

Estonian Research International Marketing Strategy 2016–2022

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Estonia is heading towards a knowledge-based society thanks to the constant efforts being made in this very direction. The challenges faced by our society and economy are being brought to our attention more often than ever before. These challenges can be resolved with the help of international research cooperation. Estonian researchers have achieved leading global success in various areas, and their contribution to international cooperation projects is highly valued. In order to increase the impact of Estonian research and to contribute towards economic growth, the process of research, development, and innovation (RDI) should be supported through a process of carefully planned marketing.

The objective of the 'Estonian Research International Marketing Strategy 2016-2022' is to contribute towards the execution of the 'Estonia is active and visible in terms of international RDI cooperation' sub-objective of the Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2014-2020, 'A knowledge-based Estonia' (hereinafter referred to as the RDI strategy).¹

The strategy specifies the objectives for the international marketing of Estonian research and also adds courses of action for 2016-2022 in order to support the internationalisation of Estonian research and, by this means, the competitiveness of our economy. The strategy is being carried out within the framework of the *Research in Estonia* initiative by the Estonian Research Council (hereinafter referred to as the ETAg, *Eesti Teadusagentuur*) in order to contribute to the fulfilment of two indicators,² both of which are contained within the RDI strategy, and indicators in the Mobilitas Pluss programming document which focus on the international marketing of research.³

The strategy was initiated by the ETAg by involving in the process Anu-Mall Naarits, the representative of the Marketing Institute of Estonia. The development of the strategy included Estonian universities (the University of Tartu, the Estonian University of Life Sciences, Tallinn University, Tallinn University of Technology, and the Estonian Academy of Arts), along with the Archimedes Foundation, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the Estonian Academy of Sciences, the Government Office, Enterprise Estonia (hereinafter referred to as EAS), the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Estonian Employers' Confederation, the Estonian Service Industry Association, and the Estonian Convention Bureau.

1 The Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2014-2020, 'A knowledge-based Estonia' is available online: https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/59705_teadmiste-pohine_eesti_est.pdf, [7 April 2016].

2 The indicators are as follows: 1) scientific publications among the top 10% most cited publications worldwide as % of total scientific publications of the country; 2) the success rate of Estonia in EU research and development framework programme Horizon 2020: funding received per capita, % of EU average, where EU average = 100.

3 Conditions for the provision of grants under the 'Internationalisation of research and support for mobility and the next generation' or Mobilitas Pluss programme: <http://www.etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Mobilitas-Pluss-Lisa-1.pdf>, p21 [7 April 2016].

1. The current situation

Estonian research is becoming increasingly more international, and researchers are becoming increasingly more mobile. The report by the research and innovation policy monitoring programme which was entitled 'The mobility of researchers connected to Estonia in the European Research Area' (2015), sets out an improved mutual understanding and a faster spread of knowledge, faster actuation of innovation and technological achievements, harmonisation with and the improvement of the quality of academic activities, and a more diverse personal and cultural development of researchers as the objectives of internationalisation.⁴

During recent years, the number both of international doctoral students and international researchers has significantly increased in Estonian higher education and research institutions: the number of international doctoral students increased from 52 in 2005 to 339 in 2015 (see Annexe 1). The number of international researchers employed in Estonia has multiplied, increasing from 62 in 2005 to 426 in 2014 (see Annexe 2). The increasing internationalisation of research is also accentuated by publications that have been issued in cooperation with foreign colleagues. During 2007-2011, the weight of publications and patents which were published by Estonian researchers in cooperation with foreign researchers was at 47.3% and 34.7%, respectively. During 2003-2012, 12.8% of total scientific publications of Estonia were among the top 10% most cited publications worldwide; 5.4% of those included an Estonian research institution as the first author and 7.4% an Estonian researcher employed by a foreign institution.⁵ The volume of foreign sources in funding Estonian research and development (R&D) has increased,⁶ with 33.7 million of the total volume of 328.2 million in 2013 originating from foreign sources. In 2010, the amount decreased by 7.1 million.⁷

Researchers want to work in strong research groups with a good reputation where international cooperation and mobility are inherent parts of the work. Thus, initiatives that help Estonian research stand out from its competition by presenting it as attractive and versatile help to achieve this goal. In addition to *Research in Estonia* - the central initiative marketing Estonian research - other organisations and networks have also marketed Estonian research on an international scale (Estonian universities, the Estonian Academy of Sciences, the Estonian EURAXESS network and the initiative of the European Commission, the EAS, the Estonian Convention Bureau, etc). *Research in Estonia* will increase cooperation with all of these institutions, with the aim of improving the productivity of all of those activities that are being implemented.

4 The mobility of researchers connected to Estonia in the European Research Area: <http://www.tips.ut.ee/index.php?module=32&op=1&id=3691>, pp13-14 [31 March 2016].

5 Overview of the OECD Research, Technology, and Industry-Related Reports 2014-2015: http://www.etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/OECD-STI-2014-report_030316.pdf, p5 [31 March 2016].

6 This includes funding from the public and private sectors, structural aid, and foreign sources.

7 Funding for research and development in Estonia: <http://www.etag.ee/tegevused/uuringud-ja-statistika/statistika/teadus-ja-arendustegevuse-rahastamine-eestis/>. [31 March 2016].

2. An overview of the international marketing of Estonian research during 2012-2015

The ETAg has been in charge of international marketing activities for Estonian research from 2012. The first stage of the process included the 'Development of the framework for the international marketing of Estonian research and the opening of an RDI liaison office in Brussels' (ETRA) project, for the 'Research internationalisation' programme of the Ministry of Education and Research. The project focused on opening an RDI liaison office in Brussels and developing a framework in cooperation with research and development stakeholders for the international marketing of Estonian research, a suitable visual identity, an internet portal and social media channels. As a result, the *Research in Estonia* brand was created, forming part of the *Welcome to Estonia* brand that markets Estonia as a whole. The ETRA project was in force until 31 August 2015. The ETAg continued the coordination of marketing activities that had been developed under the *Research in Estonia* brand within the *Mobilitas Plus* programme. The *Research in Estonia* initiative was the first knowingly to introduce success stories about Estonian research as a single brand, thereby laying the foundation for the most successful international marketing process of our research so far.


During 2012-2015, the research marketing activities which were conducted under the *Research in Estonia* brand were aimed at two target groups: international researchers and the international public. The main aim was to market Estonia as a reliable research country and a good place where to conduct research. Representatives of universities and research institutions were involved in forwarding this message. As an important advisory unit, a *Research in Estonia* working group was combined, comprising of representatives from universities as well as representatives of the Archimedes Foundation (the *Study in Estonia* initiative),⁸ the EAS, the Ministry of Education and Research, and other partners.

The following activities can be presented as being results of the cooperation process.

The *Research in Estonia* website (www.researchinestonia.eu) was developed to function as a base that has a collection of research information as well as success stories relating to Estonian research. Researchers wishing to advance their career are also able to use the website for acquiring more information from other pages (*EURAXESS*, *Work in Estonia*, *Study in Estonia*, etc). The majority of those visiting the website have been directed to the site from other pages that also aim to market Estonia. The site introduces research areas, while providing an overview of research institutions and financing, and also publishes research news through the Estonian Public Broadcasting (hereinafter referred to as the ERR), and original articles by *Research in Estonia*.

The *Research in Estonia* social media channels were created, consisting of the following: a Facebook page (630 people joined as of 28 March 2016); a Twitter account (247 followers as of 28 March 2016); and a YouTube channel for the 'Estonia - a place for science' marketing video on Estonian research (230,052 views as of 31 March 2016). Facebook posts generally cover Estonian research achievements and events as well as news from cooperation partners. The page is directed at international researchers. Twitter posts on Estonian research achievements and events are aimed primarily at sectoral organisations and foreign journalists.

⁸ *Study in Estonia* is a brand which is involved in international higher education marketing activities. The activities are implemented under the Archimedes Foundation's Dora+ Activity 4.



Estonian research was introduced at various international events: *the EuroScience Open Forum* (2014), *the European Association of Research Managers and Administrators* (2014), *Science and You* (2015), and *EXPO Milano* (2015).

Three visits were organised for international research journalists in order to introduce Estonian research to them. More than thirty journalists in total have been brought to Estonia and forty articles have been written based on those visits.

Nineteen visits to research institutions were organised for international students who were studying in Estonia, with the aim of introducing the local research environment and the work of Estonian researchers. Fourteen seminars introducing Estonian research and development were organised in Brussels.

The *Research in Estonia* working group was created, which includes representatives of universities, the Archimedes Foundation (the *Study in Estonia* initiative), the EAS, the Ministry of Education and Research, and other partners. The working group organises and implements activities which have a focus on the international marketing of Estonian research through regular meetings and by approving the annual activity plans of *Research in Estonia*.

The RDI liaison office in Brussels, opened at the end of March 2012, has played an important role in the international marketing of Estonian research. The office manages the introducing of Estonian research and development in Brussels, while also participating in the activities of fellow R&D offices which are located in Brussels, supporting Estonian research and development institutions when it comes to organising events, and offering training opportunities in Brussels.

3. The relation between research internationalisation activities and other strategies

The internationalisation of research has been regarded as an important objective in several strategic periods and is one of the four RDI objectives for 2020. Estonia has to be active and visible when it comes to international RDI cooperation. The RDI strategy states that achievements by Estonian research should be marketed internationally on a larger scale. It goes on to add that Estonia should participate in cooperation projects and fulfil high-tech orders through the process of international cooperation.

In order to implement the strategy, the Mobilitas Plus programme was launched with the help of EU Structural Funds; in addition to and in cooperation with other activities the programme is aimed at the purposeful international marketing of Estonian research. The focus is on uniting the activities of *Research in Estonia* and *Study in Estonia* and on cooperating with the business sector. Research should be marketed through a process of mutual cooperation and as an essential part of a wider strategy to market Estonia to foreign countries in order to shape the reputation of Estonia as a research country that is focused on knowledge and selected 'smart' areas.

The objectives behind the international marketing of Estonian research have been specified in the document 'Priority activities of the internationalisation of Estonian higher education and research 2013-2020',⁹ with the focus being placed on the great reputation (in terms of attractiveness) of Estonian higher education and research in chosen areas and an increase in the influence and reputation of Estonia as a knowledge-oriented small country.

In addition to the RDI strategy, the attainment of this strategy's objectives are supported by the following strategies, development plans, and measures: the Internationalisation Strategy of Estonian Higher Education for 2015-2020,¹⁰ Estonia 2020,¹¹ Talents to Estonia,¹² and Mobilitas Plus.¹³ The strategy objectives and the planning of its activities have also been based on the analysis of 'smart' specialisation,¹⁴ the final report from the knowledge-based economy study which was conducted in 2012,¹⁵ and the EU *Member States Innovation Performance 2015*.¹⁶ In order to collect further necessary data to compile the strategy, OÜ Turundusproff conducted a poll amongst international researchers so that it could understand the reasons behind their relocation to Estonia for research purposes, and what the pros and cons of working here might be.

9 Priority activities of the internationalisation of the Estonian higher education and research 2013-2020: https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/rvl_prioriteetsed_tegevused_2013-2020_51112.pdf, [28 March 2016].

10 Estonian Higher Education Internationalisation Strategy for 2015-2020: <http://archimedes.ee/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Kõrghariduse-rahvusvahelise-tutvustamise-strateegia.pdf>, [28 March 2016].

11 The competitiveness agenda, 'Estonia 2020': http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/pdf/nrp/nrp_estonia_et.pdf, [28 March 2016].

12 *Work in Estonia* - an activity plan for the inclusion of foreign specialists 2015-2016: http://www.koda.ee/public/WIE_tegevuskava.pdf, [28 March 2016].

13 Conditions for the provision of grants under the 'Internationalisation of research and support for mobility and the next generation' or Mobilitas Plus programme: <http://www.etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Mobilitas-Plus-Lisa-1.pdf>, p21 [28 March 2016].

14 Smart Specialisation Sectoral reports: <http://www.arengufond.ee/nutikas-spetsialiseerumine/tutvustus/>, [28 March 2016].

15 The 'Backing up approach to the knowledge-based economy: The manpower requirement of Estonian high- and medium technology industries' advisory service within the development work by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications of the Republic of Estonia: https://www.mkm.ee/sites/default/files/teadmistep_hise_majanduse_uuringu_l_ppraport.pdf, [28 March 2016].

16 Innovation Union Scoreboard 2015, http://ec.europa.eu/growth/industry/innovation/facts-figures/scoreboards/files/iuis-2015_en.pdf [28 March 2016].



4. Vision

By 2022 Estonia will be internationally known as a strong research country which is open to innovation.

The international marketing of research will support the internationalisation of Estonian research and an increase in the competitiveness of the Estonian economy. By 2022 **the international awareness of Estonian research and the attractiveness of Estonian researchers and research institutions as cooperation partners will have increased.**

5. Development objectives for the international marketing of research

The development objectives which have been set out in order to achieve the vision are as follows:

1. Estonia has a global reputation of an attractive research country that is supported by successful and constant cooperation between initiatives and organisations that aim to introduce Estonia;
2. Information on Estonian research is up-to-date and available for interested foreign parties;
3. The awareness has increased for international businesses which operate in the smart specialisation growth areas when it comes to Estonian RDI achievements and success stories of cooperation between enterprises and researchers.

6. Attaining objectives

The current strategy contributes towards the attainment of the following indicators for the first and fourth sub-objectives of the RDI strategy.¹⁷

Scientific publications among the top 10% most cited publications worldwide as % of total scientific publications of the country (with the objective being 11% by 2020).

The success rate of Estonia in EU research and development framework programme Horizon 2020 is reflected in funding received per capita (with the objective of 100% of the EU average by 2020).

In addition, within the Mobilitas Plus programme, *Research in Estonia* will continue the execution of marketing activity indicators and will organise twelve marketing events by 2018 and 23 marketing events by 2023.¹⁸

Three courses of action listed below support an increase in the international visibility of Estonian research and the shaping of our reputation, while also expanding cooperation networks and information channels, and introducing smart specialisation growth areas.

6. 1. Course of Action No 1: shaping the reputation of Estonian research and increasing international visibility

The objective behind this course of action is to shape the internationally good reputation of Estonian research and increase the visibility and awareness of local research and development. For this purpose, Estonian research achievements, researchers, and the research environment will be marketed on an international scale. Those activities will be united under the *Research in Estonia* brand, which itself is consistent with the brand of Estonia.

The activities behind marketing Estonian research on an international scale will focus 70% of their scope on smart specialisation growth areas and 30% of their scope on other research areas.

¹⁷ Estonian Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2014-2020: 'Knowledge-based Estonia': https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/59705_teadmistepohine_eesti_est.pdf, [7 April 2016].

¹⁸ Conditions for the provision of grants under the 'Internationalisation of research and support for mobility and the next generation' or Mobilitas Plus programme: <http://www.etag.ee/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Mobilitas-Plus-Lisa-1.pdf>, p21 [7 April 2016].

6.1.1. Presenting research-related success stories in media channels

A great deal of emphasis will be placed on introducing Estonian researcher through different media outlets which have an international audience (eg. the *Life in Estonia* magazine) by supporting awareness of research brand personas and increasing the influence of such researchers.

Publishing research-related success stories will be continued in the English news portal of ERR and the channels of *Research in Estonia*.

6.1.2. Organising visits which serve to market research

Visits to research institutions will be organised for various target groups, eg. foreign journalists and students, entrepreneurs interested in investing, international educators, etc, to introduce to them the excellence and diversity of Estonian research and researchers.

Visits will be organised in cooperation with other institutions and initiatives (universities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government Office, the EAS, *Study in Estonia*, the *Erasmus Student Network*, etc) where such initiatives also offer study or field-trip visits to Estonia.

6.1.3. Participating in fairs and international events

Estonian research will be introduced at international events, eg. events introducing Estonia which take place in other countries, at science fairs and conferences, or in business fairs, informational events, etc. In addition, events that cover Estonian research and development will also be organised in cooperation with the Brussels office, with these primarily being aimed at foreign research administrators and politicians.

6.1.4. Compiling informational materials which introduce Estonian research

Collected and target group-based informational materials, eg. materials on the Estonian research system, research infrastructure, and smart specialisation growth areas, serve as helpful means of marketing research.


Materials such as presentation slides, fair box designs, videos, a photo bank, etc, will be compiled in order to support the marketing of Estonian research and facilitate partners in their activities when it comes to highlighting Estonian research.

6.1.5. Making available materials that introduce Estonian research

The main channel that introduces Estonian research to an international audience is the *Research in Estonia* website, Research-inestonia.eu, which combines various information-based materials that introduce Estonian research in the English language to make these easily readable and downloadable.

Work on developing the website will continue in order to meet the needs of its users and facilitate the spread of information.

Informational booklets, other printed work, and links to electronic materials will be sent out to universities and other research institutions, Estonian foreign representations, sectoral ministries, and partners who will be able to use these in their marketing activities, according to their needs.



6.2. Course of Action No 2: expanding and strengthening cooperation and diversifying channels of information dissemination

The objective of this course of action is to significantly expand and develop a strategic partnership with institutions and organisations that purposefully shape Estonia's reputation and visibility so that Estonia will be able to enjoy an international image of a research country. Cooperation will enable more efficient and effective organisation of marketing activities. The main partners include *Study in Estonia*, universities, the Estonian Academy of Sciences, research institutions, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the EAS, the Estonian Convention Bureau, and Estonian journalists.

6.2.1. Strengthening cooperation with current partners

Representatives of university research development departments and communication units will be closely involved in those *Research in Estonia* activities that focus on marketing Estonian research. The majority of them belong to the *Research in Estonia* working group which meets on a regular basis to organise and implement marketing activities.

Annual joint activity plans will be compiled that will serve to strengthen cooperation with the *Study in Estonia* (Archimedes Foundation) initiative which focuses on the international marketing of higher education. The aim is the mutual support of activities and creating joint initiatives that will better achieve international visibility in research areas and higher education through joint marketing activities.

6.2.2. Initiating and sustaining cooperation with new partners

Implementing activities will include cooperation with institutions and initiatives which serve to market Estonia, eg. the EAS, the Archimedes Foundation, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Government Office, and the Estonian Convention Bureau.

In order to coordinate activities, the participants will be included in the *Research in Estonia* working group network which is coordinated by the *Research in Estonia* initiative of the ETAg. Annual actions plans and results of the implemented activities will be analysed by the working group during joint discussions.

6.2.3. Participating in international networks and establishing new networks

In order to remain up-to-date with best practise when it comes to marketing research and to strengthen the *Research in Estonia* brand which markets Estonian research, participation in international networks will be included.

The concept of Estonian research ambassadors will be developed in cooperation with partners. This will lay the foundation for a network of ambassadors and keep the network running. Its participants will be provided with necessary information and materials to market Estonian research when possible.

6.2.4. Diversifying channels for disseminating information

Articles which introduce research will be published in Estonian marketing publications (e.g. *Life in Estonia*) and websites (eg. *www.estonia.eu* and *www.estonianworld.com*).

Research news will be forwarded to embassies (both to foreign embassies in Estonia and to Estonian embassies), and to foreign representatives of the EAS.

6.3. Course of Action No 3: Introducing Estonian smart specialisation growth areas

The aim of the course of action is to increase the visibility of research and development in the smart specialisation growth areas, and increase the awareness of foreign enterprises which are operating in these areas regarding the achievements of Estonian RDI, success stories of cooperation between businesses and researchers, the opportunities available in terms of open cooperation and research infrastructure. The objectives contribute to the general aim of the Mobilitas Plus programme in terms of strengthening the international competitiveness of Estonian researchers, research institutions, and businesses.

The smart specialisation growth areas are as follows:¹⁹

1. Information and communications technology (ICT) horizontally, through other sectors.
2. Health technologies and services.
3. More effective use of resources.


6.3.1. Introducing smart specialisation growth areas at fairs and during foreign stakeholders' visits

In order to attract foreign investments that will create more added value, the shaping of Estonia's international reputation will be executed in cooperation with the EAS; the cooperation will include, as its essential area, research and knowledge-intensive entrepreneurship.

In cooperation with the EAS and other partners, visits by foreign investors and foreign entrepreneurs to research institutions will be organised to demonstrate the high level of the Estonian research infrastructure, as well as options available when it comes to cooperating with Estonian researchers and research institutions.

Participation as partners in business sector fairs for growth areas will be included in order to introduce to potential investors the achievements, infrastructure, and services that are Estonian research and cooperation options.

¹⁹ RDI strategy 2014-2020: https://www.hm.ee/sites/default/files/59705_teadmistepohine_eesti_est.pdf, p17 [4 April 2016].



6.3.2. Compiling information materials on RDI activities in growth areas

Information materials (brochures, presentations, etc) which introduce smart specialisation growth areas based on their target groups (foreign researchers and investors) will be compiled by highlighting success stories in each area. A photo bank and other visual tools will be created which will serve to illustrate our research environment.

6.3.3. Distributing information materials on RDI activities in growth areas

All materials on growth areas will be digitally collected on the Researchinestonia.eu website. The structure of the website will be developed to highlight information and ensure its convenient availability.

First and foremost, printed work will be forwarded to the EAS, university business departments, sectoral ministries, and other partners who will be able to use these in their marketing activities, as required.

7. Strategy implementation

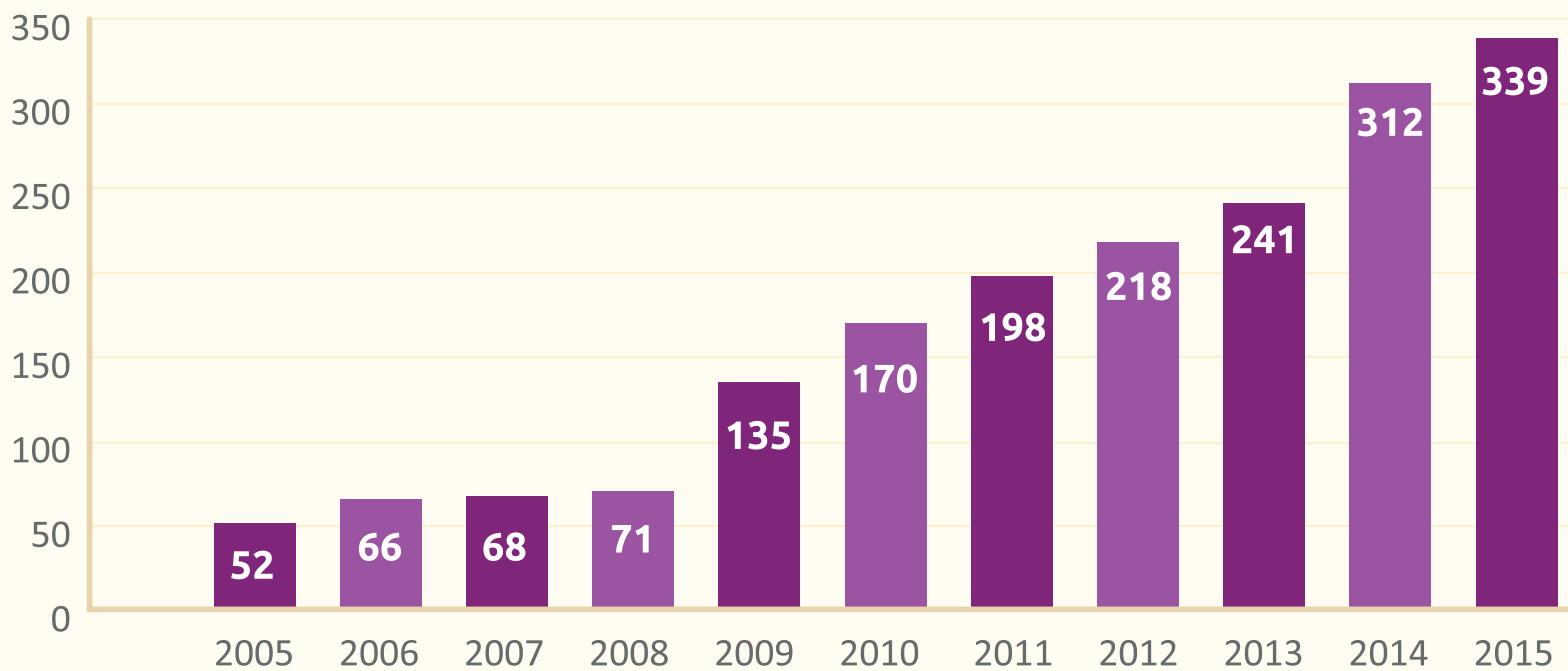
The implementation of the strategy is being coordinated by the ETAg, and the strategy is also being carried out by them, primarily through the *Research in Estonia* initiative. The majority of the measures will be financed by the European Regional Development Fund from the sub-measure 'Internationalisation of research and support for mobility and the next generation, Mobilitas Pluss programme'. The strategy will be implemented in cooperation with research institutions, ministries, the business sector, the EAS, *Study in Estonia*, and other partners.

The most important activities which are related to the strategy objectives will be specified together with fiscal indicators in the *Research in Estonia* annual activity plan; compiling the activity plan and the planning and assessment of its activities will include the *Research in Estonia* working group as an advisory body.

The implementation of the strategy will be assessed in 2018. For this purpose, an independent assessment will be ordered so that it can evaluate whether appropriate measures have been implemented in terms of attaining the objectives that have been set out. If necessary, propositions for the adaptation of activities will be presented.

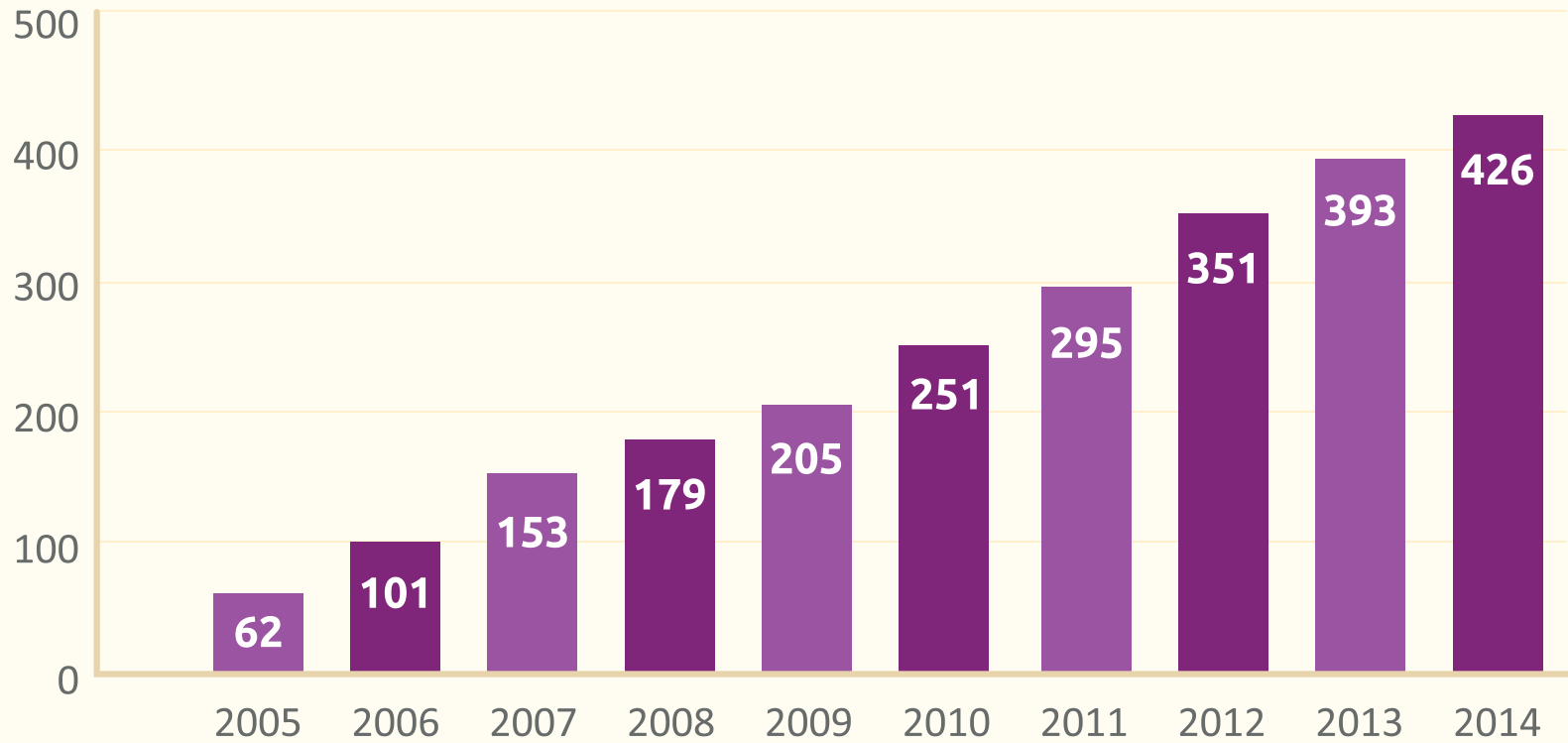
'Estonian Research International Marketing Strategy 2016-2022' was approved by the Advisory Board for Internationalisation of Estonian Higher Education and Research on 31. October 2016.

The number of international doctoral students studying in Estonia over the years

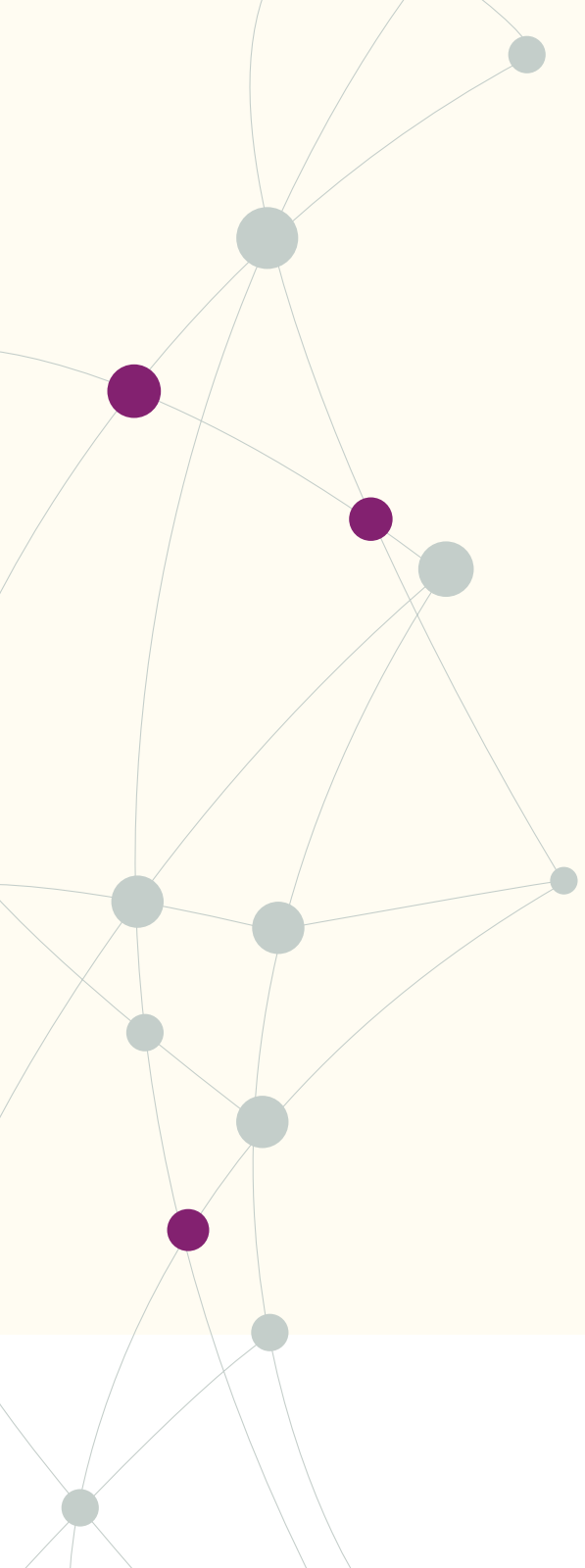


Source: Haridussilm

The number of international researchers in institutional non-profit sectors over the years



Source: Statistics Estonia



Eesti Teadusagentuur
Estonian Research Council



European Union
European Regional
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