State support for NGOs

According to the survey, the National Foundation of Civil Society (NFCS) is a well-known donator among Estonian non-profit associations.

88% of non-profit associations have heard of the NFCS
19% of non-profit associations have applied for funds from the NFCS
15% of non-profit associations have received guidance and help from the NGO consultants at the county development centres

Did you know that:
• non-profit associations who have received support from the NFCS earn more own revenue and are more successful in expanding their cooperation relationships;
• the sensed need of non-profit associations for training and support services tends to be low;
• advice and non-financial support is mainly acquired from friends and acquaintances or other NGOs.

In the autumn of 2018, Tallinn University, the Baltic Research Institute, and Turu-uuringute AS conducted a survey among non-profit associations, commissioned by the Ministry of the Interior and the Government Office, to establish the current status and trends of Estonian non-profit associations.

The survey results served as significant input for the evaluation of the effectiveness and impact of the Civil Society Development Plan 2015–2020 and as a basis for planning the development of the field for the period of 2021–2030.

The representatives of a total of 1,121 NGOs were surveyed. Similar surveys have been conducted previously as well – in every four years.

The survey included non-profit associations registered in Estonia, excluding apartment, gardening, and garage associations.

The full report of the survey is available at the website of the Ministry of the Interior: www.siseministeerium.ee/en > News > Publications and studies >

What is the current status of Estonian NGOs?

As at September 2018, Estonia has 19,969 non-profit associations (excluding apartment, garage, and gardening associations)

15% of the non-profit associations operate at the local level only
53% of the non-profit associations include volunteer work
36% of the non-profit associations have expanded their activities abroad
23% of the non-profit associations have salaried workers

Most popular fields of activity:

Leisure time / hobby activities | Sports / athletics | Culture / art

2015-2018
21%
2010-2014
20%
2005-2009
15%
untl 1999
27%

All registered non-profit associations are not active. According to the data of the register, the proportion of non-profit associations established before 2000 is smaller (16%) and the proportion of non-profit associations established during 2005–2014 is bigger (46%) than in the query sample.
**Membership and internal organisation**

Similarly to other EU Member States, the number of members in Estonia’s non-profit associations is on the decline. 44% of non-profit associations have up to 10 members and 18% have over 50 members.

- **44%** up to 10 members
- **18%** 50+ members

In 2014, non-profit associations had an average of 40% of active members. There are more women than men among active members.

The work of the leaders of non-profit associations is mostly unpaid. Motivation is seen in the opportunity to extend one’s social circle and engage in hobbies.

- **20%** of non-profit associations have a documented development plan and 6% are preparing one.

In 2014, the respective proportions were 24% and 9%.

**Cooperation and networking**

The proportion of non-profit associations belonging under umbrella organisations has decreased.

- **47%** in 2014
- **39%** in 2018

The proportion of non-profit associations belonging under umbrella organisations has decreased. The proportion of associations that did not have cooperation relationships during the past year (18% in 2013 and 22% in 2017) as well as those who have no permanent cooperation relationships at all (25% in 2014 and 31% in 2018) has increased.

In 2014, 75% of non-profit associations and in 2018, 69% had permanent cooperation relationships.

How do non-profit associations divide into types based on their cooperation patterns?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The distribution of NGOs on the basis of their cooperation pattern</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No cooperation relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No clear patterns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiming to cooperate with the local municipality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiming to cooperate with businesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Many cooperation relationships</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Financing sources**

Non-profit associations generally evaluate their economical sustainability as satisfactory.

- **50%** satisfactory
- **30%** very good/good
- **12%** very bad/bad
- **8%** N/A

In comparison with 2014, the distribution in the self-evaluation levels on economic sustainability have not changed.

33% of non-profit associations received funds from three or more sources in 2017. 38% respectively in 2013.

The diversity of financing sources has decreased for non-profit associations. In comparison with 2013, the proportion of associations who receive finances from membership fees or the state budget has decreased.

Membership fees are the most important financing sources for non-profit associations.

- **30%** membership fees
- **20%** economic activity
- **19%** local government support
- **10%** support from state authorities
- **8%** support from state funds and foundations