



YOUTH MONITORING IN ESTONIA

Policy Brief 1/2010

Youth monitoring – for whom, why and how?

In order to develop knowledge-based youth policy, one needs to acquire updated information about the current situation and related problems. Thus, there is a clear need to understand what young people need and which challenges they are facing.

The concept of integrated youth policy entails a solid and systematic overview of the **development and well-being of young people in Estonia**. Youth monitoring

provides updated information about various fields related to the lives of young people by enabling assessments about the current status and future tendencies.

A knowledge-based approach to youth policy and youth work allows quality assessment of youth work and youth policy not only within Estonia, but allows international comparisons

The year 2010 saw the creation of a systematic youth monitoring for the purpose of introducing a knowledge-based youth policy in Estonia. Youth monitoring provides up-to-date information about various fields related to the lives of young people by enabling assessments about the current status and future direction of young people in the society. Information acquired from the youth monitor can be taken into account when developing new youth policy or evaluate the potential effects of policy changes. Youth monitoring can be found at:

www.entk.ee/noorteseire

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Youth monitoring consists of the following interconnected **components** (see Figure 1):

- Indicators which are based on the collected data
- Research and analytical reports about the youth, including
 - The Yearbook of Youth Monitoring
 - Policy reviews
 - Original research based on questionnaires
- A database of youth research (studies carried out in Estonia)
- Development studies of youth policy

For the purpose of focus and coherence, youth monitoring focuses every year on a specific problem. Every year **a topic of the year** is chosen based on the priorities and directions in the youth policy sector in Estonia and suggestions made in international benchmark documents. This approach allows researchers to explore the topic from various perspectives. Moreover, a clear focus provides a better platform to create a basis for knowledge-based policy information and recommendations. The

topic for the year 2010 was **“Young People and the Labour Market”** and 2011 will focus on young people participation in the society and youth work.

Youth monitoring is **useful for all parties who work with young people**. People who need information related to young people, youth-related behavior and social processes. The target audience for youth monitoring includes:

- MP-s and members of the government
- national policy makers
- local level policy makers
- youth workers and other specialists
- socially active young people
- researchers who concentrate on topics related to young people

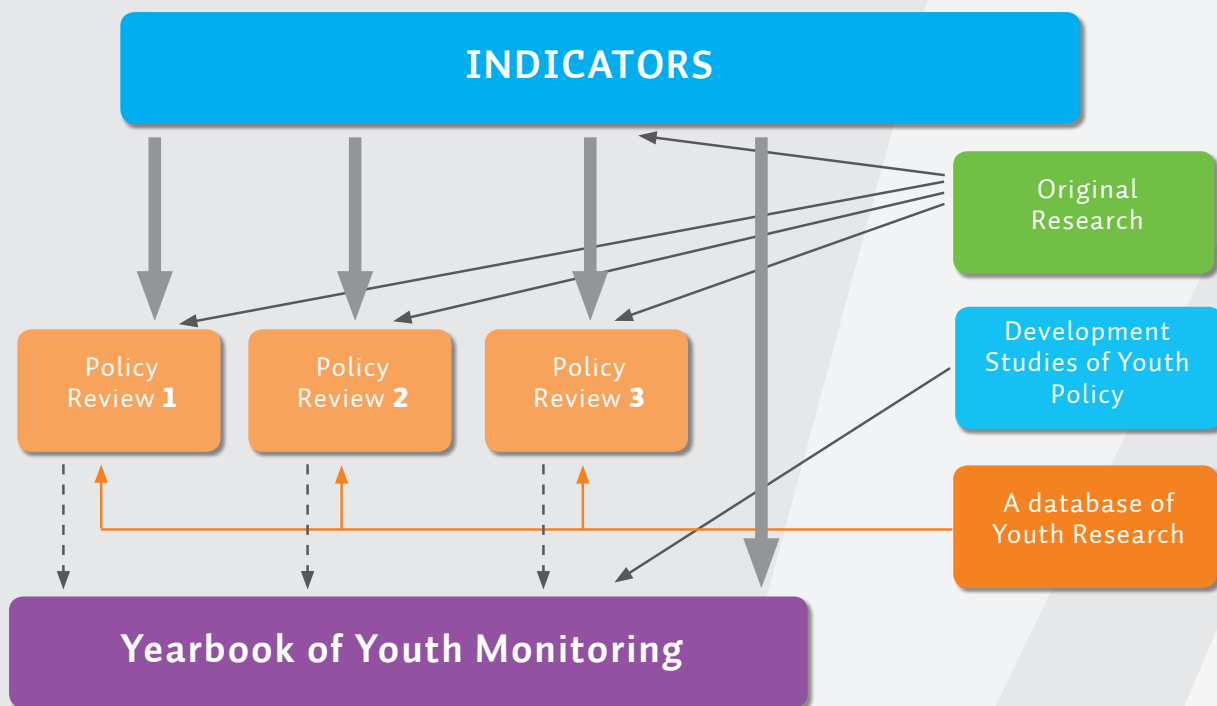


Figure 1. The Components of Youth Monitoring

The Youth Monitoring Webpage

All information related to youth monitoring is available on the youth monitoring website:

www.entk.ee/noorteseire

The **youth monitoring webpage** provides the following services:

- Search and download youth-related data from a database of indicators. Indicators mean the measuring indicators describing the development of a phenomenon or a process characteristic of the situation of young people. By means of indicators, it is possible to describe the situation of youth and its changes, define the more significant challenges in the lives of young people, and monitor and assess the effects of policy implementation.
- The indicator database assembles youth-related indicators, for which data has been collected since 2005 in a variety of dimensions (e.g. gender, country, age group). Database users can download the data, view graphs and compare different indicators. They can also read and download various analytical reports, the yearbook of youth monitoring and policy reviews. Furthermore, users can find presentations and summaries of thematic discussions.
- A youth research database enables searching for research papers, analyses and surveys related to the field of youth in Estonia. The database includes references to studies carried out at the request of ministries, scientific studies and Master's and Doctoral theses prepared by students. The database enables searching for studies by the author, the supervisor of the research paper, the text included in the title, the authority ordering the study/the financier of the study, as well as the year of completion.
- Users of the webpage can also provide feedback about youth monitoring, express opinions about various topics related to youth and make suggestions for improving the situation of youth. There is an option for new publication notification.

The news section of the website describes the key events and research related to youth topics.

Indicators of the Youth Monitor

Information on the situation of youth in Estonia is collected by using indicators. Indicators mean the measuring indicators describing the development of a phenomenon or a process characteristic of the situation of young people. Thus, by means of indicators, it is possible to describe the situation of youth and its changes, define the more significant challenges in the lives of young people, and monitor and assess the effects of policy implementation, including:

- Describe comparatively (both from international and domestic perspective) the situation youth and changes in development of youth;
- Identify the most important challenges concerning young people;
- Assess the implementation of integrated youth policy;
- Assess the impact of integrated youth policy.

The selection of indicators is **based on the following criteria**:

- The indicator has to be **directly related to policy objectives**: the indicator enables to monitor the development of national youth strategy;
- The indicator is **accurate, relevant and normative**: the indicator has to have a clear and accepted normative interpretation which describes the issue/phenomenon/outcome in an unambiguous manner;
- The indicator has to be **responsive to policy**: it has to be linked in as direct way as possible and potentially affected by the policy actions for whose assessment they are used, while not being subject to manipulation;
- The indicator has to be **reliable**: has to be statistically and analytically validated and complying with internationally recognized standards and methodologies; The indicator has to be **up to date**: in order to ensure a regular collection and provide the most updated information on the situation;
- The indicator has to be **timely available**: it has to enable revision of change and direction when needed;

- The indicator has to be **feasible**: data has to be built, as far as practicable, on available undelaying data, their measurement not imposing too large administrative and financial burden. The indicators have to be understood in a comparative context. For example indicators that represent the “values” and “attitudes” of young people may not seem to be related to developmental goals but provide background knowledge for issues such as health behavior. Most important trends related to youth are outlined in the yearbook of youth monitoring and quarterly policy reviews.

The data sources of indicators are, on the one hand, the data collected in the Estonian official statistics and departmental statistics. On the other hand, the indicators are improved by the data collected in original studies. The indicators are improved and updated on a regular basis.

In 2010, youth monitoring comprises the following indicators:

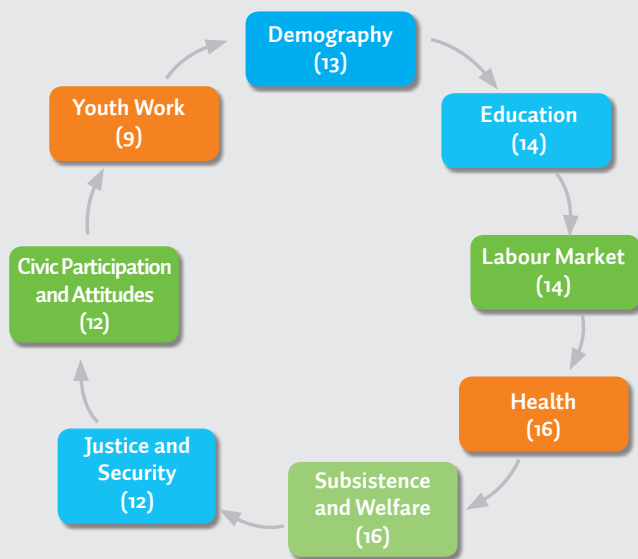


Figure 2. Indicator categories and the number of indicators in a single category

The Yearbook of Youth Monitoring and Policy Reviews

The most important parts of youth monitoring are the annual yearbook of youth monitoring and quarterly published policy reviews. The yearbook of youth monitoring is the most analytical and detailed publication of youth monitoring. It reflects the more significant changes that have taken place in the lives of young people in a year and creates a basis for knowledge-based policy formation in specific fields related to the lives of young people. The yearbook is published once a year in April. **The yearbook of youth monitoring** consists of two significant parts. The first part gives an analytical overview of the changes that have occurred in the lives of Estonian youth during the past year. The second part of the yearbook focuses on the in-depth analysis of a topic related to young people (the so-called topic of the year). Over the course of analysis, the problems related to the topic of the year are discussed on the basis of changes at the level of indicators, the results of policy reviews and the discussions connected with them and the original studies conducted during the year. In addition, the yearbook lists the definitions related to the topic and the relationships between them and gives an overview of the international experience in solving the issues associated with the topic of the year. The second part ends with summarizing conclusions and policy suggestions that are helpful to decision-makers in forming further policy steps.

A quarterly **policy review** is a more detailed overview of one youth topic published two to three times a year. Policy reviews give an overview of potential problems and their origins within the selected topic, bring out the relationships in the field and international experience and provide potential alternative solutions. Policy reviews are primarily considered to form a basis for a more comprehensive discussion. Therefore, open discussions or policy dialogues are organized on the topic of policy reviews. A policy dialogue is a seminar aimed at the users of youth monitoring, who exchange ideas and make proposals on the topic given in the policy reviews and make suggestions as to how the problems should be solved. The policy dialogues are organized in different parts of Estonia in order to make sure all target groups from different regions get the chance to participate.

International Examples of Youth Monitoring

Although youth monitoring takes place in many countries, approaches vary. The following table compares and outlines the youth monitoring models in the selected countries.

Table 1. A Summary of Youth Monitoring Systems in the Selected Countries (2010)

Country	Authority	Client	Funder	Main Components of the Youth Monitoring System	Indicators /Categories	Webpage
Estonia	Praxis Center for Policy Studies	Estonian Center for Youth Work	The Department of Education and Science	Descriptive and analytical information, including research and analytical reports (yearbook of youth monitoring, quarterly policy reviews, original research), database of youth research, development studies	102/8	www.entk.ee/noorteseire
Sweden	The National Board of Youth Affairs (NBYA)	The Swedish Government	The Swedish Government	Descriptive and analytical information, including a report based on the analysis of indicators (Youth Today), in-depth analyzes (Focus-Reports), a national youth survey and the Local Follow-up of Youth Policy – LUPP)	85/5	http://www.ungdomsstyrelsen.se/english_main/o,2693,,oo.html
The Netherlands	Statistics Netherlands	The Ministry for Youth and Families	The Ministry for Youth and Families	Descriptive and analytical information on a state, provincial and municipal level. The system entails quarterly reviews, publications and reports	67/5	http://jeugdmonitor.cbs.nl/en-GB/menu/home/default.htm
New Zealand	The Ministry of Youth Development	The Ministry of Youth Development	The Ministry of Youth Development	More descriptive than analytical. Statistics and data both on a state and regional level.	42/9	http://www.youthstats.myd.govt.nz/overview/index.html



A Demographic Overview of the youth in Estonia

As of January 1 2010, there were 330,155 young people in Estonia. Pursuant to Article 2 of the Youth Work Act a young person refers to individuals between the ages of 7 and 26.. Young males (168,899) outnumbered young females (161,256). A bit more than a quarter of 7-26 year olds were in the age group 7-12, 13-19 year olds constituted a bit over a third (32.9%) and nearly half (42.5%) of the young people were 20-26 years old.

In the coming decades, the number of young people is projected to witness a marked decline (Figure 3). Statis-

tics Estonia projects the number of young people to fall from 330,155 in 2010 to 310,041 by 2030 while the proportion of young males will remain higher. The coming decades will see another important demographic change: the proportion of teenagers will increase and the proportion of adult young people (18-26 year olds) will decrease. In 2030, teenagers (13-19) comprise the largest group (37.5%) among young people, 7-12 year olds and 20-26 year olds will constitute groups of almost equal size – 30.2% and 32.4% respectively.



Source: Statistics Estonia (2010)¹

Figure 3. Youth in Estonia depicted as a Population Pyramid in 2010 and as a 2030 Forecast.

¹ 2030 forecast is based on assumptions made by Statistics Estonia: net migration will remain negative until 2013 after which it become positive, net migration will be just over 3000 in 2016 followed by a slow decline, immigration and emigration will be in balance by 2026.

What is the Status of Young People in the Society?

In 2010, more than half of all young people (54%) in Estonia were in taught learning. Over a quarter of all young people are employed² – the number of employed youths (28%) had increased in the third quarter in comparison to previous two quarters (23%). Youth unemployment had gone down in the previous quarters – from 16% in the first quarter to 11% in the third quarter of 2010. The main causes of youth inactivity stemmed from maternity or parental leave (4%), diseases or injuries (1%), discouraged persons³ (1%) and other reasons (2%), including mandatory military service.

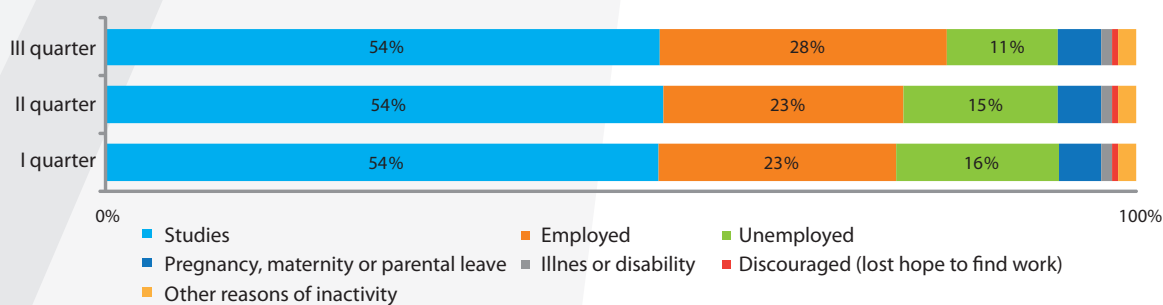


Figure 4. The Status of Youth in Society⁴

² An employed person is an individual who is working and receives a wage as an employee, entrepreneur or self-employed. Moreover, employed persons are people who work without a uniform pay in family-owned enterprises or in their own farm or are temporarily not working (Statistics Estonia, 2010).

³ A discouraged person is an individual who wishes to work and willing to commence work as soon as possible but is not actively looking for a job, having lost the hope to find one (Statistics Estonia, 2010).

⁴ The ratio of youth inactivity is based on statistics from 2009 while the rest of the data is based on calculations from 2010. Thus, the ratio of youth inactivity is calculated from the year 2009.