



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
18 December 2018

Original: English
English, French and Spanish only

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Sixty-fifth session

18 February–8 March 2019

Item 7 (a) of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports: reports submitted by States parties
in accordance with articles 16 and 17 of the Covenant**

List of issues in relation to the third periodic report of Estonia

Addendum

Replies of Estonia to the list of issues*

[Date received: 3 December 2018]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

GE.18-22144(E)



* 1 8 2 2 1 4 4 *

Please recycle The recycling symbol, consisting of three chasing arrows forming a triangle.



I. General information

Effective remedies

1. An individual whose rights under the Covenant have been violated by Government agencies, local authorities or their officials, has the right to file an action against the violator to an administrative court. Such an action according to section 37 subsection 2 of the Estonian Code of Administrative Court Procedure may seek: full or partial annulment of an administrative act (annulment action); issuance of an administrative act or taking of an administrative measure (mandatory action); prohibition of an issuance of a certain administrative act or taking of a certain administrative measure (prohibition action); compensation for harm caused in a public law relationship (compensation action); elimination of unlawful consequences of an administrative act or measure (reparation action); a declaration of nullity of an administrative act, a declaration of unlawfulness of an administrative act or measure, or a declaration ascertaining other facts of material importance in a public law relationship (declaratory action).
2. In addition to courts, labour dispute bodies, the Chancellor of Justice and the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner provide effective remedies to individuals who claim to be victims of violation of economic, social and cultural rights.
3. Human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights, are included in the curricula of lawyers as well as in-service programs for judges, prosecutors, law enforcement officials and other relevant officials working in the related fields, for instance social workers etc.
4. See also point 6.

Office of the Chancellor of Justice

5. From 01.01.2019 the Chancellor of Justice will perform the task of NHRI in accordance with Paris Principles. The two amendments to the Chancellor of Justice Act¹ authorise the Chancellor to perform the functions of promoting and protecting human rights, on the basis of the General Assembly resolution 48/134 of 20 December 1993 “National institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights” and to perform the promotion, protection and monitoring functions of implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities according to the article 33 section 2 of the convention. All other conditions of the Paris Principles are fulfilled with the existing provisions of the Chancellor of Justice Act.

II. Issues relating to the general provisions of the Covenant (arts. 1–5)

Maximum available resources (art. 2 (1))

(a) Poverty

¹ Accessible online at: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/509012018008/consolide/current>.

At-risk-of-poverty (relative) and absolute poverty rate, income years 2008–2016

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
At-risk-of-poverty rate, %	19.7	15.8	17.5	17.5	20.7	21.8	21.6	21.7	21.1
Absolute poverty rate, %	4.7	6.3	8.7	8.1	8.4	7.6	6.3	4.3	3.3

At-risk-of-poverty rate for the total population by poverty thresholds, income years 2008–2016

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
40% of median income	5.3	5.4	6.9	6.7	7.9	8.2	7.4	6.5	6.6
50% of median income	10.2	9.4	10.9	10.9	12.6	13.4	12.5	13.1	12.9
60% of median income (at-risk-of-poverty rate)	19.7	15.8	17.5	17.5	20.7	22.1	21.6	21.7	21.1

(b) Taxes as the share of general government revenues

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	84.8%	79.6%	81.7%	81.7%	81.1%	82.6%	83.3%	83.7%	85.7%	84.2%

* Found using taxes in tax burden.

(c) PIT and CIT rate are the same — in 2007 22%, during 2008–2014 21% and from 2015 20%. VAT standard rate is 20% and reduced rate 9%. The change in rates in July 2009 and January 2009 respectively**The dynamics of value added tax rates in Estonia, 2008–2017**

	2008	1.01.2009	1.07.2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Standard rate	18%	18%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%	20%
Reduced rate	5%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%	9%

The percentage of total revenue that is generated from personal income taxes collected from the richest decile of the population during 2008–2017 ranges from 43% to 50% of all PIT

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	43.9%	50.3%	49.7%	48.9%	47.2%	46.1%	44.8%	43.3%	43.1%	45.0%

and 7,5% to 8,5% of all tax revenue (as in tax burden)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
	8.5%	8.0%	7.9%	7.9%	7.7%	7.9%	7.9%	7.5%	7.5%	7.8%

(d) Public expenses as a percentage of gross domestic product

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
	34.1%	39.7%	46.1%	40.5%	37.4%	39.3%	38.5%	37.9%	39.6%	39.5%

**The proportion of the public budget allocated to social spending
(COFOG 06, 07, 09 and 10)**

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
59.0%	60.2%	61.4%	65.9%	64.9%	61.5%	60.9%	60.5%	61.9%	61.8%

(e) Inflation-adjusted absolute levels of social spending, mln €

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
3 269.1	3 578.2	3 623.8	3 457.7	3 394.2	3 500.0	3 480.7	3 610.5	4 000.4	4 179.6

Prevention of corruption

6. The aim of the Anti-Corruption Act of 2013 is to make available the core measures to manage and avoid risks of corruption by officials in the public sector. Legislative, executive, and judicial powers are all covered by the Act, it is applicable also to local municipalities, legal persons in public law (such as universities, professional bodies of such status, state foundations), and to the leadership of enterprises owned by state or municipalities. Purely private enterprises and associations are outside of the Act's area of application, except for the provisions on whistle-blower protection. The misdemeanours and offences are, in principle, investigated by the specialised Anti-Corruption Bureau of the Central Criminal Police. The charges for corruption offences are dealt with by specialised prosecutors in the central or regional Prosecutors' Offices.

7. At the national level, the Ministry of Justice is responsible for the preparation of an anti-corruption strategy. The third Anti-Corruption Strategy 2013–2020² is being implemented by all relevant ministries and agencies. The Strategy focuses on issues that have been proven by analyses to be more serious (e.g. public procurement, health care, awareness raising in private sector, etc.). Several agencies and entities have trained their officials regarding anti-corruption policy, and adopted internal guidelines and mechanisms to identify and solve risky situations. Some examples:

- The Estonian Academy of Security Sciences has carried out 10 training events in 2017 for 199 people;
- Guidelines for the development of the general principles of an internal control system and prevention of corruption were prepared in 2017 for members of local government councils; municipality, town and city mayors; and members, officials and employees of municipality, town or city governments;
- In 2018, the Ministry of Finance prepared practical guidelines and recommendations for the development of an internal control system for local governments;
- The share of e-procurements in public procurements has increased constantly. The share of e-procurements was 90% in 2016 and 96% by Q4 2017;
- The Internal Control Bureau (SKB) of the Police and Border Guard Board carried out 51 trainings in 2017 for 987 officials. Each new employee of the PBGB attends a 1.5-hour presentation on the above-mentioned topics.

8. There is no separate legal act for the protection of whistle-blowers but relevant amendments are being prepared. The protection of whistle-blowers is currently regulated by § 6 of the Anti-corruption Act (Notification of public or private sector incidents of corruption).

² Accessible online at:

https://www.korruptsioon.ee/sites/www.korruptsioon.ee/files/elfinder/dokumendid/estonian_anti-corruption_strategy_2013-2020.pdf.

Non-discrimination (art. 2 (2))

The Equal Treatment Act

9. A draft amending the Equal Treatment Act is in the consultation proceedings of government agencies to widen its scope of application concerning discrimination of persons on grounds of religion and other beliefs, age, disability and sexual orientation outside the field of employment to cover also access to the services of social welfare, social security and healthcare, including social benefits, the area of education and access to and supply of goods and services which are available to the public, including housing.

Complaints to the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner

10. The number of complaints filed for the Commissioner is increasing showing the rise of awareness of one's rights and possibilities to seek legal support.

Table 1
Complaints filed

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of complaints</i>
2009	51
2010	47
2011	90
2012	95
2013	116
2014	192
2015	209
2016	332
2017	440

Table 2
Complaints filed by most frequent category

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of complaints</i>				
	<i>Gender equality</i>	<i>Ethnicity³</i>	<i>Disability</i>	<i>Sexual minorities⁴</i>	<i>Age</i>
2009	28	10	3	<i>Under other</i>	1
2010	28	4	3	2	2
2011	45	8	2	5	-
2012	58	4	12	4	11
2013	57	4	12	5	-
2014	91	6	8	1	14
2015	70	13	35	8	16
2016	158	22	55	7	31
2017	213	18	87	0	22

11. Many of the strategic litigation cases have included cases connected to the status of being or becoming a parent. For example, discharging the employee after learning about her pregnancy or after the end of parental leave. The cases also include unequal treatment regarding one's pay when returning to work after parental leave. There have also been cases of sexual harassment at work place and cases concerning equal treatment of transgender persons.

³ Since 2014 also on the basis of skin colour.

⁴ Both sexual orientation and gender identity.

12. Please see also point 1.

The draft bill 472 SE. Refugees and asylum seekers

13. The draft bill 472 is being processed in the parliament. The EU Reception Conditions Directive has been fully incorporated into the national law and its principles concerning the detention are being implemented accordingly. Access to healthcare and other basic services is guaranteed.

14. Free information on the rights and obligations and the legal counseling is provided for all applicants. The counselors (2 full time counselors) work in the detention center and in the reception centers. Free legal aid and representation is provided for all applicants who have received a negative decision and wish to submit an appeal to the court. During 2015–2017 the State Legal Aid was applied and provided for on 118 times (for 94 persons).

Statistics of granting Estonian citizenship to minors

15. Estonian citizenship is not granted automatically. According to the Citizenship Act, minors between the age of 15–17 are able to apply for Estonian citizenship themselves.

Table 1

Persons with undetermined citizenship in 2016–2018

<i>Age</i>	<i>1 January 2016</i>		<i>1 January 2017</i>		<i>1 January 2018</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Below 15 years	391	320	94	66	68	49
15–18 years	187	184	170	151	144	135
19–65 years	39 344	29 546	37 822	28 213	36 505	26 285
66+	5 487	9 839	5 695	10 054	5 927	10 274

Table 2

Persons with undetermined citizenship, who have been granted Estonian citizenship in 2016–2018

<i>Age</i>	<i>2016</i>		<i>2017</i>		<i>6 November 2018</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Below 15 years	10	4	3	7	1	1
15–18 years	4	12	2	6	0	2
19–64 years	203	245	187	202	119	128
65+	4	6	2	5	0	4

Table 3

Persons with undetermined citizenship, who applied for Estonian citizenship in 2016–2018

<i>Age</i>	<i>1 January 2016</i>		<i>1 January 2017</i>		<i>6 November 2018</i>	
	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>
Below 15 years	5	6	4	4	0	1
15–18 years	3	10	1	1	1	4
19–65 years	217	197	197	175	162	154
66+	4	3	2	5	0	5

Equal rights of men and women (art. 3)

Implementation of the Gender Equality Act

16. An analysis of the implementation of the Gender Equality Act (GEA) was carried out in 2015.⁵ In addition to an overview of the implementation of GEA among private, public and non-profit sector employers, the study developed indicators which assess the implementation of the GEA in human resource practices and which could be used for regular monitoring of the subject. The study used combined research methods, i.e. qualitative and quantitative methods.

17. The overall conclusion of the study is that the awareness of GEA among employers is low, only 4% claimed that they are well aware of this law. Most of the respondents (46%) had heard about GEA, but did not know its content. The study also showed that the awareness of the employers of legislation prohibiting gender discrimination in recruitment process was low and discrimination in recruitment based on gender was widespread. On the positive side, the awareness of employers of their responsibility in solving the situation where gender-based harassment or sexual harassment has occurred in the workplace was relatively good.

18. The study showed that most of the employers (90%) have job descriptions and 64% of the organizations have regulated the wage principles (82% of them with 50 or more employees). In the documents regulating working relations and conditions, the gender equality principles and/or goals are the least stipulated (4%). In 33% of organisations wage is completely negotiable, 19% have a fixed wage.

19. All measures on governmental level targeted to promote gender equality are assembled in the Welfare Development Plan 2016–2023.⁶

20. Until recently, funding for gender equality issues have mostly relied on foreign funding such as European Social Fund and Norwegian Finance Mechanism. The base funding of 500 000 euros per year for gender equality has been granted by the Government starting from 2019. This shows, that gender equality is given more priority on governmental level.

Women's representation

21. Under the gender equality sub-objective of the “Welfare Development Plan 2016–2023” and its action plan, one of the focus areas is a balanced participation of women and men on all levels of decision-making in politics. Awareness-raising measures will be implemented in the coming years to raise awareness of entrepreneurs about a need and possibilities to improve gender balance in a management level of organisations. Activities will be planned to support possible use of a zipper-method in electoral lists.

Share of executives and entrepreneurs by gender in public and private sectors, 2006–2017

		Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Gender	Indicator													
Men and women			100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	Share among executives		62.9	60.8	59.1	59.3	61.9	57.3	57.6	58.2	66.2	69.5	64.0	63.2
Women			37.1	39.2	40.9	40.7	38.1	42.7	42.4	41.8	33.8	30.5	36.0	36.8

⁵ Turk, Pirjo; Anniste, Kristi; Masso, Märt; Karu, Marre; Kriger, Tatjana 2015. Study on Implementation of the Gender Equality Act and Developing Indicators to Assess the Impact of the Act. Tallinn: Praxis Centre for Policy Studies. Available online (Executive Summary pp 47-49):http://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/Ministeerium_kontaktid/Uuringu_ja_analuusid/Sotsiaalvaldkond/uuringuaruanne.pdf.

⁶ Available in english here: https://www.sm.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/eesmargid_ja_tegevused/welfare_development_plan_2016-2023.pdf.

	Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Men and women		100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Men	Share among	68.8	68.6	69.4	67.2	68.4	67.3	69.1	68.1	69.7	65.5	65.8	69.2
Women	entrepreneurs	31.2	31.4	30.6	32.8	31.6	32.7	30.9	31.9	30.3	34.5	34.2	30.8

Shares are shown in percentages.

22. The share of men and women at different levels is regularly assessed in the public and private sectors alike. Gender inequality on the decision-making levels of society is reflected by the representation of men and women in politics and other decision-making levels in the public and private sector. 30 of 101 members of the Estonian parliament are women. Of 15 members of the Government 5 are women. Women hold several high positions in the public sector: the President of the Republic, the Chancellor of Justice and the Prosecutor General. The number of female judges at the Supreme Court has risen from 2 to 4 (of 19).

23. The division of genders in the public service (state authorities and municipality, town and city governments) as at 1 January 2018: 49% of managers were women and 51% were men.

24. In 2017, 55% of mid-level managers or heads of departments in Estonian ministries were women and 45% were men. 21% of senior managers, i.e. secretaries general and deputy secretaries general, were women and 79% were men. Internationally, the EIGE (European Institute for Gender Equality) publishes statistics about the share of men and women in ministries (<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-statistics/dgs/browse/wmidm>).

25. There are also less women than men on the management level of organisations. All though risen on recent years, the share of women among managers was 39% in 2017.⁷

26. The programme “Everything Is Possible!” aimed at female entrepreneurs is being implemented by the Estonian Association of Business and Professional Women (BPW Estonia) in cooperation with partners with an aim to give 100 new female entrepreneurs to Estonia as a gift on its 100th anniversary. Aim of the programme is to increase the share of female entrepreneurs and to give knowledge, inspiration and courage to 400 women who are interested in starting a business or developing an existing one. The objective of the activities of BPW is to create and maintain social values by contributing to the development of entrepreneurial women, acknowledging and promoting the equality and employment of women and men, and the protection of children.

III. Issues relating to the specific provisions of the Covenant (arts. 6–15)

Right to work (art. 6)

Vocational education and training (VET)

27. Promoting apprenticeships and work-based learning and encouraging employers and VET institutions to work together is one of the key objectives set out in Estonia’s lifelong learning strategy for 2020.

28. The ‘Labour Market and Education Cooperation Programme’ of 2015 sets up a roadmap and offers a framework for increasing the qualification level of the labour force, decreasing the structural labour shortage and enhancing the employability of graduates by responding better to changes in labour demand. Its focus is on increasing the quality and attractiveness of VET as well as of apprenticeship and work-based learning.

⁷ Statistics Estonia.

29. The PRÕM programme — conditions for the provision of European Social Fund support under the Labour Market and Education Cooperation Programme — has a major impact on the development of quality of work-based learning, expanding of the apprenticeships programmes, training of teachers and trainers and piloting different models of apprenticeship training in Estonia. 22 VET schools have received support to strengthen cooperation between employers and education institutions in developing work-based learning.

30. The Ministry of Education and Research has created a labour and skills prognosis system OSKA (implemented by the Estonian Qualifications Authority). OSKA analyses the needs for labour and skills necessary for Estonia's economic development over the next 10 years. The aim of highlighting future labour market trends is to encourage debates in all parts of society on factors affecting changes in working life, to create the context for and open new lines of thought in relation to forecasting labour requirements in different industries and to provide input to discussions on future training needs.

31. Analysis of social and economic needs is carried out prior to formulating the state commissioned education request for vocational training. The analysis considers the number of individuals in need of vocational training and their preferences with regard to specific subjects taught. Making forecasts with regard to societal needs will take into account demographic factors by measuring the size of youth groups, projecting the number of graduates (the division of basic school and upper secondary school graduates) and making allowances for regional distribution of populations and educational migration.

32. Language skills also have an effect on persons' labour market position — in 2017 unemployment rate of non-Estonians with proficiency in Estonian was 7,3%, while of those with no proficiency the unemployment rate was almost twice as high at 13%. In 2018, The Board of Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (national PES) adopted the new principles of developing skills of the workforce. Individuals with insufficient Estonian language skills can obtain at least B2 level through the PES. The package of preventive measures adopted in 2017 includes Estonian language courses for employed persons who have insufficient Estonian language skills. There are two new possibilities for Estonian language learning through the PES: for employees whose yearly income is under certain limit can use a training voucher for Estonian language courses and for employers who want to increase their employees' Estonian language proficiency.

Right to just and favourable conditions of work (art. 7)

Minimum wage. Labour inspections

33. Minimum wage is agreed by the social partners to be established by the Government in the same amount. In 2017, the minimum wage was 470 euros, in 2018 the minimum wage is 500 euros. The minimum wage for year 2019 will be 540 euros. In 2017, Estonian Employers' Association and Estonian Trade Union Association concluded an agreement, according to which, in the future, establishing minimum wage is based on the principles that the basis for raising the minimum wage is the estimated double productivity growth in the year that the minimum wage is agreed for. The upper limit of the minimum wage is twice the predicted real economic growth, the lower limit is at least 40% of the predicted average gross wage, and the basis is the data of the Eesti Pank's summer prediction. From 1 January 2018 the overall tax-free amount (basic exemption) of up to 6000 euros per year or up to 500 euros per month is applied on all types of income.

Table 1

Violations concerning minimum wage

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Wages lower than the minimum wage	9	12	19	24	46	35

Source: Labour Inspectorate.

Table 2
Number of inspections

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	4 051	3 787	4 268	4 752	5 282	4 640

Source: Labour Inspectorate.

34. Comparing the numbers of visits and of violations, the number of violations is relatively marginal. If the employer has not notified the employee about wages in the written employment contract or that the wage agreed in the contract is less than the minimum wage, the labour inspector has a right to issue a precept to ask to stop the violation. Penalty payment may be imposed to enforce the precept. In 2010–2017 the Labour Inspectorate identified 39 violations concerning minimum wage. However, penalty payments have not been imposed.

Gender pay gap

35. The gender pay gap in Estonia has slowly but steadily decreased, dropping from 29,9% in 2012 to 25,3% in 2016. One of the key measures to decrease gender pay gap and enhance institutional arrangements in the coming years is through the amendments of the Gender Equality Act.

36. Amendments will provide the Labour Inspectorate with the right to exercise state supervision over implementation of the requirement of equal pay for women and men and the right to precept employers to conduct equal pay audits if the Labour Inspectorate suspects that their activities may be discriminatory in the public sector. A new IT tool together with guidelines will be developed. Guidelines will provide know-how for labour inspectors and employers on evaluation and comparison of jobs. The IT tool and relevant guidelines will also be available for use for all the employers in the private sector as well. The amendments should apply from 1st of July 2020.

37. Gender pay gap is one of the most crucial issues on gender equality field. An in-depth analysis will be carried out as more precise data is needed to sufficiently address the problem. As a result, Estonia will have more data on gender pay gap and a smaller proportion of the unexplainable pay gap. The results will be used in policymaking as well as in awareness raising activities. The project call was launched June 2018, the activities start in January 2019 and end in 2021. The first preliminary results will be available in summer 2019.

38. The strategy of integration and social cohesion “Integrating Estonia 2020” includes specific measure “Promotion of equal treatment on the labour market”. Different activities for promoting equal treatment of the staff in public and private sector are implemented under the measure.

39. Women are overrepresented in fields such as education, social services and healthcare and men in real estate, construction, ICT. In ICT field, only 29% of the workers are women. This is being enforced by the educational system as 71% of the students who were accepted to the university to study ICT in 2017, were men. However, the state has been increasing the efforts to increase the % of women in ICT.

40. There have been campaigns inviting women to study ICT (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications started the campaign “ICT is everywhere” directed primarily at girls and young women to inspire them to study IT-related fields). There are also several NGOs who promote women’s involvement and careers in ICT.

41. There have also been trainings for career counsellors to raise their gender awareness and several information materials produced for parents⁸ and hobby group instructors⁹ how to awake girls’ interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) fields.

⁸ http://kompetentsikeskus.vollinik.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/infoleht_Lapsevanematele_LTT.pdf.

42. Estonian parental leave system is generous by its duration. The main criticism has been, that the system is rather inflexible and women face longer career breaks, which also influences their career perspective negatively.

43. The Green Paper on family benefits, services and parental leave of 2015 included 11 policy proposals on family benefits, services and parental leave. The main policy proposals promoting gender equality concerned changing the parental leave and benefit system as well as amending the conditions of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services. Many of the policy proposals of the Green Paper have been accomplished or are in the process of being accomplished.

44. In 2016 a memorandum of the parental leave and benefit system changes was compiled. The first part of the amendments in the Family Benefits Act were adopted in 2017 including a 30-day individual right for paternity leave and benefit for all fathers and better conditions for combining work and family life, changes are established gradually in the years 2018–2020.

45. The second part of the amendments were passed in 2018 providing more flexible forms to combine work and parental leave. For example the maternity leave period will be shortened from 140 days to 60–100 days (depending on how the mother wishes to use the period) and the parents will have a longer period of sharable parental leave and benefit. The amendments will take effect on 1st April 2022.

46. In years 2015 to 2018 altogether 1193 childcare places have been created in all over the country. The participation in Early Childhood Education services has increased. In 2012 23% of the children aged 0–2 and 91% of children aged 3–6 were in the childcare, in 2017 the percentage in these age groups was 28% and 95% accordingly.

Occupational safety and health

47. The occupational safety supervision is the main priority of the Labour Inspectorate activities. The aim is to reduce the number of serious and fatal work accidents. The Labour Inspectorate's survey of enterprises is based on the risk rate, which in turn is based on the number and characteristics of work accidents, occupational diseases and work-related diseases in the area of activity and in the specific enterprise. The risk rate is also influenced by the risk level attributed to the area of activity, the time of the last visit to the enterprise, and detected deficiencies in the enterprise. Each enterprise will have an individual risk rate and the enterprises with the highest risk rate are chosen for inspection. Since 2017, the Labour Inspectorate inspect those enterprises in which the work accidents recur or the employer has not paid sufficient attention to finding out the causes of work accidents and prevented the occurrence of similar cases.

48. The scope of supervision is based on the occurrence of work accidents. The wood industry is under increased supervision due to occupational accidents and occupational diseases. Based on statistics only 3% of employees work in agriculture. It means that the percentage of supervision in the agriculture is not so high than some years ago.

ISCO-2008		No. of accidents at work									
		2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
01	Agriculture	161	131	136	135	131	139	168	154	156	154
16	Wood processing	306	200	254	305	310	355	306	373	337	399

Percentage of all registered accidents at work:

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Agriculture	3.9%	4.5%	4.2%	3.6%	3.2%	3.3%	3.6%	3.2%	3.1%	3.0%

⁹ http://kompetentsikeskus.vollinik.ee/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/Uuringu-aruanne_LTT-huviharidus-sooline-aspekt.pdf.

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Wood processing	7.5%	6.8%	7.9%	8.1%	7.5%	8.5%	6.6%	7.8%	6.6%	7.7%

Occupational diseases:

Area of activity	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Wood processing	4	3	5	3	5	6	6	8	4	7
Agriculture	17	18	19	17	8	8	7	5	5	2

Percentage of all occupational diseases:

Area of activity	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Wood processing	5.4%	4.1%	4.8%	3.4%	8.6%	10.7%	10.7%	16.0%	10.3%	18.9%
Agriculture	23.0%	24.3%	18.3%	19.5%	13.8%	14.3%	12.5%	10.0%	12.8%	5.4%

Number of visits:

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total	5 809	4 652	4 732	4 402	4 051	3 787	4 268	4 752	5 282	4 640

Percentage of visits of supervision (wood processing industry and agriculture):

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Wood processing industry	6.1%	4.8%	4.9%	6.4%	4.9%	5.1%	6.7%	5.0%	4.6%	4.0%
Agriculture	4.5%	3.3%	3.9%	4.9%	3.9%	2.6%	3.0%	3.7%	4.7%	3.6%

49. Over the past ten years around 10 complaint-based inspections have been carried out each year. Most complaint-based inspections in agriculture and the wood industry were carried out in 2015 (24 complaint-based inspections together). Last year (2017) 4 inspections were carried out in agriculture and the wood industry.

Trade union rights (art. 8)

Right to strike. Collective bargaining and collective labour dispute resolution

50. In case of a strike, in enterprises and institutions which satisfy the primary needs of the population and economy, the body which calls a strike or locks out employees shall ensure indispensable services or production which shall be determined by agreement of the parties. In the case of disagreements, indispensable services or production are determined by the Public Conciliator whose decision is binding on the parties.

51. There is no list of enterprises and institutions which satisfy the primary needs of the population and economy, as the Government has not come to an agreement with social partners on which enterprises and institutions should be included in the list.

52. The draft act on collective bargaining and collective labour dispute resolution that, inter alia, included regulation for determining indispensable services, was dropped in 2015 after its first reading in parliament upon the expiry of the mandate of the parliament, since the proceedings were not completed before the expiry of the mandate. Therefore, unfortunately the law was not adopted.

Right to social security (art. 9)

Old-age pension scheme

53. The pension system is based on a three-pillar approach, which ties the right and the amount of the future old age pension to the amounts of social tax paid by or on behalf of the person over the full career.

54. Mandatory funded pension (II pillar) scheme, launched in 2002, is an individual savings scheme, where the size of pension depends on the contributions and rate of return of the pension fund. Possibilities for supplementary voluntary funded pension (III pillar) were created in 1998.

55. Since 1999, I pillar old age pension rights are acquired only on basis of social tax paid. Self-employed persons are covered with all pillars as long as they are making contributions. Persons working in informal economy are not covered with I and II pillar as no social tax is paid.

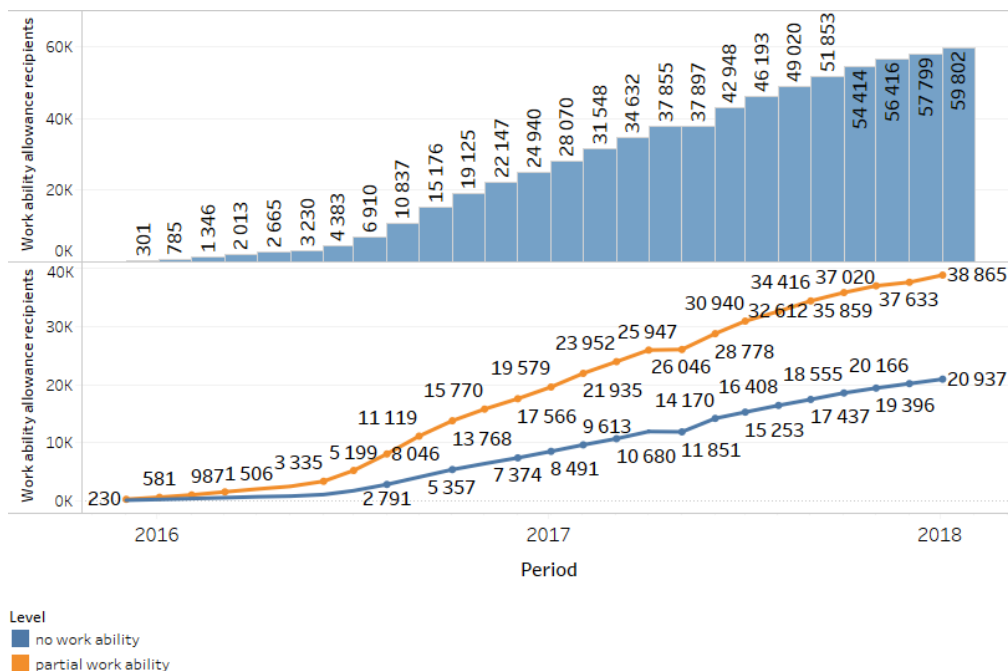
56. 304 320 people received old age pensions from I pillar in 2017. In 2017 706 842 people had joined II pillar, there were 57 863 people with valid III pillar insurance contracts with lifelong disbursements and 45068 people had joined III pillar; in total there were 102 931 in III pillar. 37373 people had right for II pillar pension by the end of 2017, 29629 of them had made payment statements. 61% of people receiving II pillar payments received regular payments from the pension fund, 21% got bulk redemption from pension fund and 19% received lifetime payments from the insurance company. Average I pillar old-age pension was 409 euros in the end of 2017. Average I and II pillar pension at the same time was 416 euros. The impact of pillar II on average old-age pension is currently marginal as only 2% of old-age pensioners have II pillar insurance contracts. Average pension from II pillar insurance contract was 54,7 euros in 2017.

57. Increasing of actual pension payments is performed through regular indexation. Pensions were indexed in 2018 with index 1.076 so that average I pillar old-age pension rose from 415,6 euros to 446,5 euros. According to prognosis the indexation of pensions in 2019 will increase average pension by 34 euros, so it will be 480,40 euros. From 2018 the pension supplement to one parent, parent's spouse, guardian or foster parent for every child one has raised for at least eight years, in the amount of one time the value of a year of pensionable service (6,161 euros) is paid. This pension supplement is paid to 229000 pensioners. Pensioner's living alone receive allowance. In October 2018 79370 pensioners receive allowance of 115 euros. In 2018 the repressed person's allowance rose from 192 euros to 230 euros. Main receivers of the repressed person's allowance are pensioners. From 2018 the tax free allowance was raised to 500 euros so that average old-age pension is tax free.

Work capacity reform

58. The number of work ability recipients has reached almost 60 000 by the end of III q 2018. The average work ability allowance has gradually increased from 119 euros (III q 2016) to 281 euros by III q 2018. The average allowance for people with no work ability was 386 euros in September 2018 and 223 euros for people with partial work ability.

Figure 1:
Work ability allowance recipients¹⁰ (month)



Source: Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF).

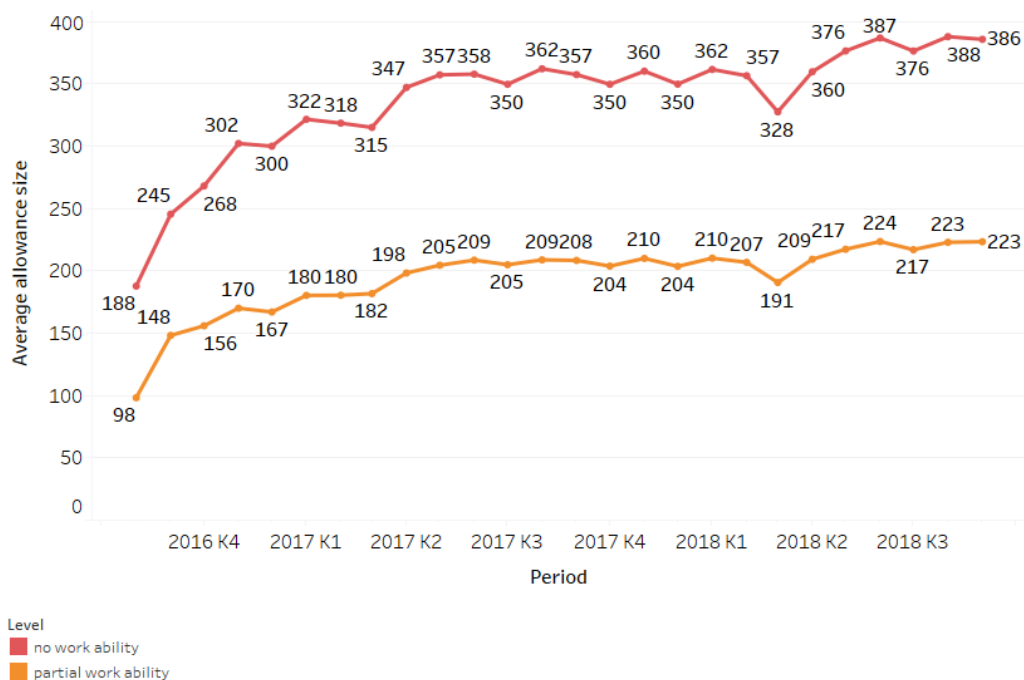
Figure 2.1:
Average work ability allowance payment (month, euros)



Source: UIF.

¹⁰ The number of work ability allowance recipients contains persons who received a payment of work ability allowance during the specified month.

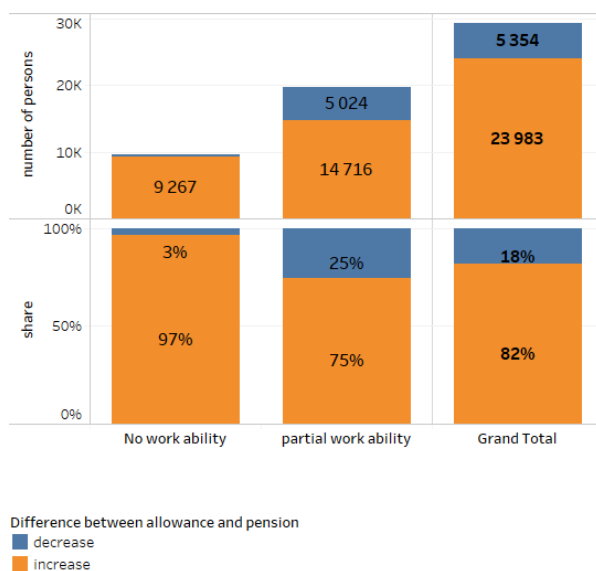
Figure 2.2:
Average work ability allowance payment by the level of work ability (month, euros)

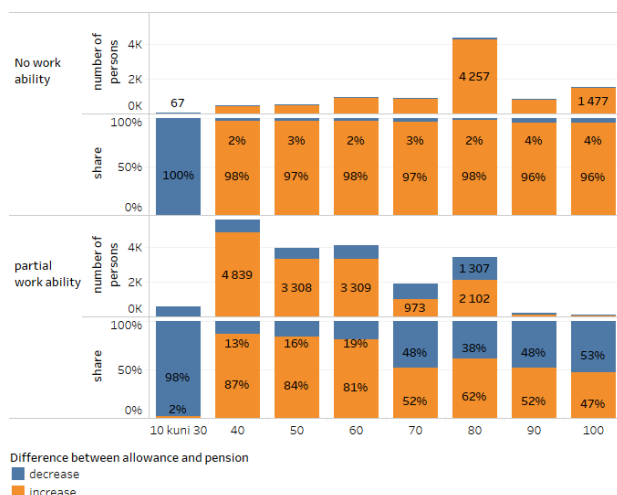


Source: UIF.

59. When comparing the amounts of work ability allowance and of previous incapacity pension, the majority of beneficiaries have received higher income compared to the previous situation.

Figure 3:
Number of work ability allowance recipients (December 2017) by level of work ability and capacity %, and the share of persons by difference in income





Source: UIF, Social Security Fund, calculations by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

60. The Ministry of Social Affairs is analysing possibilities to change Estonian unemployment benefits system. Unemployment benefits (unemployment insurance benefit and unemployment allowance) must ensure an adequate income for the person while looking for employment and help them avoid the risk of poverty. It must also support their fast return to the labour market. The analysis is expected to propose different scenarios based on the shortcomings of the unemployment benefits system and to the related problems. First outcomes of the analysis will be revealed in 2019.

Protection of the family and children (art. 10)

Prevention of domestic violence

61. In January 2015 an amendment of the Estonian Penal Code¹¹ entered into force pursuant to which causing damage to the health of another person and physical abuse which causes pain, if aggravated by being committed in a close relationship or relationship of subordination, is punishable by a pecuniary punishment or up to five years' imprisonment (section 121, subsection 2, clause 2). Data on domestic violence is largely based on this aggravated offence. The amendment also included a rewording of the aggravating circumstances applied for all offences, to be taken into account when considering the degree of guilt and punishment (section 58).

62. Estonia has implemented the European Union Directive on the rights of a victim, and acceded to the Council of Europe's conventions of Lanzarote and Istanbul. Sexual harassment and stalking have been criminalised in domestic law.

Annual number of registered domestic violence criminal offences in 2015–2017¹²:

Year	2015	2016	2017
The number of registered domestic violence related criminal offences	2 997	3 017	2 632

63. Domestic violence offences are listed mostly (86%) under the category of physical abuse in close relationships and dependency relationships, where section 121 subsection 2 point 2 of the Penal Code apply.

64. Data on criminal proceedings of domestic violence offences:

- Physical abuse in close relationships and dependency relationships comprise 90% of all offences registered under the Estonian Penal Code section 121 subsection 2

¹¹ Accessible online at: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/509072018004/consolide/current>.

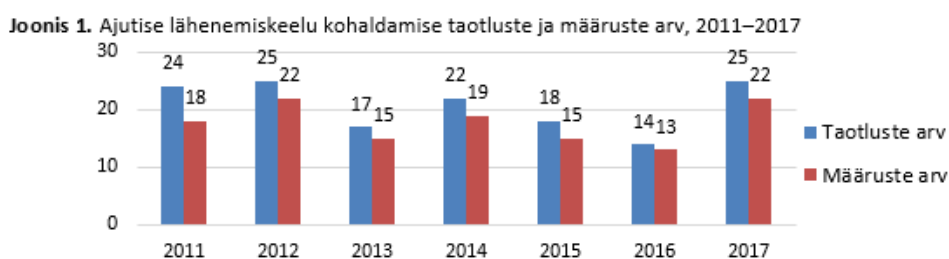
¹² Source: Kuritegevus Eestis 2017.

offences. In 2017, 763 persons were prosecuted under section 121 subsection 2 and criminal proceedings were terminated in regards of 891 persons (in 2016, respectively 788 and 881).

65. Data on punishments imposed on perpetrators of domestic violence:
- Study of 2013 showed that 53% of domestic violence perpetrators were imposed conditional prison sentence, 20% were imposed substitution of imprisonment by community service, 14% were imposed pecuniary punishment and 13% were sent to prison.
66. Annual number of temporary restraining orders:
- Number of applications for restraining orders and orders issued in 2011–2017. Most restraining orders have been applied and issued in domestic violence cases (93%).

Figure 1:

Number of applications for restraining orders and orders issued, 2011–2017 (Number of applications — blue, number of orders issued — red)



67. Estonia has adopted comprehensive legislative and policy frameworks to prevent and combat domestic violence. A national strategy for prevention of violence is being implemented in 2015–2020¹³ and domestic violence is one of the topics the strategy is focused on. In 2016, Lead Group of the Strategy for Preventing Violence in 2015–2020 of seven ministries (Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) was formed to coordinate activities of the responsible parties, as well as to discuss the developments in the sector, the issues requiring solutions and amendment of the operational programme of the Strategy.

68. Estonia has introduced multi-sectoral approach for supporting victims of domestic violence and the National Victim Support is the central point coordinating the work and leading the network all around Estonia. In 2017 a project to protect victims of domestic violence involving law enforcement, social and child protection, women's shelters and other relevant counterparts was initiated and it will be gradually introduced throughout Estonia by 2021. In cases of serious domestic violence Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences are being practiced. These two approaches together will provide safety and security for victims as well as their children.

69. State provided services for victims of domestic violence include support services; women's shelters; around-the-clock hotline. There are targeted services victims of sexual abuse/rape, for prostituted/sexually exploited women, and for trafficked men and women.

70. Local governments provide social support, safe housing and other relevant services for victims of domestic violence, including shelters for mothers and children.

Protection for children

71. The Employment Contracts Act (ECA) was amended in 2017 to allow more flexibility in the employment relationship with minors, at the same time ensuring efficient

¹³ Accessible online at: http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/sites/krimipoliitika/files/elfinder/dokumendid/strategy_for_preventing_violence_for_2015-2020.pdf.

protection of minors. These amendments encourage more employers to enter into employment contract with minors rather than contract for provision of services. The labour inspectors have a right to qualify a contract for provision of services as employment contract, if the contract has characteristics of employment contract.

72. In case the child is working outside of the framework of a formal employment relationship, the primary liability for ensuring the child's rights and well-being lies with the parent or with the person raising the child. Everyone who has knowledge about a threat to child's well-being is required to notify the local government or the child helpline service (11611) of the child in need of assistance.

Table 1
Working minors by age groups, all contract types, 2012–2017

<i>Year</i>	<i>Age < 7</i>	<i>Age 7–11</i>	<i>Age 12–14</i>	<i>Age 15–17</i>	<i>Total</i>
2012	8	120	1 807	6 284	8 219
2013	11	112	1 882	6 609	8 614
2014	8	165	2 055	7 902	10 130
2015	8	151	2 039	8 663	10 861
2016	7	155	2 039	8 849	11 050
2017	10	119	2 146	10 359	12 634

Source: Tax and Customs Board.

Table 2
Working minors by sex and age groups, all contract types, 2017

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Age < 7</i>	<i>Age 7–11</i>	<i>Age 12–14</i>	<i>Age 15–17</i>	<i>Total</i>
Male	6	67	992	4 413	5 478
Female	4	51	1 154	5 946	7 155
Total	10	118	2 146	10 359	12 633

Source: Tax and Customs Board.

73. In addition to regular inspections, the Labour Inspectorate conducts targeted inspections on working minors during the summer. As a result of more attention to minors in recent years the violations concerning working conditions of minors have significantly decreased since 2008. It is difficult to bring out concrete number of inspections concerning minors, since in addition to target inspections, working conditions of minors are also inspected during the routine inspections.

Table 3
Violations regarding working conditions of minors, 2014–2017

	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>
Entry into an employment contract or the admission of a minor to work that is prohibited	2	1	-	-
Entry into an employment contract with a minor without the prior consent of a legal representative	-	2	-	1
Entry into an employment contract without the consent of the labour inspector	-	-	-	-
Working time of minor is more than allowed by law	3	3	1	4
An overtime work agreement with a minor	-	1	-	-

	2014	2015	2016	2017
Break for a minor is less than 30 minutes for work at least 4.5 hours	1	3	-	1
Violations of restriction on requiring minor to work	2	4	1	1
Violations of daily rest time requirements	1	7	1	1
Total	9	21	3	8

Source: Labour Inspectorate.

74. The sanctions for violations of restriction on requiring minor to work, have been as follows:

Natural person misdemeanour procedures:

- 2014 – 1 expedited procedure, fine 140 euros;
- 2015 – 1 expedited procedure, fine 120 euros;
- 2017 – 1 expedited procedure, fine 300 euros.

Legal person misdemeanour procedures:

- 2016 – 1 general procedure, fine 500 euros;
- 2017 – 1 misdemeanour procedure, but closed due to limitation period ending.

Right to an adequate standard of living (art. 11)

Reduction of poverty

75. Subsistence benefit, consisting of the subsistence level and housing expenses, is a social benefit for people living in poverty paid from the state budget. People whose income after the payment of housing expenses falls below the subsistence level are eligible for subsistence benefit. The benefit is not limited in time and the amount of the benefit varies monthly depending on family composition and housing expenses.

76. The subsistence level is established and revised each budgetary year by the Parliament taking into account minimum expenditure on food, clothing, footwear and other goods and services to satisfy persons' basic needs.

77. In 2018 the subsistence level for the first or only family member is 140 euros, for each subsequent grown-up family member it is 80% thereof (112 euros) and for each child up to 18 years of age it is 120% thereof (168 euros) per month. The subsistence level of children has been raised remarkably from 80% before 2016 to 120% in 2018.

78. In 2016 Estonia endorsed the "Welfare Development Plan 2016–2023" where the purpose of having the subsistence level in line with the subsistence minimum was set as a priority. In 2018 the subsistence level for a single or first family member is 8 euros higher than the subsistence minimum without housing expenses. The Welfare Development Plan highlights, that the method of subsistence minimum needs to be up to date and taken into account while annually establishing the subsistence level. In the end of 2018, the analysis of subsistence minimum level will be published and taken into account while establishing the new subsistence level. A single parent family has the right to receive an additional social benefit of 15 euros accompanying the subsistence benefit.

79. Majority of the subsistence benefit receivers also receive other allowances and benefits covered by different social security schemes such as unemployment benefits and allowances, disability benefits, child benefits etc. Therefore, their effect on the inactivity or poverty trap must be viewed in combination. In addition to the help provided by the state, local authorities provide social welfare services and pay different universal and needs-based social benefits to people in need. For example, they compensate the cost for

pharmaceuticals, unexpected expenses; and they also offer food aid (in co-operation with NGO-s and the Fund for European Aid to the Most Deprived).

80. The subsistence benefit continues to be an important social transfer for reducing poverty, but at the same time, it is crucial to avoid the formation of poverty, inactivity and low-income trap while paying subsistence benefit. The main expected impact of the aforementioned amendments is that people participate in the labour market more actively, the absolute poverty rate decreases and the economic independency of people improves.

Adequate housing

81. The activities in the housing sector are based on the Estonian Energy Development Plan 2030. The previous Housing Development Plan 2008–2013 aimed to ensure better access to and a sustainable supply of housing units and a secure living environment. The development plan was implemented at the time of recession and the funds planned for the area of housing were re-allocated, which is why several measures were not executed. For example, the number of municipal housing units for rent was not increased and activities related to the accessibility of housing units were not completed. The focus was mainly on reducing the energy costs of the supply of housing units and the creation of favourable conditions for the renovation of apartment buildings.

82. Housing investment support for local governments was developed in 2017 in order to increase the number of municipal housing units, including social housing units, and it is used to finance the construction of new rental buildings and the reconstruction of existing municipal apartment buildings. Local governments are given support of up to 50% within the scope of this measure. The state has planned to allocate 60 million euros for the measure from 2017–2020.

83. Pursuant to the Social Welfare Act, a local government is obliged to assess a person's need for help comprehensively and to consequently offer them social services and support that guarantee their subsistence. Ensuring housing is a mandatory service to a person who is unable to find housing that meets their needs due to their socioeconomic status. A local government may use the shelter or safe house service as an interim stage with the person's consent when looking for more permanent and suitable housing for the person. The objective of the shelter service is to ensure accommodation for adults in need who are unable to find accommodation for themselves. The shelter service can be used in emergencies as well as over a longer period of time. The objective of the safe house service is to ensure temporary housing, a safe environment and primary help (incl. crisis support) to people in need. The service is mainly meant for children, but also for adults who accompany them and in certain cases for adults who need a safe environment (e.g. victims of domestic violence).

84. An eviction is carried out in an enforcement procedure according to the Code of Enforcement Procedure¹⁴ (CEP). Only claims arising from an enforcement instrument are fulfilled in an enforcement procedure. In case of eviction such an enforcement instrument can either be an effective court judgment or a statement of compulsory auctions on the basis of which a person who purchases an immovable is registered in the land register as the owner of the immovable, upon reclamation of possession of the immovable. Evictions, therefore, are carried out either in an enforcement proceeding for the release of immovable without the transfer of ownership, or in a separate enforcement proceeding after the immovable has been sold in a prior enforcement proceeding. The eviction process in both cases is carried out according to section 180 of the CEP.

85. In case it is determined that the immovable is in possession of a person that lacks the necessary legal basis, a bailiff shall grant a term of up to three months to the person being evicted for voluntary compliance with the enforcement instrument. When determining the term of voluntary compliance facts such as whether the person evicted will lose a home, whether the person has a possibility to move somewhere else, the size of the immovable and even the weather conditions at the time of the eviction, etc. The person being evicted can apply for a suspension of the enforcement proceedings or extension or deferment of

¹⁴ Accessible online at: <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/509072018006/consolide/current>.

enforcement if continuation of the proceedings is unfair in respect of him or her. The interests of the claimant and other circumstances shall be taken into account, including the family and economic situation of the person being evicted.

Safe public water supplies

86. Estonia continuously invests into measures targeted at ensuring quality drinking water to all inhabitants. Investments include finances from the state funded Environmental Investment Centre Environmental Programme, EU funds, as well as local municipalities and water utilities.

87. To ensure high-quality drinking water, new infrastructure for water supply has been built and existing ones expanded, modern water treatment plants have been built, primarily to remove fluorides, iron and manganese and improve the organoleptic quality of the water, mainly with funds from European Union and Environmental Programme. As the result of the installation and application of reverse osmosis devices, progress has been made in improving drinking water quality where excessive fluoride and boron content is present in natural waters. It is the responsibility of water supplier to ensure the quality of drinking water in coordination with the Health Board. checking the quality of drinking water.

88. According to the 2016 data, 88–89% of the population in Estonia is connected to the public drinking water supply where quality of drinking water is ensured and controlled. The compliance with the requirements of water quality in public drinking water supply has risen to 98% within the same time frame. 11 % of the population get drinking water from their own well. Requirements for construction and maintenance of wells is regulated in legal provisions. Since 2007, Estonia has invested with state funding more than 39 MEUR to modernization of private water supply and sewage systems in rural areas. These grants have improved the quality of life for about 20,000 people. The Ministry of the Environment has started a project to widen the knowledge of the quality of drinking water abstracted from private wells and technical situation of the individual drinking water systems. The project covers the whole country with ca 1000 private wells. Project will be finished by spring 2020. Early results show that there is a strong need for additional investments with over 100 MEUR to improve the quality of individual drinking water systems.

89. The total number of public drinking water supplies in 2016 was 1316.

90. According to 2016 data the content of fluorides and boron in drinking water continued to improve resulting from installation of several reverse osmosis devices or due to connecting problematic small drinking water supplies with bigger ones where the limit value was met.

91. In 2016 the fluoride limit value was met in all bigger drinking water supplies (over 2000 consumers). The permitted limit value of fluoride content in smaller drinking water supplies was exceeded in 11 public drinking water supplies. In 2016, 927 permanent consumers used water exceeding the fluoride limit value.

92. In 2016, boron exceeded the limit value in 4 drinking water supplies. In total, 595 consumers used water with excessive boron.

93. The Health Board has commenced proceedings regarding all drinking water supplies where fluoride or boron limit value was exceeded.

94. The radioactivity of the drinking water produced from the Western and Northern Estonian Cambrian-Vendian aquifer system is in high concentration due to naturally occurring radionuclides in specific groundwater layers. The health risk assessment with cost-benefit analysis finalized in 2018 by Tartu University analyzed the scale of the risk posed to health by the radioactive substances in drinking water and explained when it will be necessary to start taking measures for health protection. One of the project's output was a formula that water producers can use to calculate whether remedial actions are justified. Each water producer who supplies water with indicative dose over 0.1 mSv/year, can calculate their possible cost for removal of radionuclides, if the cost would exceed potential health benefits to general public, no further actions are necessary.

Right to physical and mental health (art. 12)

Sexual and reproductive health education and services

95. Sexual and reproductive health education is integrated in the national curricula of basic schools and upper secondary schools and is one of their mandatory components. The youth counselling centres are accessible free of charge to everyone irrespective of gender up to the age of 26.

96. Estonian Ministry of Education and Research does not gather or process data on pregnant adolescents in education system. Statistics Estonia gathers information on the age of the mother but her education level is not included in the data set.

97. All contraceptives are accessible to all women irrespective of their place of residence or disability. Condoms are sold in all grocery and convenience stores. Long-acting reversible contraceptives (spirals, implants, pills, etc.) require a doctor's or obstetrician's prescription. A discount of 50% is applied to long-acting reversible contraceptives, i.e. 50% is paid by the user and 50% is paid from the health insurance budget.

Abortions, abs figures

Year	Age group		
	10–14	15–17	18–19
2015	13	165	322
2016	20	146	287
2017	8	120	226

Births, abs figures

Year	Age group		
	10–14	15–17	18–19
2015	2	96	269
2016	5	77	228
2017	1	74	220

98. School attendance is compulsory for children up to the age of 17. There are alternative options available if a student cannot attend the school, such as individual study programme; home schooling; studying in an upper secondary school for adults in the daytime form of study.

Mental Health

99. Health insurance system covers the costs of psychiatric assistance to everyone covered by health insurance and like other medical assistance everyone has the right to psychiatric assistance, which has to be based on informed consent with the exception of cases of involuntary nature as strictly based on law and on the permission of the court. Emergency psychiatric assistance is guaranteed to everyone.

100. The state follows the voluntary document “Mental Health Strategy for 2016–2025” and finances the activities of the Mental Health Coalition that is also implementing the goals of the said strategy. This strategy is not a development document approved at the state level that would bring about obligations; it is a document created by Estonian mental health experts that can and is used as a pointer in planning activities in the area of mental health.

101. As the media performs an important role in informing and educating the public about suicide, different trainings and seminars on how to report suicide in the media has been carried out for journalists. Also web counselling is funded, because it's easily

accessible to all those who wish to use it and it overcomes barriers that may preclude others from seeking therapy.

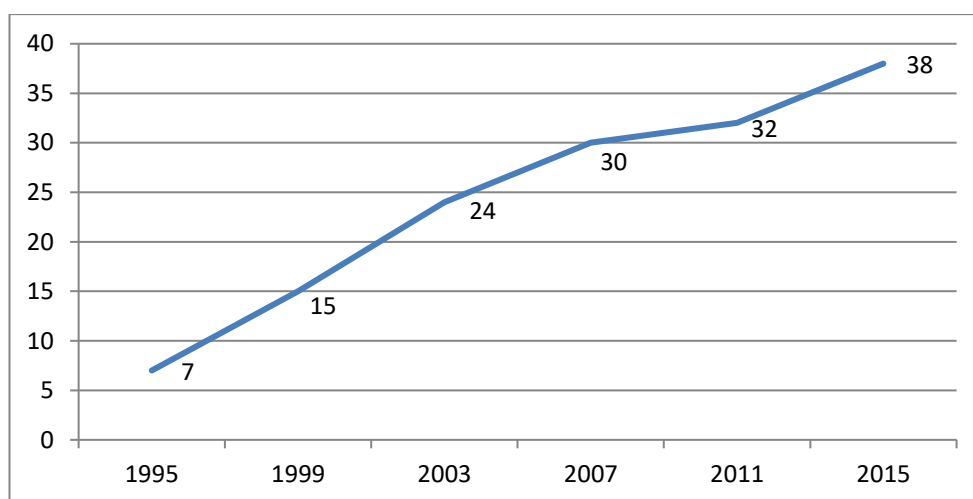
White Paper on drug prevention policy

102. Indicator 1: Drug overdose deaths are reduced. The goal of less than 80 drug overdose deaths per year has not been reached. In 2017, the number of deaths was 110 and it has been stable over the last years, mainly due to the use of fentanyl and its analogues. Despite of the availability of naloxone take-home program it is difficult to fight against constantly changing high potency synthetic opioid illicit drug market.

103. Indicator 2: By 2015 the percentage of 15–16-year-olds who have used drugs in their lifetime will be reduced. The goal to reach levels of 24% of 15–16-year-olds who have used drugs during their life (and more specifically, 10% for cannabis) has not been reached. The most popular substances among 15–16 years old students are cannabis (18.9%), inhalants and sedatives (without a doctor's prescription). In 2015, 3% of students used Ecstasy and 2% used amphetamines (ESPAD 2015¹⁵).

Figure 1

The use of illegal drugs by 15- to 16-year-olds throughout their lifetimes (%) 1995–2015 (ESPAD 20152)



104. Indicator 3 and 4: Every year will show a two percent decrease in the use of drugs during the last 12 months among the adult population (18–74-year-olds).

105. Indicator: Every year will show a two percent decrease in the use of drugs in their lifetime among minors (7–17-year-olds).

106. These indicators were not measured during the period of 2012–2018 due to the lack of general population survey.

107. Most of the drug treatment services are accessible for both gender (except one long term rehabilitation center is Sillamäe). Treatment services are free for everybody who needs them regardless of health insurance status.

108. Estonia has one center for people involved in commercial sex services. Many of the clients of the center also use illicit drugs. This center provides counselling services, rapid HIV testing, condoms, pregnancy tests, and syringes if needed.

109. At the end of the 2017, nine organisations in Estonia provided services for harm reduction. A total of 34 service centres exist in various regions of Estonia, of which 14 were stationary centres and 20 were based on outreach work. Since November 2018 two extra mobile harm reduction buses are providing service. Most of the services are located in

¹⁵ The use of drugs among students: The use of illegal drugs by 15- to 16-year-olds in Estonia, 2015, National Institute for Health Development 2016. (ESPAD 2015).

Harju County and East Viru County, although services are also provided in Tapa, Pärnu and Paide (fig. 2).

Figure 2
Location of harm reduction services in Estonia, 2017

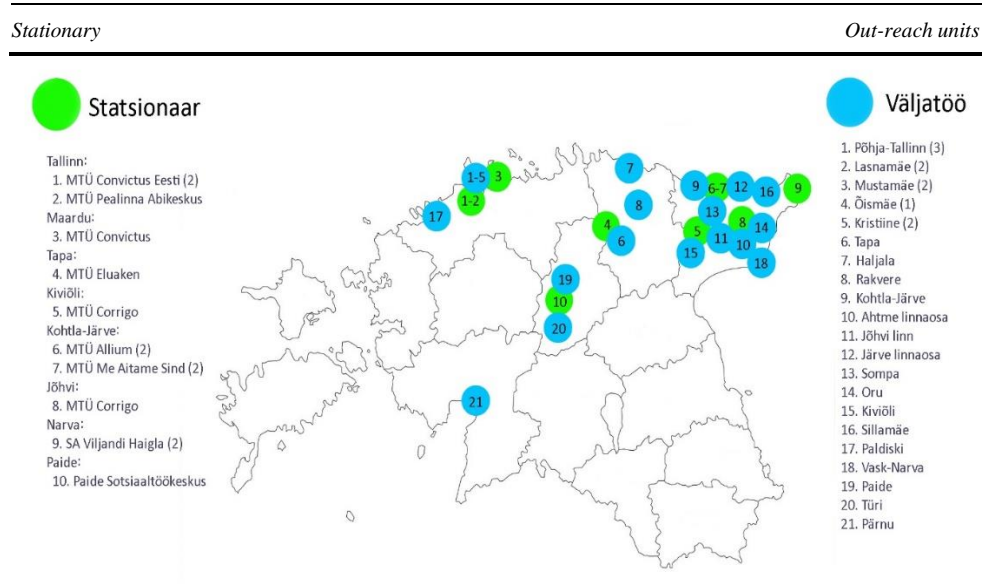


Table 1
Statistics on the use of harm reduction services, 2015–2017

	2015	2016	2017
Total service users (with a client code)	5 810	5 608	5 465
Number of times the service is used annually	138 325	132 325	110 636
Number of consultations with harm reduction specialists	50 822	47 417	43 896
Number of consultations with social workers	6 868	7 734	7 794
Number of psychological consultations	1 047	1 494	1 210
Health-related counselling	5 558	6 199	5 837
Number of distributed syringes	2 136 691	2 070 169	1 997 158

110. Approximately two million syringes are distributed to injecting drug users every year via the harm reduction services.

111. The other direct measure to tackle the spread of HIV is free ART for everybody as soon as possible after the diagnosis is confirmed. The treatment is freely accessible for people without health insurance. In every hospital/clinic offering ART, case management services are also provided (includes social worker, psychologist, and depends on the center also peer counselling).

112. In 2017 4109 patients received ART, in previous years 3941, 3494, 2998, and 2691, respectively for 2016, 2015, 2014 and 2013.

113. Estonia has a steady decline in new HIV cases that are related to injecting drug use. In 2015, 20.4% of new HIV cases were related to sharing needles. In 2016, the percentage was 13.5% and in 2017 6.4%.

Right to education (arts. 13 and 14)

Enrolment rates

114. The enrolment rate at the primary education level has remained constantly high over the last decade. The enrolment rate is not 100% as the dataset includes children who have the permission to start primary school a year later and children attending school abroad.

115. Comparing enrolment to tertiary education institutions to secondary school graduation rates (ca 60% female and 40% male students) the rates are more proportionate. One of the reasons behind the difference in enrolment rates to higher education lies in earlier education pathway decisions: a higher number of male students enrol into vocational education after basic school. Around 2/3 of vocational school graduates are male, they form the majority in low performers section and are less likely to continue their studies on secondary school level, which is the common pathway to tertiary education.

116. Since 2012/2013 academic year, higher education is free of charge for those studying full-time and in Estonian. It is difficult to make direct links, but the number of male students enrolled to tertiary education institutions has increased.

117. The dropout rate from upper secondary vocational education has decreased for three consecutive years due to the increasingly targeted activity of educational institutions.

118. The drop-out risk is highest in the first school year and the challenge for VET providers is to keep the most vulnerable learners (those who had low grades in basic school and may not have had positive learning experience or have not developed study habits) in VET programmes.

119. Developing good quality support services is essential to prevent dropping out. In 2018, the budget of VET institutions was increased by EUR 3.25 million, mostly targeted to financing support services to increase the ability of schools to support learners, including those with special needs.

120. A vocational orientation programme has been successfully piloted in 2017 and 2018 in three VET institutions. A legal basis will be adopted in 2019 to extend it to other VET institutions.

Bilingual and multicultural education

121. According to the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act and national curriculum cultural diversity and tolerance, equality and non-discrimination are, among others, considered basic values and topics of Estonian education content. The fundamental principles of education are based on the recognition of universal and national values, freedom of the individual, religion and conscience.

122. Estonia is one of the few Member States of the European Union where the education system makes it possible to acquire an education in a language other than the state language at publicly financed schools. Russian education is accessible in state and private schools at all levels: pre-school, basic school and secondary school, as well as in vocational schools and some institutions of higher education.

123. Schools organise language and cultural studies for students acquiring basic education whose native language is not Estonian if this is requested by at least 10 students with the same native language or language of communication at home (subsection 21 (5) of the Basic Schools and Upper Secondary Schools Act).

Table 1
Basic Education, 2017/2018 school year (Data: Haridussilm)

<i>Language of instruction¹⁶</i>	<i>Number of Schools</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
Estonian	436	95 876
Estonian (language immersion programme)	36	7 099
English	6	520
Finnish	1	66
Russian	70	22 188
Sum	549	125 749

Table 2
Vocational Education, 2017/2018 school year (Data: Haridussilm)

<i>Language of instruction</i>	<i>Number of Schools with programmes</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
Estonian	37	19 102
English	1	6
Latvian	1	No data
Russian	11	5 035
Sum	38	24 143

Cultural rights (art. 15)

Rights of national minorities

124. Approximately 300 cultural societies and 21 umbrella organisations of national minorities operated in Estonia in 2017, and two national minorities (Swedes and Finns) have cultural autonomy. The cultural societies of national minorities can apply for base financing from the Integration Foundation via umbrella organisations. The Ministry of Culture finances, in addition to umbrella organisations, a support programme for the cultural societies of national minorities aimed at the preservation and development of the cultures and languages of national minorities and supporting integration, and the ministry allocates operating support to cultural autonomy bodies every year.

125. National minorities may, with the agreement of all parties, use their native languages in oral communication with the employees of state authorities and local government institutions, notaries, bailiffs and sworn translators, and on foreign missions of Estonia. All ministries and state agencies have Russian and English websites. Local government institutions take into account the needs of people belonging to national minorities in the use of language. The newspapers of local governments in Tallinn, Harju County and Ida-Viru County are published in Estonian and Russian. The services of the Employment Office are offered in Russian in regions where the number of persons belonging to national minorities is high. Russian is used in banking, business and medicine as well as in local governments and municipal services in regions where the share of the Russian-speaking population is large.

126. The native languages of ethnic minorities are studied at the Sunday schools of the cultural associations of national minorities, whose mission is to develop and preserve the languages and culture of the ethnic groups. The Ministry of Education and Research finances Sunday schools from the state budget. More than 30 Sunday schools were registered in the Estonian Education Information System in the 2017/2018 academic year.

127. The objective of the Estonian Society of Teachers of Sunday Schools of National Minorities is to establish Sunday schools and organise courses for Sunday school teachers.

¹⁶ One school can have several languages of instruction.

128. Estonian Public Broadcasting launched the Russian-language TV channel ETV+ in 2015. Private Russian-language channels also operate in Estonia. The most popular Russian radio stations are Russian Radio and Radio 4 (a public channel).

129. Regional Russian press exists just about everywhere in Estonia where there are residents whose native language is Russian. 17% of books, 157 periodicals, 42 magazines and 36 newspapers (including one national daily newspaper in Russian) ca 20 different commercial magazines are published in Russian. There are also national Russian online media portals: rus.err.ee, delfi.ru, dv.ee, veneportal.ee, rus.postimees.ee, mke.ee and vecherka.ee.

130. Estonia values the preservation of cultural traditions of national minorities in their authentic forms via various regional cultural programmes. The Peipsiveere cultural programme supports the historical culture of the Russian Old Believers. Festivals, folk culture training events, cultural summer camps for children and a special programme that introduces local cultural heritage in the school curriculum are supported by the programme.

131. Many national minorities and groups have established museums: the Russian Museum operating in Tallinn and Kohtla-Järve and the Estonian-Swedish, Chuvash and Jewish museums in Tallinn. Russian and Ukrainian cultural centres also operate.

Scientific research

132. Research and development is regulated by the Organisation of Research and Development Act.¹⁷

¹⁷ <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/513042015012/consolide>.