

17. Estonia

This country profile benchmarks key self-employment and entrepreneurship indicators for women, youth, seniors and immigrants against the European Union average. It also presents current inclusive entrepreneurship policy issues and highlights recent developments in Estonia.

Key trends

The self-employment rate has increased over the past decade and was 10.4% in 2018 – the highest rate since 2006 – but was still slightly below the European Union (EU) average (13.5%). Similarly, Estonians were more likely to report being engaged in early-stage entrepreneurship activities over the 2014-18 period (14.1% vs. 6.7% for the EU), particularly women (10.5% vs. 4.9%) and youth (19.5% vs. 7.7%). Many of these entrepreneurship activities by women and youth appear to be high quality activities since a slightly higher than average proportion of early-stage women (6.1%) and youth (12.3%) entrepreneurs expected to create at least 19 jobs over the next five years.

Hot issue

While women's entrepreneurship support has a long history in Estonia, many new activities have been introduced in recent years. These include, for example, the training programme “Everything is possible!” (*Kõik on Võimalik!*), launched in 2018 by BWP Estonia with support from The Estonian Business School and several foundations. It will operate in five cities, complemented with online training material that is open to all. In addition to new support initiatives, several high profile events have been organised to raise the profile of women's entrepreneurship. Examples include the conference “Full speed to female entrepreneurship!” (*Hoogu naisettevõtjusele!*), which was organised by The Estonian Women's Studies and Resource Centre in November 2017 and featured many key stakeholders such as the Minister of Entrepreneurship.

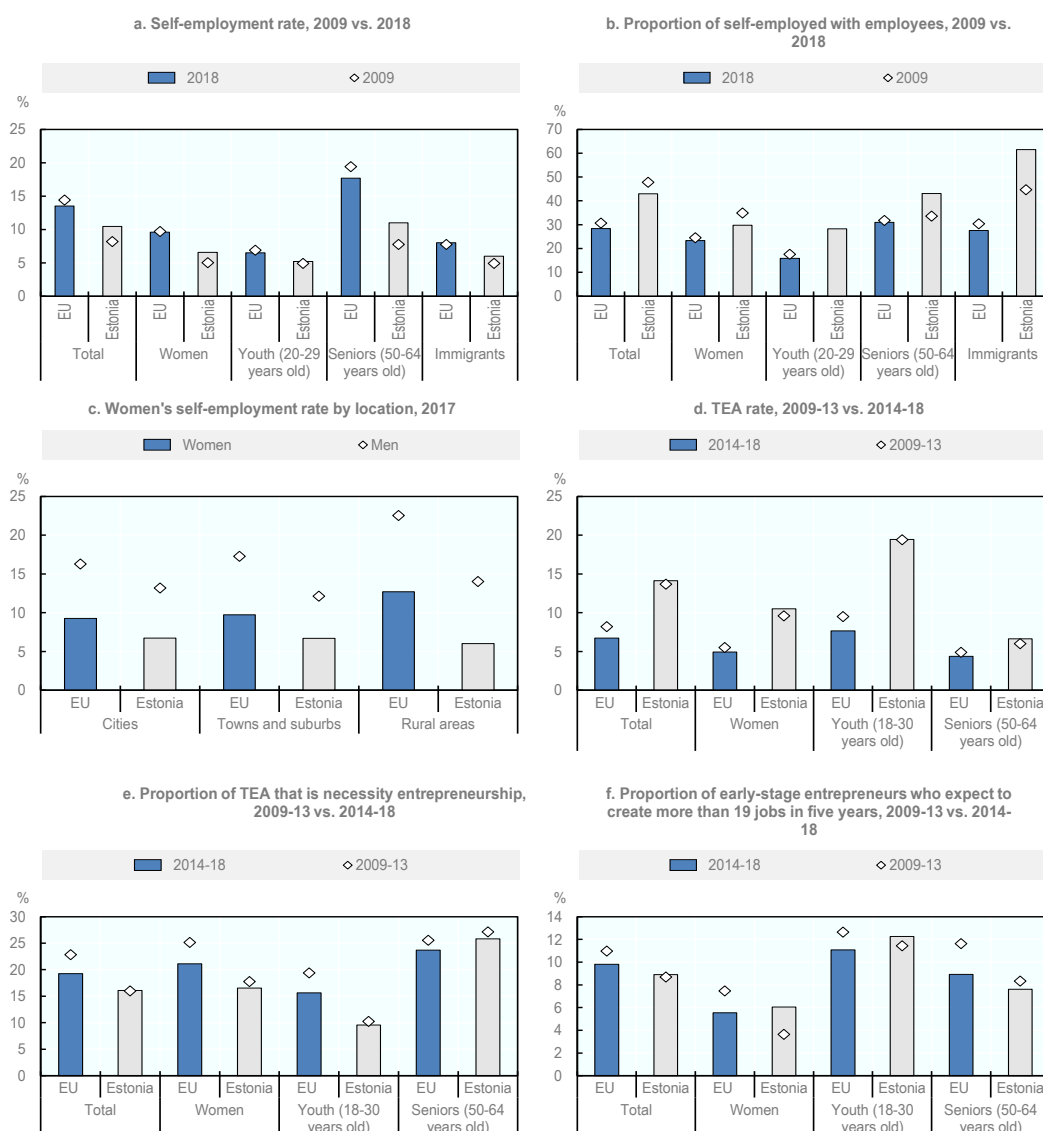
Recent policy developments

Many new policy developments focus on building entrepreneurship skills among people from specific under-represented and disadvantaged groups. Two calls for project proposals were announced by the government in 2017-18, including “Support to co-operation between the schools, community and entrepreneurs to make entrepreneurial studies more practical” for youth and the “Key Competences Programme” for adults with low skill levels and older people. The programmes are co-funded by the European Social Fund and managed by Innove Foundation.

This profile is based on a recent country assessment report, which can be found at: www.oecd.org/cfe/leed/inclusive-entrepreneurship.htm.

Key inclusive entrepreneurship data

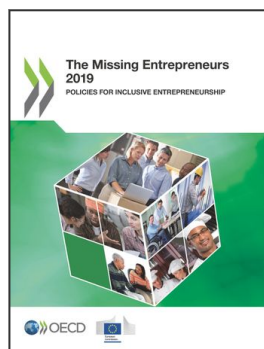
Figure 17.1. Entrepreneurship and self-employment data for Estonia



Notes: The self-employment rate is defined as the number of self-employed people (15-64 years old) divided by the number of people in employment. The TEA rate is the proportion of adults (18-64 years old) involved in setting up a business or managing a business that is less than 42 months old. Necessity entrepreneurship is defined as entrepreneurship activities that were launched because there were no other options in the labour market. Early-stage entrepreneurs are those who are in the process of setting up a business or managing a business that is less than 42 months old. The EU average in Panels D-F excludes Czech Republic and Malta for the period 2014-18 and Malta for the period 2009-13.

Sources: Panels A and B: Eurostat (2019), Labour Force Survey, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database>; Panel C: Eurostat (2018), Self-employment, Labour Force Survey ad-hoc module, <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/lfs/data/database>; Panels D-F: Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (2019), *Special tabulations of the GEM survey 2014-18*.

StatLink  <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888934066729>



From:
The Missing Entrepreneurs 2019
Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship

Access the complete publication at:

<https://doi.org/10.1787/3ed84801-en>

Please cite this chapter as:

OECD/European Union (2019), "Estonia", in *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2019: Policies for Inclusive Entrepreneurship*, OECD Publishing, Paris.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1787/d65e0760-en>

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