



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA  
MINISTRY OF FINANCE

# Green paper on Estonian spatial planning

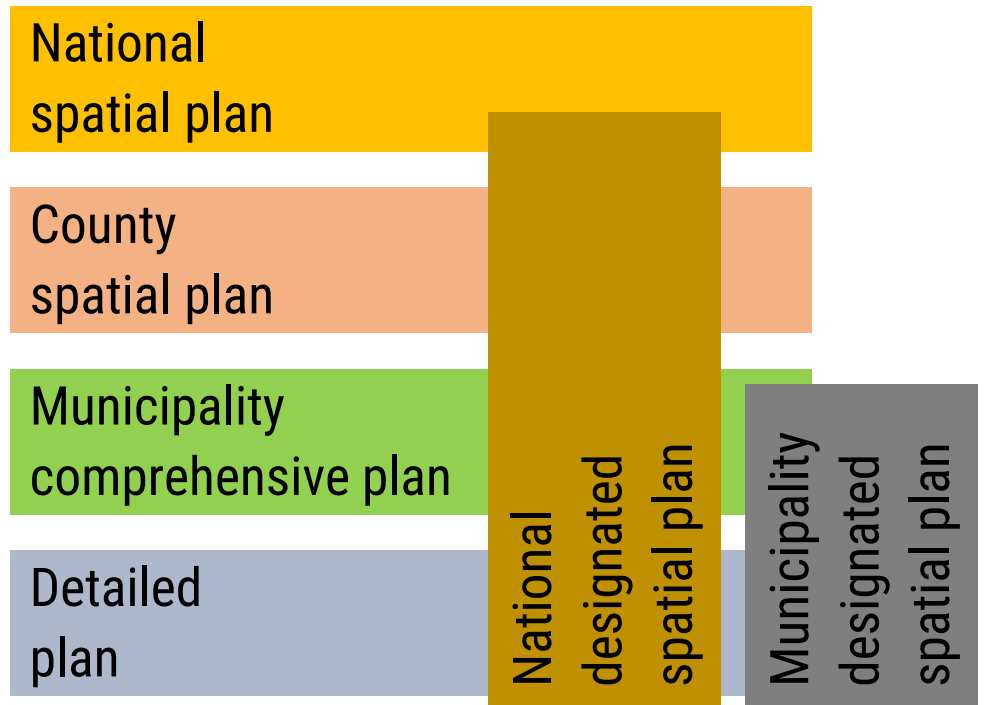
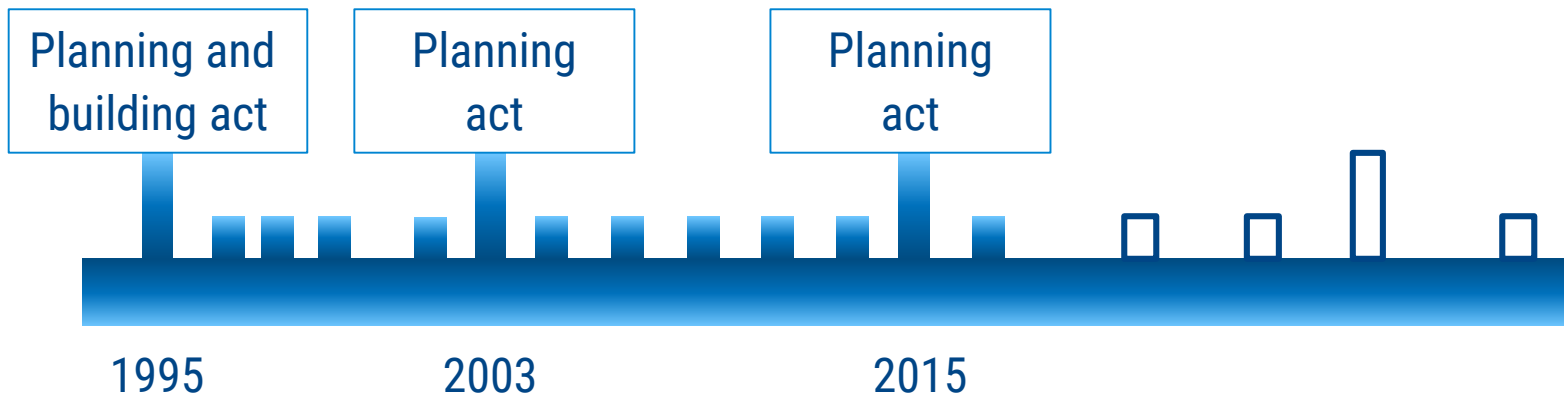
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# Subjects

1. One-slider of the current spatial planning system
2. Rationale for and nature of the green paper
3. Some outtakes from the green paper



\* English translation of the current Planning Act available at <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/513072018002/consolide>

# Green paper – why and what?

Wiki: green paper is a tentative government report and consultation document of policy proposals for debate and discussion.

Aims of the Estonian green paper on spatial planning:

- Pronounce the problems;
- Describe desired status;
- Indicate activities/changes;
- Promote international discussions.

Next steps:

- Legislative changes, as necessary;
- Organisational changes and strengthening of some parts of planning, as necessary;
- Use in everyday planning proceedings.

English version of the green paper available [here](#).

# Subjects covered

I Roles of participants in the preparation of the plan

II Public participation, availability of information regarding spatial plans

III Role and competence of the planner

IV Spatial and strategic planning, financing decisions with significant spatial impact

V Spatial planning instruments of the local and central government

VI Financial gains and costs related to changes in land use

VII Risk of corruption in spatial planning

VIII Duration of planning proceedings

IX Impact assessment in the preparation of plans

X Financing the preparation of plans

XI An effective and efficient planning system

# A few outtakes

- ❗ Spatial planning is the only administrative proceeding that considers the spatial needs of sectors at a certain location in interaction with each other.  
... nevertheless, a spatial plan is not always needed to think spatially.
- During the preparation of spatial plans, the interested person or planning consultant has fulfilled the roles that, essentially, the planning authority has to fulfil – balancing interests, discretionary decisions of the planning solution, reaching agreements with neighbours, and cooperation with agencies.
- It is time-consuming to find valid the valid rules set by a plan for using an area and accurate information is not always available.
- ❗ It is not reasonable to expect that all planning decisions give priority to the interests of the individuals or communities affected. As both Estonian courts and the European Court of Justice have found, it is not reasonable to expect that the environment around us will not change.  
... nevertheless, everyone has to have the possibility to have a say.

## A few outtakes, continued

- The planning official and the planning consultant do not always work together to develop a comprehensive spatial solution, confrontation takes place. The planning consultant has been treated as a ‘pencil’ for the interested party in the planning processes, not a partner to the planning authority.
- ! Promote planner education (formal education, refresher training) to ensure the next generation of competent planning officials and planning consultants, as well as the competence of the existing ones.
- The goals set in the development plans of local governments are not always spatially solved or balanced in the preparation of the municipality comprehensive spatial plans. Comprehensive spatial plans are not used as an instrument to direct spatial development, but only to set building rules.
- ! A coherent framework for the distribution of the benefits and costs of implementing the plan between the interested person (owner of the land) and the local government must be developed throughout Estonia.

# A few outtakes, still continued

- ❗ Minimising the risk of corruption in each planning proceeding. Using digital solutions to help with the issue. Due to the wide margin of discretion in planning and the wide range of values and interests to be considered, it is not possible to completely eliminate the risk of corruption in spatial planning.
- ❗ When preparing any spatial plan, the issues to be addressed by the plan must be acknowledged and clearly communicated. Implementation of the one-stop-shop principle in spatial planning.
- The parties perceive that paying for ordering the plan affects the content of the planning solution.
- ❗ The preparation of strategic plans should address spatial issues that are important to the society – e.g. reducing environmental pressures and achieving national environmental goals, adapting to climate change, facilitating different modes of transport and reducing forced mobility, sustainable land and property policy, and ensuring equal opportunities for different social groups.
- ❗ Estonia's experience in shaping the field of modern spatial planning is short. The sector needs continuous development. As a society, Estonia is still looking for the best ways to balance spatial interests.



# A reflection: some (super-) wicked problems

- ① Finding ways to put the administration responsible for spatial planning (usually – the local municipality) in the centre of spatial (planning) decisions.
- ② Simplifying and speeding up spatial planning proceedings vs participatory planning.
- ③ Supporting planners' education.
- ④ Better linking spatial and strategic planning.
- ⑤ Reducing the perceived risk of corruption.
- ⑥ Some issues of digitalisation.

+ issues that didn't fit into the current scope: eg useability of form-based code



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# Thank you for your attention!

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