



Estonia is a small North European country and it has been a member of the European Union since 2004.



Promotional page about Estonia: www.estonia.ee.



[University of Tartu](http://www.ut.ee)

Promotional page about [Research in Estonia](http://www.research.ee)

Umbrella organisation uniting researchers, scholars and intellectuals: [Estonian Academy of Sciences](http://www.eurosci.ee)

[1] <http://www.stat.ee/science-technology-innovation> [2] <http://blog.ut.ee/how-successful-is-estonian-science/> [3] <http://www.stat.ee/news-release-2016-132> [4] Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2014-2020 "Knowledge-based Estonia"

EURAXESS members in focus: ESTONIA – a place for independent minds

Did you know that Skype was programmed in Estonia in 2003? Or that Estonia has used legally binding digital signatures since the year 2000? These facts illustrate the innovative attitude of the small North European country called Estonia perfectly. Estonia has an attractive environment for research, top-level infrastructure, a collaborative research community and excellent research achievements.

Research and Development in Estonia

Estonian researchers are good partners in international collaboration projects and the number of international co-publications is rising. Research in Estonia is becoming more international as the number of foreign researchers from 2005 to 2014 has increased sevenfold¹. The impact of papers authored by Estonian researchers is growing rapidly; average citations per paper exceed the Thomson Reuters' Essential Science Indicators (ESI) mean citation rate by 5%².

There are 20 R&D institutions in Estonia, including 6 public universities where most research is performed. The leading scientific institution in Estonia is the University of Tartu.

The ratio of total R&D expenditure to GDP in 2015 was 1.5%, with nearly half of R&D expenditure in 2015 coming from the state budget³.

Research Excellence in Estonia

Biological sciences are at the forefront of Estonian research – 2/3 of the top researchers (among 1% most cited in their field worldwide) who are affiliated with an Estonian research institution are **biologists** and **ecologists** [2]. Each Estonian paper published in environment/ecology and plant and animal science receives about 40% more citations than papers in these fields in general. Additionally, clinical medicine, molecular biology and genetics, physics, pharmacology and toxicology, and psychiatry/psychology are also above global average [2].

There are 12 [Research Centres of Excellence](http://www.research.ee) in Estonia, composed of **internationally highly regarded research groups**. Featured topics are: terrestrial ecosystems in the context of global change from molecular to biome-level responses, genomics and translational medicine, information and communication technologies (ICT), molecular cell engineering, space studies.

Estonian R&D Strategy

The Estonian R&D strategy document **Knowledge-based Estonia 2014–2020** outlines four objectives: 1) Research in Estonia is of high level and diverse 2) RD functions in the interest of Estonian society and economy 3) RD makes the structure of economy more knowledge-intensive 4) Estonia is active and visible in international RDI cooperation. The strategy foresees that by 2020 investments in R&D **will reach 3% of GDP**⁴.



How Skype started in Estonia,
read [The Story of Skype](#)

[e-Estonia – The Digital Society](#)

[Enterprise Estonia](#) supporting
and advising businesses



The main funding body is the
[Estonian Research Council](#).



Information and support for
incoming researchers on
[EURAXESS Estonia](#)

EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion is an initiative of the European Research Area (ERA) that addresses barriers to the mobility of researchers and seeks to enhance their career development. This pan-European effort is currently supported by 40 countries, of which we will profile one in our quarterly e-newsletter. In this edition, we zoom in on Estonia.
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EURAXESS Estonia and
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Entrepreneurship and Innovation

Innovation and the start-up ecosystem in Estonia are growing rapidly. Notable recent success stories backed by R&D in the IT field include [Skype](#), [TransferWise](#), [Lingvist](#), [Starship Technologies](#) and [Guardtime](#).

Among Estonian priorities, the ICT sector --including cybersecurity-- is by far most the prominent. Estonia is standing out as a **digital society**. We have developed highly innovative and practical solutions for digital **public services** including online tax-declarations (in use since 2000), digital signatures (2000), online voting (2005), digital recipes (2010), and most recently the e-residency (2016) for anyone in the world (you can become an [e-resident](#) of Estonia in order to register your business in Estonia, thus gaining full rights to do business in Estonia and in most European Union countries). More than 17,000 individuals from 130 countries registered for e-residency, and the number keeps growing fast. This enables Estonia to foster entrepreneurship and innovation.

[Competence Centres \(8\)](#) are designed to improve the competitiveness of enterprises through strategic cooperation between Estonian science, industry and the public sectors. Main topics are health and food technologies and ICT services.

[Enterprise Estonia](#) promotes business and provides financial assistance, counselling, cooperation opportunities and training for entrepreneurs, research institutions and the public and non-profit sectors.

Funding and Recruitment Opportunities

Research in Estonia is primarily financed on the basis of quality competition. Financing comes from the state budget, foreign funds (mostly EU H2020 and other means) and companies. The Estonian Research Council is the principal funding body of R&D in Estonia, consolidating different grants and types of funding and giving research more visibility within society. There are also several mobility grants. Click here for the funding calls.

As most research is performed in the public universities, most research jobs are also available in public universities. PhD students are regarded as students and receive a monthly scholarship.

Important Information for Incoming Researchers

[EURAXESS Estonia](#) provides information and support to international researchers for free. We provide information about **entry conditions**, visas and **residence permits**, Estonia in general, the Estonian research landscape, **job & funding offers**, events for researchers and much more!

Brazilian citizens can stay in Estonia visa free for 90 days but for working and long-term stays they require a hosting agreement and a residence permit. See all [Estonian embassies and representations](#) around the world.

[EU Council presidency](#)

Estonia will be holding the EU Council presidency in the second half of 2017. In STI field it would mean more Digital Europe and the concept of free flow of data (in addition to 4 classical EU freedoms). EU must exploit the benefits of technological progress that is bringing continuous change to citizens, businesses and governments. For this purpose, we will need to focus more on developing cross-border e-commerce and e-services for the benefit of consumers, producers and businesses and ensuring modern and secure electronic communications available everywhere across Europe as well as creating a favourable environment for new innovative services.



Interview with Brazilian researchers in Estonia



Winter in Estonia

Nemailla Bonturi

Researcher in Microbial Cell Factories, University of Tartu

How did you hear about Estonia and why did you decide to work in Estonia?

Nemailla Bonturi: To be honest, I didn't know much about Estonia or had this country in my plans while I was looking for a job last year. In May 2016 on the EURAXESS portal I saw an open position as a Researcher in Microbial Cell Factories at the University of Tartu in Estonia. The job description matched perfectly my field of activity and interests, which led me to look further into Estonia. By doing so I was amazed by its old and rich history, by how fast this country has developed in the last decades, the quality of life here, and by the prestige of this university (top 3% of the world best universities). After that it was easy to accept the position here when it was offered to me.

Jhonny Capichoni Massante: Honestly, I heard about Estonia when I was 12 years old in my school. I have an professional account on Twitter where I saw an opportunity to do a PhD at the University of Tartu. I had never heard about this university; however the topic was very interesting. I researched about the university and was very surprised to find out about its reputation: One of the best universities in the world! Then, I thought: Why not? Everything went okay and here I am now!

Name three characteristics about research work in Estonia or about Estonia in general.

NB: In my opinion the main characteristics of doing research in Estonia are: investments, ambitious goals and the recognition of the importance of a scientist's work.

JCM: As for my experience, here things are super organised. And work well. Estonian people are extremely efficient! Working here is enjoyable! I think that this results from those aspects mentioned above.

A message to anyone who is considering research work with Estonian partners or moving to Estonia for work?

NB: First of all, it is not that cold! Second, I think Estonia is putting a lot of effort into internationalisation and welcoming foreigners, which is much better than building walls. I hope you can join me in this delightful challenge of living and working here.

JCM: Do it! If you have no trouble with the weather and if you like different cultures, then here is a good place to work and live. Also, if you do not intend to move here, I would recommend working with Estonians. You certainly will like the exchange and work experience with them!



At my workplace in the Botanical Garden in Tartu

Jhonny Capichoni Massante

PhD student of Plant Ecology and Ecophysiology, University of Tartu