16.6	18.1	16.9	222			
Foreign population	20.9	18.9	16.7	16.4	20.0	17.5	219			
Naturalisations	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level			
<i>Percentage of the foreign population</i>					2000-04	2005-09	2009			
	1.2	2.8	0.9	0.8	1.5	1.7	1 670			
Labour market outcomes	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average					
					2000-04	2005-09				
Employment/population ratio										
Native-born men	62.2	66.1	72.6	63.5	64.6	69.0				
Foreign-born men	70.5	73.4	80.5	68.8	70.2	75.1				
Native-born women	57.1	61.4	65.7	62.4	57.8	63.8				
Foreign-born women	57.7	65.6	70.0	67.0	59.1	68.8				
Unemployment rate										
Native-born men	15.3	8.9	6.0	17.3	11.9	8.7				
Foreign-born men	13.4	9.4	5.4	17.7	13.0	9.6				
Native-born women	11.8	6.3	5.2	10.5	10.1	6.3				
Foreign-born women	11.1	11.4	6.5	12.3	13.1	8.4				
Macroeconomic indicators	2000	2005	2008	2009	Average		Level			
<i>Annual growth in %</i>					2000-04	2005-09	2009			
Real GDP	10.0	9.4	-5.1	-13.9	8.0	1.6				
GDP/capita (level in USD)	10.5	9.7	-5.0	-13.9	8.5	1.8	14 288			
Employment (level in thousands)	..	2.0	0.2	-9.2	..	0.1	596			
<i>Percentage of the labour force</i>										
Unemployment	13.6	7.9	5.6	13.8	11.2	7.6				

Notes and sources are at the end of the chapter.

StatLink <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888932441249>