

COUNTRY: ESTONIA

FACTS:

Area: 45.339 km²

Population: 1.328.360

Government: Parliamentary republic

Language: Estonian

Religion: There is no state religion in Estonia, and many of the people are either nonreligious or atheist. The Christian majority includes a large slice of unaffiliated Christians, along with significant Evangelical Lutheran and Eastern Orthodox communities, as well as lesser numbers of Baptists, Methodists, and Roman Catholics.

Currency: Euro (EUR)

Time difference from CET: +2

Climate: The climate of Estonia is marked by cold winters and fairly warm summers

Capital: Tallinn

National Day: Independence Day (February 24), Restoration Independence Day (August 20)

TIME:

HOLIDAYS AND VACATION:

- New Year's Day (January 1)
- Independence Day, anniversary of the Republic of Estonia (February 24)
- Good Friday (April)
- Easter Sunday (Second Tuesday of April)
- Spring Day (May 1)
- Pentecost (May 31)
- Victory Day (June 23)
- Midsummer Day (June 24)
- Day of Restoration of Independence (August 20)
- Christmas Eve (December 24)
- Christmas Day (December 25)
- Boxing Day (December 26)

Vacations per year is 28 calendar days, mostly 2 weeks of vacation is planned in the middle of July.

OFFICE HOURS:

Business hours are mainly 8:30/9:00-17:00/18:00. Estonians work even during the weekends, vacations and after office hours.

MANNERS AND CUSTOMS:

COURTESY:

First handshake, greetings can come across as rather formal and rather reserved.

Men should initiate greetings with women and the younger person always greets the older person. When meeting someone make sure you are stood up, offer direct eye contact and give a nice firm handshake. The most common greeting is *tere* (hello).

DRESS:

In Estonia there are four distinct seasons. This should be taken into account when planning what to wear. Workwear smart casual, Fridays are more like casual.

BODY LANGUAGE:

Estonians are quite formal. Tend to speak softly and do not like to draw attention to themselves. Being rational, calm and not going to emotional extremes are all qualities that respected. At first Estonians can come across as aloof. Once a relationship warms up this becomes less so.

NEGOTIATION:

BUSINESS MEETING:

Estonians are prepared for hard work, and are concerned with accuracy, detail and deadlines. Estonians mean what they say and do what they say they will do. Estonians are somewhat pragmatic and reserved, especially in the early stages of developing a business relationship. Estonians are not emotive speakers.

NEGOTIATION SKILLS:

Estonians mean what they say and do what they say they will do. They expect foreign businesspeople to keep their word. Failing to do so can cause irreparable harm to a business relationship. They are generally polite and courteous speakers. Estonians are somewhat pragmatic and reserved, especially in the early stages of developing a business relationship. Estonians are not emotive speakers. If you are from a culture where hand gestures are robust, you may wish to moderate them to conform to local practices. Soft voices

are the norm. If you have a booming voice, you may wish to moderate it when conducting business with Estonians. Estonians do not always respond to what has been said, especially if they are uncomfortable with the subject or if they need more time to organize their thoughts. Although they are direct communicators, Estonians temper their directness in order to protect the feelings of all concerned. They are slow to pay compliments and may become suspicious of compliments offered too readily and without sufficient reason. Passive silence is very much part of the communication style. Estonians are not fond of conversational overlap and will not think highly of someone who interrupts them while they are speaking. Estonians value their good reputations. Therefore, be careful not to criticize or embarrass anyone publicly.

GIFTS:

In Estonia formal gifts are more and more regulated in the internal code of conduct.

REPRESENTATION:

AT A RESTAURANT:

Dinner is the most common, lunch is the second common get together. Breakfast is not often used for business meetings.

IN THE HOME:

Estonians are getting more and more used to host an event in their homes. Usually it is gathering of a good friends.

OTHER:

COUNTRY AND PEOPLE:

Estonia is small, we do not have major differences in different part of Estonia.