



ESTONIA'S COOPERATION WITH AFRICAN COUNTRIES

- Estonia's cooperation with Africa aims at strengthening bilateral and multilateral relations based on shared values, interests and **equal partnership**. The main objectives of this cooperation are to increase the security, prosperity and stability of the African continent, strengthen business relations and support global sustainable development.
- Estonia's renewed engagement with Africa is in line with the EU's vision of the **future EU-Africa partnership**, the African Union Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.
- Estonia has adopted **a comprehensive strategy** for engaging with Africa for the 2020-2030 period and an action plan for 2021-2025. The action plan lists, among other areas, the key priorities for (1) foreign and security policy, (2) economic relations, (3) development cooperation and humanitarian aid.
- Estonia has developed a **regional approach** for engaging with Africa with the ambitious goal of meeting the challenges of the 21st century together. The regional approach to Africa had its start in North Africa with the establishment of Estonia's first embassy in Cairo and appointment of non-resident Ambassadors to Morocco, Tunisia and Algeria. According to the strategy, wider cooperation objectives are also set for Eastern, Southern and Western Africa with a heightened focus on **Kenya, Namibia and Mali**. Deepening cooperation with the African Union remains of high importance.
- **Digital transformation**, e-governance, innovation and green transition are of particular importance to Estonia, as is supporting the European Union's **Team Europe** approach in response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and broader cooperation between member states. Estonia is **one of the founding members of the Digital for Development (D4D) Hub** and therefore at the forefront of promoting new international partnerships on the digital transformation in Africa.

1. Foreign and security policy

Estonia has considerably expanded its collaboration with African countries and organisations in the past decade. As a member of the EU, Estonia is part of the Union for the Mediterranean, which brings the two shores of the Mediterranean closer together.

With its fellow EU countries, Estonia contributes to the operation EUNAVFOR MED IRINI, which oversees the implementation of the UN arms embargo on Libya. In 2020-2021, Estonia is an elected **member of the UN Security Council**, which puts the country at the forefront of solving global problems and managing conflicts. Estonia is actively cooperating with African countries on key topics such as human rights, women's empowerment and access to education within different UN committees.



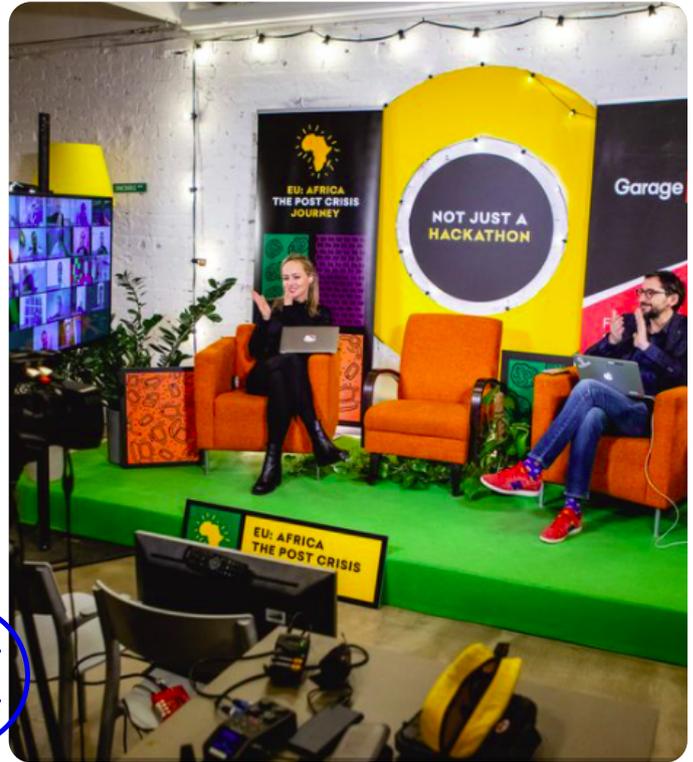
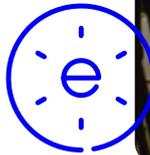
For Estonia, stability in the Sahel region is a key priority as it has a direct impact on the security of Europe. Estonia will continue contributing to the fight against terrorism with an infantry platoon in the French-led Operation Barkhane and with a Special Forces unit in the Taskforce Takuba in Mali. Estonia also participates with staff officers in the UN peacekeeping mission MINUSMA and the EU training mission EUTM Mali.



2. Economic cooperation

One of Estonia's priorities in its engagement with the African countries and key organisations is the development of the **African digital single market**. Estonia is well-positioned for sharing its experience in the areas of **e-governance** and e-services, the interest toward which has steadily increased from the African side. Digital cooperation has been formalised with the African Union, Smart Africa, EASTECO and several African countries.

Estonia's **global digital businesses** and start-ups, such as Bolt, Erply, Pipedrive and Transferwise, are active in or expanding to the African market, contributing to better livelihoods and increased business opportunities in Africa. Estonian e-Governance Academy, a non-profit think tank and consultancy organisation, has shared expertise and best practices with numerous African countries in the areas of digital transformation, e-governance, e-democracy and cyber security. The Estonian ICT Cluster has provided workshops and implemented e-governance technologies in several African countries, including Kenya, Namibia, Rwanda, Benin, Botswana, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Tanzania and Tunisia.



In December 2020, Estonia and the African Union co-hosted the EU: Africa - The Post Crisis Journey online hackathon, with the support of several partners. 315 teams from Africa and Europe worked on developing digital solutions to the most acute socio-economic problems in Africa, further amplified by the COVID-19 crisis. The winning solution, developed by a team from Uganda, will help many young girls and women in the future.

3. Development cooperation and humanitarian aid

In development cooperation, Estonia is committed to achieving the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as well as supporting education and creating new job opportunities together with African partners. Key areas of cooperation include **good governance, education, healthcare**, support for **entrepreneurship** and **innovation**. Estonia prioritises digital transformation and green transition as crosscutting areas and therefore appointed a permanent representative to the UN Environment Programme in Nairobi, Kenya in 2020. Estonia pays special attention to the rights of women and children in all its programmes and projects.

Estonia is actively working with partners in African countries to promote **cyber resilience** in the continent.

For example, by participating in the EU's Cyber Resilience for Development (Cyber-4Dev) project.



In humanitarian aid, Estonia regularly supports the operations of the United Na-

tions agencies and Red Cross / Red Crescent Family. Estonian civil society organisations such as Mondo are actively working with their African partners, carrying out longer-term development projects and providing **humanitarian assistance**. Estonia offers support to refugees; its activities include providing opportunities to increase their digital skills and competencies.



Estonia is a founding member of the Digital4Development (D4D) Hub together with Germany, France, Belgium and Luxembourg. Launched by the European Commission in December 2020, the AU-EU D4D Hub will operate as a strategic tool for advancing multistakeholder dialogue, joint partnerships and investments in the African digital economy.