

Medium

Estonia's new European course



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Following parliamentary elections on March 3rd, Prime Minister Jüri Ratas and his Keskerakond party (ALDE) are in negotiations with Isamaa (EPP) and euro-skeptic EKRE to form a new governing coalition.

The potential coalition has announced they will continue Estonia's Western-orientation and EU and NATO membership. However, this statement needs to be read side-by-side with EKRE's electoral programme, which contains a number of points that directly conflict with EU principles and EU and other international obligations.

I've translated the relevant points from EKRE's quite short and concise programme ([link](#)), with a few purely linguistic and factual notes. No commentary here, for analysis in Estonian see my guest post ([link](#)) on the Estonian politics blog poliitika.guru

1. In public procurement, we will have preferential treatment for companies based on Estonian capital

and will support local entrepreneurship and job creation through government tenders.

2. We oppose all attempts to create an EU federation, joint army and budget and will ally with other EU Member States that place a high value on the nation state. *Note: The language EKRE uses in Estonian implies they are referring to the current EU budget, not just to a Eurozone budget.*

3. We will oppose the indiscriminate transposition of EU directives and will not apply regulations and directives that infringe on our sovereignty or constitutional fundamental principles.

4. We will restrict voting rights in local elections to [Estonian] citizens.

5. Foreign funding in Estonian education and science needs to advance the interests of the Estonian state and society. *Note: The phrase used generally covers EU funding (e.g. Horizon 2020) too.*

6. Should power continue to concentrate in the European Commission, we will organize a referendum on Estonia's next steps, if necessary also regarding our EU membership.

7. We will put an end to accepting quota refugees assigned by the European Commission.

8. We will end the Rail Baltica project. *Factual note: Rail Baltica is a joint undertaking of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Finland to extend the European rail network*

into the Baltics. It is backed by significant EU funding. <http://www.railbaltica.org>

9. We will review Estonia's membership in international organisations, and continue our membership only in those organisations that advance Estonia's interests.

10. We will ask our most important ally the United States for military aid totaling up to one billion US dollars, we will similarly ask our European allies for aid.

Finally, two points are a bit more ambiguously related to the EU but could cause issues in Brussels:

We will impose strict limits on the influx of foreign labor. *Note: the programme doesn't specify whether this includes EU labor.*

We will institute elections for Supreme Court judges, and impose time-limited terms of office. *Note: Currently, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is nominated by the President and confirmed by Parliament, other Supreme Court judges are nominated by the Chief Justice and confirmed by Parliament. All judges are appointed to life terms.*