



EESTI SAARTE KOGU

✉ Tallinna 19, 93811 Kuressaare, Saaremaa ①

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There are over 2000 islands in Estonia, most of them are too small for living. The number of inhabited islands is 22 with the total population of 44100. One of the inhabited islands - Piirissaar - is situated in Lake Peipsi, the biggest lake of Estonia, the others are in the sea.

The Association of Estonian Islands (AEI) is established on the 5-th of December in 1992 on the island of Muhu by insular local governments and the representatives of islands as private persons. The Association of Estonian Islands is a voluntary non-profit organization of representatives of the residents of islands situated in the waters of the Republic of Estonia. The members are local municipalities, citizen unions and private persons.

At the moment there are members from 20 islands (in Estonian context 3 of them are considered big islands): Piirissaar, Manõja (Manilaid), Kihnu, Ruhnu, Abruca, Vahase, Vilsandi, Saaremaa, Kõinastu, Kesselaid, Muhu, Hiiumaa, Heinlaid, Kassari, Vormsi, Osmussaar, Pakri Islands, Naissaar, Aegna, Prangli. No bridges connecting to the mainland, although 2 islands are connected to 2 bigger islands by causeways. 6 islands have their own municipalities, others belong to larger municipalities (10 of them are situated on the mainland). Total of 2000 persons are living on small islands (from 1 to 701 in 2019) and 42 thousand on big islands.

The purposes of AEI are: maintenance/preservation of democratic and ongoing/lasting, continuous, durable, prolonged, permanent living environment and development of

cooperation of the network between islands; representation of the communities living on the islands of Estonia on nation-wide and international levels; supporting the enactment of communities inclusive, including science-based legislation; assurance of the rights and interests of Estonian islanders.

To achieve the purposes AEI implements the following activities: Analyses and studies on the operation of communities and social relationships; build-up of the the law of small islands with permanent settlement into the law of covering all Estonian islands; establishment of research institution engaged with studies of Estonian islands. The purpose of the Islands`Institute will be surveys and research on the topics of Estonian islands. Essential and needful for the politicians to make good decisions and make our life better.

The Association is lead and the daily work arranged by 3-member board and 18-member council. The council consists of representatives of all islands (one from each) plus 1 representative from each island municipality. Several work parties are formed to carry out the activities: economy, education, legislation, security and science.

The supremacy of AEI is general meeting, summoned at least once a year. It is a tradition to arrange the meeting as a 2-3 day event in summertime on one of the Estonian islands. This year the meeting was held in Prangli, 2020 we planning to get together in Kõinastu.

AEI is a member of [European Small Islands Federation \(ESIN\)](#) where 11 countries of the total of 1640 small islands are represented. ESIN is the voice of 359,357 islanders on 1,640 small islands, helping them remain alive.

To this end, ESIN acts at two levels:

- 1) Local level: strenghtening islands cultural identity, facilitating the circulation of information between its members, allowing comparison on how different countries cope with issues, sharing knowledge.
- 2) European level: informing relevant EU institutions, influencing EU policies and rules by increasing their awareness and understanding of small islands.

Composed by:

17.09.2019

Riina Kaljulaid

Chairman of the board of AEI