

COUNTRY	Estonia
<p>How many OPs are there in your Member State? Do they have very different provisions in terms of partnership?</p>	<p>There are in total 3 OP-s:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Human Resource Development (HRD) OP for ESF. Managed by the Ministry of Education and Research; 2. Living Environment Development OP for ERDF and CF. Managed by the Ministry of Environment; 3. Economic Environment Development OP for ERDF and CF. Managed by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications. <p>There are no axes purely dedicated to partnership in any OPs, but international cooperation is seen as one of the priorities in many axes. Special programmes for supporting partnerships in Estonia are already formed under the priority axis “Enhancing administrative capacity” of HRD OP.</p>
<p>Does partnership have a geographical focus in your Member State's OP(s)? If so, national, regional, sub-regional e.g. county, district, group of municipalities, municipality, etc.?</p>	<p>There is no geographical focus given in the OP, since the majority of activities (according to the indicative categories of expenditure table in OPs) will take place nation-wide.</p>
<p>Is partnership linked to specific thematic issues / objectives (incl. possible targeting of specific groups / links with policy) in the OP(s)?</p>	<p>“Enhancing administrative capacity” priority axis of HRD OP has two measures targeted at social partners:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. “The enhancement of the strategic administrative capacity of state, local municipalities and non-governmental organizations”, also known as the “Fund of wise decisions”. There are two sub measures targeted to “Evolvement of strategic administrative capacity” and “Development and implementation of subject field research”. Both sub measures function on an open call basis. 2. “Training and evolvement of public servants, local authorities and non-governmental organizations”. There are two sub measures “Organization development” and “Internship programme” where social partners can also apply for funding. <p>There is also a separate programme for representative institutions of employees in order to enhance their capacity as a partner for governmental institutions.</p>
<p>Please specify further what is understood as “partnership” in the OP(s) in your Member State? (See Note 1)</p>	<p>The principle of partnership covers 3 different levels of activities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. preparation – social partners and also all interested people (through public presentations and consultations of the OP in 2006) made significant contributions for drafting the OP. After the adoption of the OPs partners are included in drafting the programmes and measures for implementation. The most used forms of partnerships are consultation rounds, steering committees for measures or axis. 2. implementation – especially in ESF programmes, many social partners are appointed as programme/project promoters. All implementation acts are usually approved by the monitoring/steering committees of that particular measure or axis. 3. monitoring –special monitoring committees (can also be called steering committees) are formed at measure or axis level. Half or majority of places on those committees are reserved for social partners. ESF OP MC
<p>What requirements are there for partnerships to become formally established in your OP's? (e.g. they need to: write a declaration with intent to work together, prepare a more detailed partnership</p>	<p>There are different types of partnerships:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. formalised – monitoring committees (for the OP, axis or measure); 2. ad hoc – to prepare programmes, evaluate etc; 3. informal partnerships – partners in open calls or in programmes. Usually there are requirements for the applicants regarding what kind of partnerships are expected to apply for funding (i.e universities

<p>agreement detailing tasks/roles, launch a call for tenders to acquire partners through contracts or join up in a separate legal entity)</p>	<p>together with enterprises etc). In both cases, open calls and programmes, partners are stated in a letter of intent or in the programme.</p>
<p>What specific questions regarding partnership are asked in (previous/current) ESF application forms?</p>	<p>In current application forms applicants have to write down the procedure to show how this specific partner was selected or why this partner should be involved (this is important in order to follow the rules of the procurement law). Also the division of tasks, responsibilities and breakdown of the budget.</p>
<p>Types of organisations typically involved in partnership (e.g. social partners, NGOs, companies, academia, etc.) in the OP(s)</p>	<p>Types of organisations involved: NGOs, umbrella organisations (SME, local municipality, counties, rectors conferences representatives, VET-schools etc), employers and employees confederations, universities, local employment agencies etc.</p>
<p>If partnerships are embedded within existing national, regional or local structures, how are these different levels linked to each other and how does this facilitate mainstreaming in the OP(s?) (See Note 2)</p>	<p>Social partners are members of monitoring committees (both on OP and axis level). Partners involved are usually umbrella organisations who have many members, thus guaranteeing that all the information needed will get to the final beneficiaries and target groups and also ministries responsible for the ESF implementation will have the feedback from grassroots level. The main role of those steering/monitoring committees is to approve the drafts of measures/activities, monitor success of the measure and propose, approve changes in measure /activities.</p>
<p>How do the choices of the OPs in terms of partnership address the EC regulation? (See Note 3)</p>	<p>Monitoring Committee of the OP and monitoring/steering committees of axis are meeting the criteria stated in article 3 and 5. In addition there are special programmes created under priority axis 5 “Enhancing administrative capacity” of the ESF OP developed two special programmes and four sub-measures with a focus on capacity-building social partners at the start. One programme is targeted at the Employers Federation with the purpose of enhancing administrative capacity of enterprise organizations to enlarge entrepreneurs co-partnership among formatting policies and decision-making process at state level; to broaden the supporting surface of political decisions and through that to enlarge the effectiveness of their realization. Another programme is targeted at representative institutions of employees. The purpose of the programme is to enhance the capacity of employee’s representative institutions to be better partners for the government institutions and to be more capable in participating policy making process.</p> <p>Additional to above mentioned programmes, social partners can apply (open calls) funding from following sub-measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The measure “The enhancement of strategic administrative capacity of state, local municipalities and non- governmental organizations” has two sub-measures: 1. Evolvement of strategic administrative capacity. 2. Development and implementation of subject field research. • The measure “Training and evolvement of public servants, local authorities and non-governmental organizations” has also two sub-measures: 1. Organization development. 2. Internship programme. (State institutions can involve social partners as a partner to the mentioned measure).
<p>Are there major differences with how partnership was organised in the past OP(s)? Why was the choice made to change? Did EQUAL have influence on this choice and, if yes, how?</p>	<p>During the programming period 2007-2013 partnerships are supported in all priority axes. The main source of knowledge on how to form partnerships and what actions are needed come from the EQUAL experience. However EQUAL was more targeted at international partnerships, currently we are trying to implement the practise nationally as well. At the moment we are trying to</p>

	implement the EQUAL practise on a wider level. It is important to stress that partnerships are not supported only because they are partnerships, but only when they give additional value.
What are the strong points of the way the OP(s) organise(s) partnership?	The monitoring/steering system where partners are included both on OP and axis level. This kind of an involvement gives opportunities for partners to express their thoughts while drafting implementation activities and also in the process of monitoring.
What are the draw-backs of the way the OP(s) organise(s) partnership?	Having limited information about partnership support schemes while drafting the OP. At the moment it is hard to come up with special programmes or initiatives when hardly any paragraphs are dedicated to partnerships (not all priority axis have special measures to initiate partnerships).
What measures, if any, are being taken to build on the strong points and reduce the draw-backs in the OP(s)?	Managing Authority started with risk assessment activities where all intermediate bodies and implementing agencies have to asses their own implementation, preparation risks (11 areas of risks defined). Risk assessment activities were initiated in order to analyse the administrative personnel input (or lack of it) and define the areas where more input, guidance or support is needed. Outcomes of those activities are included in the monitoring report of the OP.
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Notes

Note 1

- o function of partnership within the OP: ranging from implementation of activities on the ground (e.g. through projects) to high level strategic decision making (e.g. in monitoring committee etc.)
- o stability of partnership: ranging from supporting ad hoc, task oriented partnerships to permanent, institutionalised partnerships
- o importance of ESF funding for partnership: highly dependent to small influence
- o mainly cross-sector partnerships or within a sector
- o mainly cross-(sub)regional partnerships or within a (sub)region
- o highly formalised (e.g. legally binding agreements) to informal
- o etc.....

Note 2

Mainstreaming refers here to vertical mainstreaming where lessons learnt and good practice need to be taken up by higher levels of the organisational or political system.

Note 3

Art. 3: promoting partnerships, pacts and initiatives through networking of relevant stakeholders, such as the social partners and non-governmental organisations, at the transnational, national, regional and local levels in order to mobilise for reforms in the field of employment and labour market inclusiveness.

Art. 5:

1. The ESF shall promote good governance and partnership. Its support shall be designed and implemented at the appropriate territorial level taking into account the national, regional and local level according to the institutional arrangements specific to each Member State.
2. The Member States shall ensure the involvement of the social partners and adequate consultation and participation of other stakeholders, at the appropriate territorial level, in the preparation, implementation and monitoring of ESF support.
3. The managing authority of each operational programme shall encourage adequate participation of the social partners in actions funded under Article 3. Under the Convergence objective, an appropriate amount of ESF resources shall be allocated to capacity-building, which shall include training, networking measures, strengthening the social dialogue and activities jointly undertaken by the social partners, in particular as regards adaptability of workers and enterprises referred to in Article 3(1)(a).
4. The managing authority of each operational programme shall encourage adequate participation and access by nongovernmental organisations to the funded activities, notably in the domains of social inclusion, gender equality and equal opportunities.