



OUTCAN Info Sheet 2020

Tartu, Estonia

LOCATION

Country: Estonia

Town: Tartu, 2nd largest city after Tallinn.

Entry/Exit requirements: Duty: Green Passport, NATO Travel orders (NTO).

- Every citizen and resident must have an ID card from the Estonian Government.
- Baltic Defence College (BALTDEFCOL) Administrative staff will make the necessary arrangements for members and their dependents to obtain ID cards once the family arrives on posting. This cannot be completed on HHT.

Other info to Consider:

- Family (non-dependants) can visit and stay 90 days **without visa** (Schengen Area).

POPULATION

Size: just under 100,000.

Ethnicity: 52% Estonian, 37% Russia, 3% Ukrainian and rest other eastern European mostly.

LANGUAGE(S)

Official language: Estonian.

Prevalence of French or English speaking: Very limited. Some will speak as second or third language, but limited. Half of citizens speak Estonian as their native language, while 46.7% speak Russian. Other languages spoken in Tallinn are Finnish, Belarusian and Ukrainian.

COST OF LIVING

Exchange rate to consider: Euro

QUALITY OF LIFE

Climate and potential for severe weather, natural disasters:

- Estonia experiences cold winters and heavy snowfall in cities and rural areas between November and March.

Laws and Culture:

- Penalties for possession, use or trafficking of illegal drugs are severe. Convicted offenders can expect jail sentences or heavy fines.
- Penalties for drinking and driving are severe. The legal blood alcohol limit is zero. If a police officer suspects you of drinking and driving, they could confiscate your driver's license on the spot. If you're convicted, you can expect heavy fines and possible jail time.
- In the event of an accident, you must contact police to file an official report.
- You must carry an international driving permit and a valid Canadian driver's licence to drive in Estonia.
- Pedestrians must wear small reflectors from dusk until dawn, could be fined for failure to wear a reflector, particularly if an accident occurs.

Safety and Security:

- Petty crime such as pickpocketing and purse snatching occurs during the summer tourist season. They target tourists in airports, train stations and other public areas.
- Theft of vehicles or their contents is common.
- Harassment of individuals sometimes occurs for reasons of race or foreign-looking appearance.

Level of isolation:

- This post is considered remote, and has limited access to French and English; risk of feeling isolated is high.

HOUSING

- No military quarters available, housing will be on the economy.
- Using a local real estate agency is recommended, especially to avoid misunderstandings with lease, language barrier.

EMPLOYMENT

Are there employment opportunities for spouses? There are very limited employment opportunities available through CFMWS, so families should plan to be single income for the duration of the posting.

- Limited, language barrier.

Op Tempo: The op tempo will vary greatly depending on position. TD is possible.

HEALTH CARE

Access: Health care is excellent in Tallinn and Tartu, and comparable to Canadian standards.

- Quality of care varies greatly throughout the country.
- Doctors and hospitals expect travel insurance or payment for health services. Credit cards and money transfers are widely accepted. Cash payments are accepted, but rarely expected.
- English speaking personnel limited but available.
- Prescriptions written by local providers can be filled on the economy.
- The pharmacy in GK stocks a variety of medications and may be able to provide assistance with obtaining prescription drugs that are not available in Tartu.
- In addition to the core Canadian vaccinations, it is recommended that personnel receive the Tick Borne Encephalitis vaccine. It is endemic throughout Estonia, and has been found in parks within the city as well.

Special needs: extremely limited in English or French.

Consideration for pregnancy / birth: Health care for pregnancy and birth is available on the economy.

Dental: Dental care can be accessed in town. You are required to pay up front, and you can then claim your expenses.

SCHOOLING

- Schooling is typically at the Tartu International School (IB) for grades K-9.
- No compatible education options at post beyond grade 9
- There are no French language schools indicated for this posting.
- Should consider distance to International school when selecting a residence, catchment area and pick-up points for school bus or public transport.
- It is highly recommended that parents visit the school during HHT in order to view the facilities and introduce themselves to the staff.
- In order for their children to be placed, parents must bring the most current report card or transcripts
- No French education currently available in Tartu.

Curriculum vs. Canadian curriculum:

- The curriculum varies depending on choice of school.
- None of them offers Canadian history or geography at the elementary level.

Resources for special need children: Access is depending on language required (English/French), area of specialization and degree of support needed, it may be very limited.

CHILDCARE

Things to Consider:

- Local municipal daycares start at 18 months old (as Estonians have one of the most generous maternity/parental benefits in the world) and up to three years old.
- Very few will provide childcare in English nor French.

TRANSPORTATION

Things to Consider:

- The Tartu Airport (TAY) is small and is only serviced by Finnair Airlines via Helsinki making duty travel in and out restrictive.
- While air travel is restrictive, travel by road and rail is possible. Most travellers choose to travel to Tallinn by bus or train and then fly to other destinations.
- Buses constitute the only form of public transport within the City of Tartu. There are 15 bus routes in the city.

RESOURCES AND AMENITIES

Is there a Military Family Services centre available in that location?

- No, under MFS(E) Riga & Remote.

Psychosocial / Mental Health Resources:

- Not at post, MFS(E) SW for dependants only, CAF SW/Mental Health Team for member and family are located in Geilenkirchen, Germany. Padre is located in the UK.

Communications (e.g. Quality of Internet connection): Quality of internet connection is depending on location and can vary. Reasonably priced.

ACTIVITIES

Access to sports or other leisure activities: There are gym facilities (e.g. weight room, gym floor, exercise equipment) located at the BALTDEFCOL facility at no cost to members or families.

- There are plenty of recreational activities and venues available. Limited in English or French

Availability of playgrounds: Yes.

RESTRICTIONS TO CONSIDER

Are common law relationships recognized? Yes. A registered partnership offers many of the same rights as marriage except in the areas of taxation and adoption.

Are same sex couples recognized? Yes. Estonian law prohibits discrimination based on gender and sexual orientation. However, LGBTQ2 travellers should consider exercising caution, especially in smaller towns, when visiting Estonia.

Medications that are illegal in the country: use without a prescription of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances is illegal.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- **European Commission Country Reports (2019)**
https://ec.europa.eu/info/publications/2019-european-semester-country-reports_en
- **Canadian Travel Advisories**
<https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories>
- **CIA World Factbooks (One Pagers from US)**
<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/pl.html>
- **Living Abroad (from Gov.UK)**
<https://www.gov.uk/topic/help-british-nationals-overseas/europe>
- **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**
<https://data.imf.org/?sk=4FFB52B2-3653-409A-B471-D47B46D904B5>

For more comprehensive information, please feel free to reach out to the resources below;

- MFS(E) Social Worker : Chebat.Myriam@cfmws.com or Myriam.Chebat@Forces.gc.ca
- CAF Social Worker: Martin.Laferrieresimard@forces.gc.ca
- MFS(E) Riga Remote: + 371 231 16 869, MFSE.Rigaremote@cfmws.com
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