

Country: Estonia

Committee: UNDP

The main objectives of Goal 8 and Goal 9 are crucial to fulfill the agenda of UN by 2030, the agenda being eradication of poverty in all of its forms. Goal 8 relates to economic growth and ethical working conditions. Goal 9 is related to improve industrialization, form proper infrastructures and facilitate innovations. Estonia has been a part of UN since September 17, 1991.1 Therefore, it is of great interest that Estonia contributes to SDG’s set by UNDP.

In relation to goal 8, Estonia has certain legislations and systems in order to help preserve the ethical working conditions. As an example, regulations on minimum wage used to be made under the Wages Act of 1994. However, with the passage of Palga Alammäära Muutmise Põhimõtete Kohta 2008, minimum wages are now regulated by the government. They publish a new agreement on minimum wages yearly.2

Estonia also has strict regulations to ensure the protection of every worker in the country. These regulations state that work time, wage, duration of holidays, rules of the workplace, and other benefits are required to be listed in the employer’s contract. It is also required that employers must have safety precautions for possible accidents in the workplace. They are required to have health and safety policies in order. All employees are protected from discrimination based on sex, race, age, nationality, color, disability, sexual orientation, religious and other beliefs by The Estonian Employment Contracts Act, Estonian Gender Equality Act and Equal Treatment Act. All employees have certain required employee benefits in Estonia. There are unemployment funds that ensure the employee’s financial stability. 3

In relation to Goal 9, Estonia has certain policies to achieve the objectives made clear in Goal 9. Estonia has made huge improvements on their scientific research domains by increasing their scientific papers released on a year by fourfold. They also made huge additions to their public spendings on science, which were aided by EU funds. Those spendings increased from 80 million euros in 2007 to more than 150 million euros in 2013. 4

Estonia has also spent 122.5 million euros for building rail infrastructures on the country.5 There are certain railroad projects that were announced by Rail Baltica in Estonia. This new infrastructure is meant to connect Estonian and Baltic railroads to the European Rail Network.6

Estonia has also been a permanent member of OECD,7 which runs a program called ODA. This program’s purpose is to form a common budget to support countries that are in the “List of ODA recipients”. This list is rectified every 3 years. At 2021, Estonia has given 0.17 percent of their gross national income8 to said common budget.

REFERENCES:

1) <https://un.mfa.ee/estonia-and-un/estonia-in-the-un/#:~:text=Estonia%20became%20a%20member%20of%20the%20United%20Nations%20on%2017%20September%201991>.

2) <https://wageindicator.org/documents/decentworkcheck/europe/estonia-english.pdf>

3) <https://boundlesshq.com/guides/estonia/employee-rights/>

4) <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-00209-7>

5) <https://www.railtech.com/policy/2021/01/29/estonia-invests-122-5-million-in-railway-in-2021/?gdpr=accept>

6) <https://www.railbaltica.org/rail-baltic-estonia-announced-a-new-tender-for-the-construction-of-the-railway-infrastructure-in-ulemiste/>

7) <https://www.oecd.org/estonia/estoniaandtheoecd.htm#:~:text=Estonia%20became%20a%20member%20country,achieving%20the%20Organisation%27s%20fundamental%20aims>.

8) <https://data.oecd.org/oda/net-oda.htm#indicator-chart>