



education
estonia

Growing curious minds: Early education in Estonia

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Key
qualities
of Estonian
pre-school
education

HIGHLY EDUCATED
TEACHERS

Master's degree for principals
Bachelor's for teachers
Qualifications for assistant teacher

CURRICULUM-BASED
LEARNING OUTCOMES
achieved by
learning-through-play method

AUTONOMY

Autonomy
of kindergartens
and teachers

HOBBY EDUCATION
offers wide opportunities
for additional education
and self-development

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Special support for those
requiring it

Pre-school education:

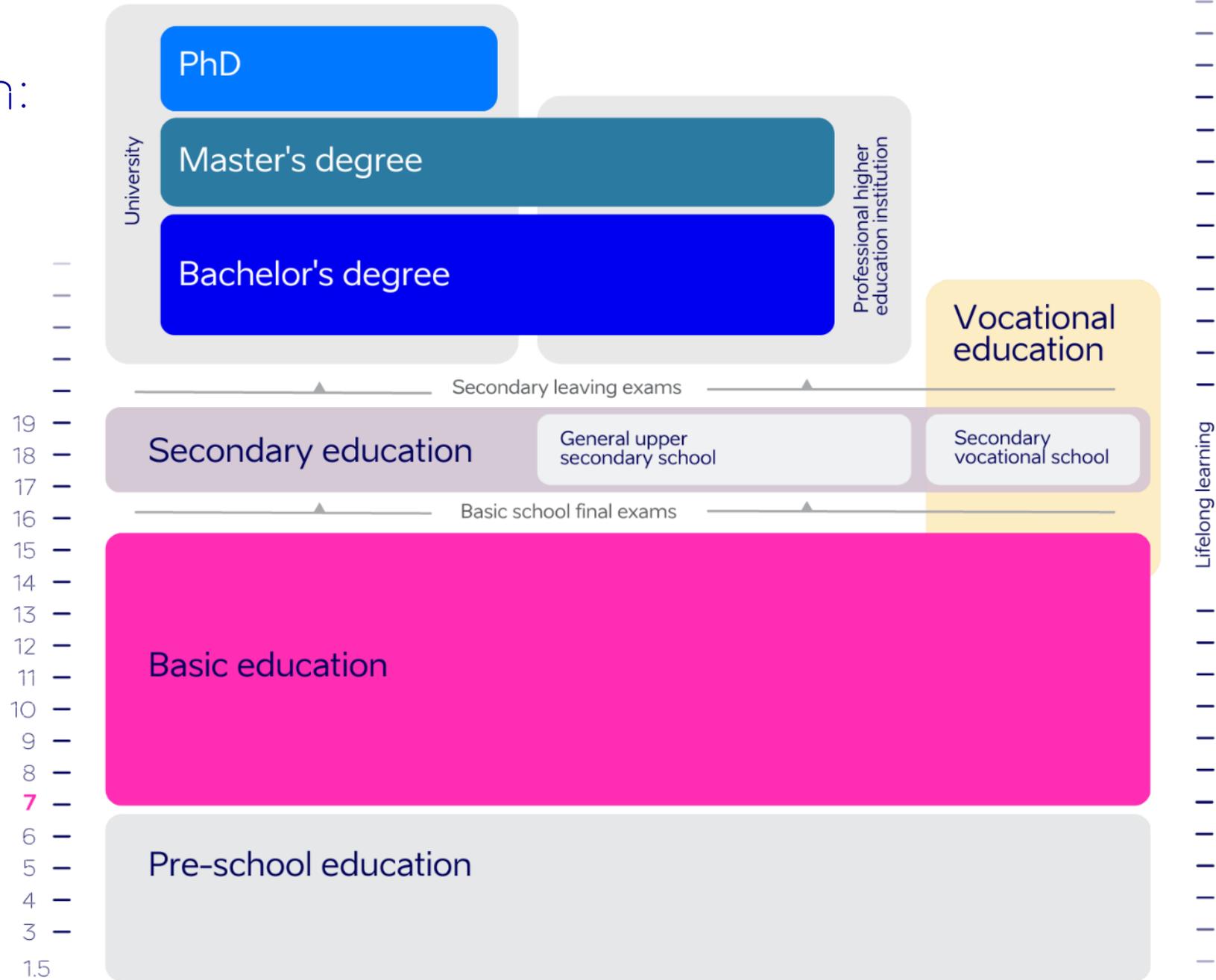
65 676
children

7076
teachers

533
kindergardens
of which 61 are
private
kindergardens

400
childcare service
providers with

6343 children
(mostly under age 3)



A young child with blonde hair is drinking from a glass of milk. The child is wearing a blue sweater. In the background, another child in a red and white striped shirt is visible, looking towards the camera. The scene is set in a brightly lit room, likely a dining area.

92%
of 3-7 year olds
participate

Eurostat

A young girl with blonde hair, wearing a green dress, is standing in a forest. She is eating a strawberry and has some juice on her chin. She is holding a wicker basket. The background is a blurred forest with tall trees and sunlight filtering through the leaves.

Building the foundation for the future

- + Pre-school education supports the child's full and continuous development together with the family.
- + Learning helps children gain basic and practical skills — preparing under-3-year-olds for kindergarten and 3- to 7-year-olds for school and daily life.

National Curriculum (2008)

- + Play is the main activity of children
- + Play skills are the basis for the development of all general skills
- + A child should be involved in planning, making choices and analyzing
- + Teachers carry out observations
 - + Everyday activities
 - + Undirected play
 - + Teacher directed activities
- + Parent-teacher development conversation at least once a year

A day in a kindergarden

- 7** Arrival. Individual activities, study & play
- 8.30** Breakfast
- 9-12** Organised activities, incl. outdoor
- 12.30** Lunch
- 13-15** Rest
- 15** Activities: Movement, creativity, individual work etc
- 16** Snack
- 16.30** Free play indoors or outdoors
- 19** Kindergarden closes



School readiness card

<https://www.tallinn.ee/et/meelespea/koolivalmidus>



Recent reforms of Estonian ECEC

- + Childcare Centres are starting to prepare a curricula
- + By the end of 2025, six sets of guidance materials will be developed to support childcare centres and kindergartens in updating their own curricula.

Costs ja conditions

Affordable, high-quality services ensure broad participation

Public funding and low parental cost

- Public spending: 2.4% of GDP (EU average: 1.7%)
- Parental fee is highly subsidized: max 20% of min wage (\approx 10% of actual costs)

What families receive in return

- Long day 7–19 supports working parents
- Three warm meals, nap time with bedding
- Qualified staff, gym and music rooms, well-equipped outdoor areas

Early introduction to programming

ProgeTiger programme

- + Logical thinking, problem-solving skills, creativity and innovation from kindergarten to high school and vocational education
- + Teacher training, device funding support, student events, free educational resources



Eliis, eKindergarden

The screenshot shows the Eliis website with a navigation bar containing 'ABOUT ELIIS', 'KINDERGARTENS', 'FEATURES', 'PRICING', and 'CONTACT'. Below the navigation are three columns of features:

- For parents**
 - Monitor your child's progress
 - Read notifications
 - Send messages
 - Event calendar
 - Gallery
 - Digital development folder
- For kindergartens**
 - Digital group diaries
 - Poll creation
 - Weekly and monthly plans
 - School readiness card
 - Send messages
 - Document management
- For municipalities**
 - Reporting and statistics
 - Document management
 - Kindergarten management
 - Occupancy
 - Contacts

Each column has a downward arrow icon and a short descriptive paragraph at the bottom.

Let's get to know
each other



Disagree < -----> Strongly agree

*“I feel I have enough
professional freedom
in my work”*

*"Outdoor learning
is a regular and year-round part
of our kindergarten program"*

*“Digital tools do not belong
in kindergartens”*

Aitäh!

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