

Implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

Answers to the issues to be taken up in connection with the consideration of the second periodic reports of Estonia concerning articles 1 to 15 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (E/C.12/EST/2)

I. General Information

1. Please update the information contained in the second periodic report with regard to (a) new bills or laws, and their respective regulations; (b) new institutions (and their mandates) or institutional reforms; and (c) recent ratifications of human rights instruments.

New legal acts

As of May 2009 amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act and Labour Market Services and Benefits Act entered into force transferring the functions of the Labour Market Board to the public body Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. After the entry into force of the amendments, the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund assumes responsibility for the provision and organization of labour market measures to unemployed persons and job-seekers.

On 1 July 2009 the new Employment Contracts Act entered into force. The English version of the act is available on <http://www.sm.ee/eng/activity/working-and-managing/employment-contracts-act.html>.

Pursuant to the amendments to the Unemployment Insurance Act entered into force on 1 January 2011, the foundation capital of labour market services and benefits was established; specified activities of the foundation are agreed within an employment programme with a specified term. The foundation is funded from the budgets of the unemployment insurance benefit foundation, the benefit foundation paid in the case of lay-offs and insolvency of employers as well as the budget funds of the Ministry of Social Affairs from the state budget.

The Equal Treatment Act referred to in paragraph 10 of the second periodic report of Estonia 2008 was passed on 11 December, 2009 and entered into force on 1 January 2009. The information provided in the periodic report holds true for the content of the Act as it was actually passed. Pursuant to the Act, the competence of the Gender Equality Commissioner was expanded and the commissioner is now known as the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, who heads the Office of the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner.

The Equal Treatment Act has been amended on two occasions, once to require the equal treatment of full-time and temporary workers and most recently with amendments that entered into force on 23 October 2009, which provide for more detailed provisions regarding applications submitted to request an expert opinion from the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner, and the Commissioner's rights in obtaining information from all relevant persons.

Some amendments to legal acts have also been referred to below in connection with answers to more specific questions.

Institutional amendments

The reform of the labour market agencies was implemented in 2009, which terminated the activities of the Labour Market Board and the obligations to provide active labour market measures (including payments of unemployment benefits) were transferred to the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (as of 1 May 2009), which was previously engaged only in the administration of the unemployment insurance. Also the representatives of social partners belong to the management body of the new joint institution. This has provided an excellent ground for a more efficient implementation of the labour market policy from now on. As a result of the merger of the labour market agencies, the number of people who participate in active labour market services has significantly increased; the quality of labour market services has improved as well.

Pursuant to the Equal Treatment Act, the competence of the Gender Equality Commissioner was expanded and the commissioner is now known as the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner. The Commissioner is an independent and impartial expert who acts independently, monitors compliance with the requirements of the Equal Treatment Act and the Gender Equality Act, and performs other functions imposed by law. These include advising and assisting persons in submitting complaints and claims regarding discrimination, and providing an expert opinion regarding possible cases of discrimination, at the request of any person or on his or her own initiative. The Commissioner also analyses the situation of men and women and all other groups in society with regard to equal treatment, and can make recommendations to the Government of the Republic, government agencies and local government agencies regarding the implementation of the Gender Equality Act and Equal Treatment Act, and take measures to promote equality in society as a whole. The activities of the Commissioner are financed from the state budget, including the work of the Office of the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner.

As of March 2011 the Chancellor of Justice Act was amended and the Chancellor of Justice assumed also the functions of Children's Ombudsman. Already on 1 January 2011, a new division in the Office of the Chancellor of Justice a new division was formed dealing only with children's rights. The tasks of this department are as follows: dealing with complaints concerning children's rights in areas of constitutional review and ombudsman activities; preparation and carrying out of inspection visits; preparation of applications and opinions in constitutional review cases; providing education about children's rights and informing about the UN convention on the rights of the child; conducting research and analyses in questions of promotion and protection of children's rights; co-operation with children and youth organizations, third sector, professional unions, state and scientific authorities.

As of 1 May 2011, the amendment to the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act pursuant to which “any other unemployed person whose possibility to find employment is particularly hindered” belongs to the risk group (unemployed persons whose joining the labour market is more complicated than on average belong there). The Labour Market Services and Benefits Act does not list any particular labour market services based on target groups (excl. specific additional labour market services targeted on disabled persons). The underlying principle for the provision of measures is individual approach and preparing an Individual Action Plan for each unemployed person in order to ensure that the circle of services is as suitable and flexible as possible to help bring the person back to the labour market. The possibility to provide labour market measures – besides the standard services listed in the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act – also according to the programme financed by the European Social Fund and the state programme referred to in point b), the content and services of which can be designed according to the current needs of the labour market, adds even more flexibility to solving individuals’ problems.

International agreements

- Declaration drafted on the basis of paragraph 1 of article 14 of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, 8 July 2010;
- Declaration on the recognition of the competence of the International Commission of Inquiry, drafted on the basis of paragraph 2(a) of article 90 of the Protocol I additional to the Geneva Conventions of 8 June 1977 of the Geneva Convention 1949, relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, 26 January 2009;
- Accession to the United Nations Convention against Corruption, 26 February 2010;
- Ratification of the Convention against Computer Crime, 1 January 2010;
- Ratification of the Additional Protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Individuals with regard to Automatic Processing of Personal Data regarding supervisory authorities and transborder data flows, 19 June 2009;
- Ratification of the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, 30 March 2009;
- Accession to the Convention on the Prohibition of Military or Any Other Hostile Use of Environmental Modification Techniques, 11 March 2011.

2. Please provide examples of cases where the Covenant has been invoked by national courts of law, either as a ground for a case or as interpretative guidance for legal norms.

In 2007 the Tartu District Court addressed 3 cases in which the claimants argued that the acts by which they were denied national old-age pension on the ground that they already receive pension from another country is discriminatory and not in compliance with international obligations of the Republic of Estonia, including ICESCR. The court found that the cited international legal instruments (including ICESCR) establish rights of general nature and do not regulate the conditions and procedure for determination and payment of pension, and are, therefore, irrelevant to the case. Also, the legal obligations provided in the international conventions referred to by the claimants are of international character and therefore, as a rule, do not grant to an individual a subjective right of claim against the state.

In similar matters Tallinn Administrative Court (10 cases in 2007) has found that moreover the persons concerned were not denied pension as such, but received it from another country and therefore there is no violation of the right to social security pursuant to Covenant. Further, ICESCR only provides obligations of a general nature and do not regulate the conditions and procedure for determination and payment of pension, and are therefore not relevant to the claim(s).

There have been some further cases where claimants have made general reference to ICESCR, however the Covenant has not been mentioned by the courts.

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

Article 2 paragraph 2 - Non-discrimination

3. Please provide recent data, disaggregated on the basis of the prohibited grounds of discrimination, on a yearly comparative basis, on the implementation of the rights enshrined in the Covenant.

Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner:

Data for the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner is available concerning all prohibited grounds of discrimination as of 1 January 2009, as this marks the entry into force of the Equal Treatment Act.

In 2009, the Commissioner received a total of 51 complaints of discrimination, on the following grounds: sex - 30; sexual orientation - 5; disability - 3; ethnic origin - 2; membership in a trade union - 2; age - 1; other grounds not expressly set out in the Equal Treatment Act - 8.

In 2010, the Commissioner received 47 complaints of discrimination, on the following grounds: sex - 24; age - 4; sexual orientation - 3; ethnic origin - 2; belief - 1; sex and disability (multiple discrimination) - 2; age and sex (multiple discrimination) - 1; age and disability (multiple discrimination) - 1.

In the Commissioner's opinion, discrimination had taken place in 15 of the cases in 2010.

Chancellor of Justice:

The Chancellor of Justice may deal with equality issues within the framework of supervision over the legality and constitutionality of legislation, in Ombudsman proceedings or voluntary reconciliation proceedings.

In 2008, the Chancellor of Justice received a total of 52 applications relating to the principle of equality and non-discrimination.

On four different occasions, the Chancellor of Justice found that legislation was incompatible with the principle of equal treatment provided for in § 12 of the Constitution. One case involved discrimination on the grounds of age, one on the grounds of language, and two cases involved discrimination based on other status. In all four cases, the body that had enacted the legislation agreed to amend the legislation on its own initiative.

No violations of the principle of equal treatment were found in any of the applications under the Ombudsman procedure.

The Chancellor of Justice received one application for reconciliation proceedings regarding discrimination on the basis of national origin, one concerning discrimination on the basis of political beliefs and one concerning discrimination based on other status. None of these proceedings was carried out in full due to a lack of will on the part of the respondents.

In 2009, the Chancellor of Justice received a total of 26 applications relating to the principle of equality and non-

discrimination.

On one occasion, the Chancellor of Justice found that legislation was incompatible with the principle of equal treatment provided for in § 12 of the Constitution, due to discrimination on the basis of other status. On another occasion the Chancellor of Justice held that the application by a local government of its legislation was discriminatory on the grounds of sexual orientation, yet the local government in question refused to amend its regulation or its interpretation. The alleged victim then filed a case with the courts.

The Chancellor of Justice received one application for reconciliation proceedings due to age discrimination and one application due to discrimination on the basis of national origin; however neither of these proceedings was carried out in full due to a lack of will on the part of the respondents.

In 2010, altogether 43 applications related to complying with the principle of equal treatment were filed to the Chancellor of Justice. Ten applications concerned potential discrimination (i.e. unfavourable treatment due to specific discrimination indicators according to the second sentence of § 12(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia), the rest of the applications focused on the issues of following the general principle of equality. The said applications addressed the compatibility of legal acts with the constitution as well as the activities of public authorities and conducting the conciliation procedure. Upon 3 cases, the Chancellor of Justice established a contravention of the general principle of equality laid down in § 12(1) of the Constitution in a legislation of general application.

In 2010, The Chancellor of Justice received two applications for reconciliation proceedings due to equal treatment. In one case, the respondent did not agree on the reconciliation proceedings and the Chancellor of Justice terminated the proceedings. In the second case, the petitioner withdrew his/her application for reconciliation proceedings.

During the period 2007 - 2011 the Estonian courts have addressed discrimination issues in civil matters as follows (only completed cases are listed):

Employment - 3 cases

Public service - 2 cases

Social affairs - 3 cases

Taxation - 1 case

4. In view of the low number of court cases based on discrimination as enumerated in paragraphs 22 to 24 of the State party report, please inform the Committee of any measures taken by the State party to enforce its anti-discrimination legislation in a more effective manner so as to ensure the right of victims to effective remedies.

The Equal Treatment Act entered into force on 1 January 2009. This marked an important step towards ensuring the rights of victims of discrimination to effective remedies, as the Act serves to provide specific provisions for the interpretation and application of the general equality clause and general prohibition on discrimination provided for in § 12 of the Constitution with regard to all protected grounds except sex. This provides everyone with the information they need on how to proceed if they believe that they have been discriminated against. The Act provides the definition of the principle of equal treatment, direct discrimination, indirect discrimination and harassment, and establishes that both instructing others to discriminate and victimization are forms of prohibited discrimination. The law further allows for the use of positive action under specific circumstances and establishes a shared burden of proof in cases of prima facie discrimination. As noted above, the Act also expanded the competence of the Gender Equality Commissioner, who is now the Gender Equality and Equal Treatment Commissioner (see 1 (b)). Pursuant to the Act, discrimination disputes shall be resolved by a court or a labour dispute committee, and discrimination disputes may also be resolved by the Chancellor of Justice by way of conciliation proceedings. The Act clearly states the legal remedies available in cases of discrimination: the right to demand termination of the violation and to claim compensation for both patrimonial and non-patrimonial damage. In 2009 and 2010 several information campaigns have been carried out to introduce the Act and to raise public awareness on the issues of equal treatment and non-discrimination.

5. Please provide detailed information on the new act replacing the Social Benefits for Disabled Persons Act, cited in paragraph 194 of the State party report, and the impact of its implementation. Moreover, please indicate whether the various allowances, listed in table 36 of the State party report, enable persons with disabilities and their families to have an adequate standard of living or to meet the expenses for which they are paid, such as the education allowance for non-working disabled student. Please also indicate to what extent public services

and buildings are accessible to persons with disabilities, taking account of the various forms of disability.

The purpose of social benefits for persons with disabilities is to support their self-efficiency, social integration and equal opportunities and promote learning and working through the partial compensation for additional expenses caused by the disability. The amendments to the said Act entered into force on 1 October 2008 transferring the system of allowances for disabled persons of working age to new grounds. While earlier the monthly allowance depended on the degree of severity of the disability, now, additional expenses caused by the disability are established in the case of persons of working age. The amount of the allowance is determined on the basis of the additional expenses. Several different expenses that arise when taking part in everyday life are taken into account: medicinal products, transport, special aids and equipment, special need for clothing and footwear, increased self-care and household expenses, the means of communication. The purpose is to support the self-efficiency, coping and working of disabled persons – i.e. to promote the activeness of disabled people. It is presumed that the people who are more active have more additional expenses and are therefore subject to a higher allowance. Disabled children and disabled persons of retirement age continue to receive allowances pursuant to the current system where additional expenses are not established and the degree of severity of the disability is determined on the basis of the frequency and extent of personal assistance and guidance. The amount of the allowance depends on the degree of the severity of the disability.

In order to motivate disabled persons to participate in the labour market, a new type of allowance – work allowance – was added to the Act. This allowance is paid to working disabled persons up to the age of 70, who have actual additional expenses caused by their disease in connection with working. These expenses can be transport expenses, increased need for an assistant or special aids and equipment etc.

However, the work allowance has not been used much so far. This can be caused by the fact that there are people who are yet not aware of the opportunity to receive this allowance. On the other hand, the reason behind this can also be the fact that there is not always a need for it. Many disabled persons can cope very well in available working and learning environments and do not need an additional allowance.

The amount of the monthly allowance paid to a person of working age depends on the extent to which the person's participation in everyday life is hindered. When the person is active, his or her expenses are higher as well, which is taken into account in determining the monthly allowance. If the person has no additional expenses in relation to working in his or her workplace, there is no need to apply for the work allowance either.

Pursuant to the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act, it is possible to adapt the working premises or a workplace according to the needs of a disabled person. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund enters into a contract with the employer for that and the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund partially compensates the employer the cost of the adaptation. It is also possible to provide special aids and equipment necessary for working without charge. This can also be arranged through the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund.

In addition to the work allowance, disabled people can still apply for education allowance and in-service training allowance. These allowances were not amended in 2008. The education allowance has been prescribed for unemployed disabled students in order to decrease disability-related hindrances in receiving an education in the formal educational system. The in-service training allowance is paid to employed disabled persons for vocational training and formal education acquired within the adult education system in order to promote their retention in employment.

The previous years do not provide the most suitable basis for the assessment of the impact of the amendments to the Social Benefits for Disabled Persons Act. Due to the general economic recession, the general employment, including the employment of disabled people, decreased in record speed. Therefore it is difficult to indicate separately the direct impact of the changes on employment, entered into force on 1 October 2008. However, the increase in the average amount of the monthly allowance per person paid to disabled persons of working age can be indicated as a positive aspect.

In order to give the disabled people an opportunity to live an independent life and participate fully in all aspects of life, the state has taken measures to ensure the disabled people equal access to the physical environment, transport, information and means of communication, including information and communication technologies and systems as well as other necessary public facilities and services in both urban and rural areas.

Pursuant to § 3(9) of the Building Act, the construction works, parts thereof which are for public use and the premises and sites thereof shall be accessible to and usable by persons with reduced mobility and by visually impaired and hearing impaired persons if required by the purpose use of the construction works. A building where services inter alia related to arts or other cultural activities or sports, exercise, hobby, recreation or other similar services are provided is defined as a public construction works. The requirements ensuring that the mentioned groups of persons are able to move in public construction works (requirements have also been provided for roads and car-parks, footpaths and pavements, landmarks in public places etc.) have been established on the basis of paragraph 10 of the same section.

The situation in respect of the physical accessibility of public services in Estonia differs in different administrative areas, which is partly connected with the volume of services provided. For instance, according to the assessment of the Ministry of Education and Research, there are no serious problems with the accessibility of educational institutions under state administration, but there are problems with the accessibility of pre-school child care institutions and general education schools under local governments' administration. The physical accessibility is hindered the most in pre-school child care institutions, general education schools and adult education institutions under local governments' administration. According to the information of the Association of Estonian Cities, Association of Municipalities of Estonia and Ministry of Education and Research, it can be generalised that 20% of schools in Estonia are fully accessible and 80% of schools are partly accessible or inaccessible; therefore, case-based solutions are implemented. At the same time, according to research results, disabled people refer relatively seldom to difficulties with accessibility of or entry into educational institutions as hindrances to learning.

According to the assessment of the Association of Estonian Cities and Association of Municipalities of Estonia, 44% of nursery schools, 18% of rural municipality governments, 26% of youth centres, 27% of day centres and 22% of hobby centres are accessible. Also the results of the research "Measures supporting the employment of the disabled" carried out in 2009 indicate that the accessibility of the institutions providing public services – adjustment of ramps, handrails, handholds, disabled toilets etc. – differs greatly in different places.

There are institutions in the area of competence of the Ministry of Social Affairs that provide social, healthcare and labour market services and accessibility to which is of major importance for disabled people. As of 2009, 66 (55%) general care homes out of 120 are fully accessible and there is no access to 18 institutions (15%). Full access has been ensured to 30 (38%) medical rehabilitation institutions and there is no access to 7 institutions (9%). Eight (30%) offices of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund were fully accessible, 9 (33%) offices were partly accessible and 10 (37%) were inaccessible; however, in this connection it is important to add that all the said sectors are continually developed and the access of clients with special needs to the services is improving.

Hospitals are accessible, but there are problems with family health centres. There are 59 institutions providing services (5 different services) to persons with mental disability. Among the services, the accessibility has been ensured as follows: 28 institutions (58%) providing services that support coping with everyday life are accessible, 22 institutions (60%) providing services that support employment are accessible, 19 institutions (44%) providing the service of supported life, 1 institution (33%) providing the service for living in a community and 11 institutions (50%) providing round-the-clock care are accessible.

There are 320 institutions in the area of competence of the Ministry of Culture (in other words, 71% of all facilities, including theatres, museums, community cultural centres, community centres, clubhouses and libraries) where accessibility needs to be improved in a greater or small extent.

There is no precise overview of the accessibility of the public services provided by private enterprises. The fact that several private service providers have already taken the access requirements into account, being sometimes even more flexible than state authorities.

There are ca 2,000 busses of different size and range of price in use in Estonian public transport; trolleybuses and trams in Tallinn are in addition to them. There are no state level requirements laid down for public transport vehicles and low-floor public transport vehicles have been introduced (12-14% of urban busses in larger cities) and/or hoists for the disabled have been obtained only in some areas, in order to enable persons with mobility disability to use the service of public transport in a better way. At the same time, in addition to the high age of the public transport vehicles (mostly more than 10 years), the shortage of investments necessary for meeting the mobility needs of disabled persons is also a problem.

In order to ensure the mobility of disabled people, the local governments have the obligation to organise a transport service for the disabled. A disabled taxi differs from a regular taxi from its technical solutions and local governments compensate the price of the service. If it is not possible to ensure the freedom to move of a person with mobility disability by public or specialised transport and using a private car is the only option, it is possible to support buying of an automobile and its adjustment to the specific needs.

As one of the requirements to improve the possibilities of the disabled people's to use public transport, the General Rules for Regular Carriage of Passengers by Bus, Occasional Carriage by Bus, Taxi Service and Carriage of Baggage has been established by the Minister of the Economic Affairs and Communications Regulation No. 141 of 26 May 2004 and § 3(11) of which stipulates that there shall be at least two marked priority seats for pre-school children and disabled people in each public transport vehicle on rural municipality, urban or county lines. Other passengers are obliged to give those seats up if necessary.

According to the „Survey of the Disabled and the Care Load of their Family Members” carried out in 2009, nearly half of the disabled adults who use public transport or adjusted public transport have no problems with using it, but it became evident from the “Survey of the Needs of Disabled Children and their Families” carried out in the same year, that 20% of the parents of children with disabilities have faced the problem of the lack of suitable transport necessary for going out of home in order to use social services. The parents of children with disabilities who live in rural areas experienced this problem more often than other parents (25%).

At the same time, it is possible to improve the access to public transport by improving substantial access (such as announcing stops both verbally and in writing, bus stops always at determined stopping points, clearly displayed illuminated bus line marking signs in large print), which has also been done.

Access to information by using information technology will be ensured after the activities specified in the development documents of the sector (Estonian Information Society Strategy 2013) have been implemented. The objectives of the Information Society Strategy are, inter alia, ensuring the possibility to use an internet service of sufficient quality to use services provided and of similar price throughout Estonia; ensuring the accessibility of public sector web pages also for people with special needs; ensuring that all inhabitants have at least general knowledge and skills for using computers and the Internet as well as awareness of the opportunities and threats related to the information society has increased. The objective is to create an information society that involves all members of society.

Access to information, means of communication and other services, including electronic and emergency services, has generally been well developed already and is being continuously developed. However, a number of web pages are not in a disability-specific form (WCAG and WAI guidelines) yet, which is required to ensure the compatibility of different programs and technical aids. Specific technical aids such as audio text readers, Braille embossers etc. are available for visually impaired persons. The possibilities to receive information have been ensured for people with different disabilities through radio and television broadcasts, the Internet, periodical publications and the like.

In order to access information, a deaf or hearing impaired person needs the service of a Sign Language interpreter, technical aids for using computers, news programmes in Sign Language and subtitled TV-programmes to be available. Local governments in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research are responsible for the availability of the Sign Language interpretation service (consumer, school, conference and

court interpretation and interpretation over the air). The availability of the service is constantly improving in respect of both the availability of qualified Sign Language interpreters and the volume of service itself.

The local governments are obliged to establish conditions for a child with disability to learn at a school in the child's place of residence, if it is in favour of the child and a desire of the parents. At that, there is a possibility to learn either at a special school or at a regular school. If it is in the child's favour to attend a special school, there is a system of special schools in Estonia enabling to obtain education in the environment that supports the child's intellectual and social development in the best manner. The special schools are divided into schools for students with hearing and/or speech impairment, multiple disabilities and/or mobility disability, mental disability, behavioural and emotional disorders.

In Estonia, the provision of Braille textbooks has been ensured for all visually impaired students in both regular and special schools. The necessary support, counselling and training are available at the counselling centres established on the bases of state schools and which are successfully used by regular schools. The Programme of Hearing Impairment Rehabilitation for 2008-2011, where the required activities of different parties have been specified, including organising the education-system in a better way, is being carried out in cooperation with organisations for hearing impaired persons. Both education allowances and in-service training allowances have been provided in order to support the education of the disabled.

In order to broaden the opportunities of the disabled to get information, the Estonian Library for the Blind is working as a branch of the Estonian Deposit Library under the area of competence of the Ministry of Culture. The task of the library is to manufacture, collect, store and lend the documents in Braille. The Public Libraries Act obligates the public libraries to organise home service free of charge for inhabitants, who are not able to visit the library due to health reasons, at their request. The Ministry of Education and Research ensures all means, manners and formats of communication necessary for teaching and learning (the use of Sign Language, Braille, augmentative and alternative communication and all other means, manners and formats of communication chosen by the disabled). There are a couple of television programmes (mainly news programmes) simultaneously interpreted into the Estonian Sign Language in order to deliver public information to the disabled.

It is necessary to take measures to increase the awareness of the public and the institutions providing public services and to improve the availability of services. To that end, there is a close cooperation with other administrative agencies and the third sector bodies, such as the Rescue Board, The Estonian Chamber of Disabled People and several others that actively provide trainings.

In order to improve the accessibility of emergency services, cooperation projects with the aim of ensuring the availability of emergency services for the deaf and also the blind if necessary have been carried out with the Rescue Board.

For example, a special communication solution based on modern technology has been developed in order to deliver and receive emergency messages from hearing impaired persons via the single emergency phone 112; the aim of the solution is to enable hearing and speech impaired persons in particular to deliver emergency messages to the alarm centre free of charge, without delay and without assistance. Special smoke detectors which have been made available in cooperation between the Rescue Board and the state have been made available for hearing impaired persons in order to prevent them getting into emergency situations. Technical aids for notifying of emergency situations are ensured for disabled people through the state system for the allocation of technical aids under favourable conditions.

The Centre of Disability information and Assistive Technology is developing, in cooperation with the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, a universal manual on design which focuses on creating accessible buildings and environments.

Improvement of accessibility is an ongoing process and the access of disabled people to public services has improved year by year.

6. Please provide additional detailed information about 'persons with undetermined citizenship' as referred to in paragraph 8, and how this status of 'undetermined citizenship' affects the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights on the same level as citizens.

'Persons with undetermined citizenship' as a term has no legal definition. In practice, all persons who do not have citizenship of any country are considered as persons with undetermined citizenship whether it is actually possible

for them to obtain the citizenship of some country. As of 31 May 2011, there were 99,677 persons with undetermined citizenship living in Estonia with a valid residence permit or a right of residence. Here we would like to explain that in Estonia, economic, social and cultural rights as well as ensuring them are associated with the residence and not with the citizenship of a person. These rights are equally enjoyable for all persons who are staying in Estonia on a legal basis, whether they are Estonian citizens, citizens of any other country or persons with undetermined citizenship. Exceptions to this are only a few political rights, such as the right to vote in parliamentary elections and the right to be elected.

7. Please indicate whether the State party has adopted a comprehensive strategy as well as targeted policies and programmes to ensure the right of the Russian-speaking population to the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights without discrimination.

§ 49 of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia provides that „everyone has the right to preserve his or her national identity”. Pursuant to section 50 of the Constitution, „national minorities have the right, in the interests of national culture, to establish self-governing agencies under conditions and pursuant to procedure provided by the National Minorities Cultural Autonomy Act”. Moreover, section 12 of the Constitution prohibits discrimination against on the basis of nationality and language.

The principal document underlying development and protection of other nationalities is the „Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013”. The Government of the Republic endorsed the integration strategy on 10 April 2008. On the basis of the order No. 236 of the Government of the Republic of 11 June 2009, the tasks related to integration policy were delegated to the Ministry of Culture and the Minister of Culture was appointed as the person responsible for the coordination and implementation of the activities of the integration strategy; the corresponding amendments were inserted into the integration strategy as well. In addition to the integration strategy, also its implementation plans for 2008–2010¹ and 2011–2013² were adopted, which include specific indicators for measuring the success of the implementation of the integration strategy.

The integration strategy is implemented in three different fields: educational and cultural, social and economical, legal and political fields.

The state of Estonia guarantees education, social benefits and social services to all people living in Estonia. Each person, who has decided to live in Estonia, to bind his or her personal life and professional input with Estonia, is under the jurisdiction and protection of the state. The objectives of the integration strategy provide that the Estonian Integration Strategy 2008-2013 rests on the fundamental values laid down in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union: democracy, the rule of law, peace, the right of self-determination of individuals, respect for human rights and cultural diversity. The aim of integration is to value Estonian citizenship and appreciate every person’s contribution to the development of society, accepting cultural differences at the same time. The principles of the rule of law, respect for personal liberty and human rights and ensuring welfare, education, social security, as well as the opportunities to promote business, creative self-expression and health to all permanent residents serve as the basis for successful integration.

The relatively numerous non-Estonian population³ comprising people who arrived to settle here from outside the current state border during a very short period (1945–1991) and who were forced to find new identity for themselves after the collapse of the Soviet rule, can be considered to be a specific character of Estonia. The Russian ethnic group is the largest minority group in Estonia, i.e. 25.5% of the population. While the first Estonian State Integration Strategy 2000–2007 focused first and foremost on the naturalisation process and language learning, the new integration strategy for 2008–2013 pays main attention to the new generation, whereas the keywords are competitive education and integration as a bilateral process.

The field of educational and cultural integration has the largest share in the integration strategy accounting for nearly a half of the budgetary capacity of the entire implementation plan. The field of educational and cultural integration accounted for 53% (3.93 million euros), the field of social and economic integration accounted for

¹ http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/Loimumiskava_rakendusplaan_2008_2010.pdf

² http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/Loimumiskava_rakendusplaan_2008_2010.pdf

³ Before The Second World War, Estonians accounted for 88% of the population. In 1934, there were 92,600 Russians, 16,300 Germans, 7,600 Swedes, 5,400 Latvians and 4,400 Jews living in Estonia. During The Second World War, the demographic situation changed dramatically, the present situation has been influenced the most by the inflow of immigrants after 1945 when Estonia was occupied by the Soviet Union. As of 2010 there are 1.3 million inhabitants in Estonia, 68.83% of which are Estonians, 25.55% Russians, 2.07% Ukrainians, 1.16% Belarusians, 0.79% Finns, 0.18% Tatars, 0.16% Latvians, 0.15% Poles, 0.13% other nationalities.

21% (1.71 million euros), the field of legal and political integration accounted for 10% (0.78 million euros) and the field of managing, monitoring, assessing, increasing operational capacity of agencies and the field of international cooperation accounted for 16% (1.17 million euros) of the financial resources of the implementation plan of the integration strategy 2010.

Educational and cultural integration

Pursuant to § 37 of the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia, everyone has the right to education. Attending school is compulsory for children of school age to the extent specified by law and it is free of charge in state and local governments' general education schools. Education is available to everyone, the state and local governments ensure the funding of requisite number of educational institutions. Also other educational institutions, including private schools, may be opened and operated pursuant to law. It is up to parents to make the final decisions on the education of their children.

The general aim of the sector is to ensure equal possibilities to obtain education in a single education system and necessary conditions to preserve one's own language and culture to all Estonian residents. In Estonia, it is possible to obtain education in addition to Estonian also in Russian.

The transfer of the partial language of instruction to Estonian in Russian schools which started in 2007 has attracted remarkable attention in the recent years. As of 2011/2012, Estonian as the language of instruction must constitute at least 60% of the subjects in all schools in Estonia. The government has designated five subjects (Estonian literature, citizenship studies, music, Estonian history and geography) to be taught in Estonian, the school can select rest of the subjects.

In Estonia, there are 19 local governments, which have upper secondary Russian schools in their budget. The largest number of upper secondary Russian schools are located in Tallinn (24, incl. 3 private schools), Narva (8, incl. 1 private school and 1 state school), Kohtla-Järve (6), Sillamäe (3) and in Tartu and Jõhvi (2 in both cities). The rest of the local governments maintain one upper secondary Russian school. There are a total of 58 upper secondary Russian schools, of which 4 are private upper secondary schools and the obligation of the mandatory transfer to Estonian as the language of instruction does not apply to them. There are 9 bilingual municipal upper secondary schools among 54 municipal upper secondary Russian schools.

The main aims of the transfer to Estonian as the language of instruction in upper secondary Russian schools (grades 10 to 12), which commenced in 2007, are to provide opportunities for practicing Estonian and to ensure all students whose native language is not Estonian, equal opportunities to obtain higher or vocational education and to participate in society and to be successful in the labour market despite their nationality. The primary objective of this educational innovation is to achieve a more cohesive society preventing segregation but the second objective – and no less important – is to improve the quality of education in schools with Russian as the language of instruction and the education of Russian school graduates.

In January 2010, the Government endorsed new curricula for upper secondary schools and basic schools. The national curricula contain different subject syllabuses for Estonian and Russian schools in respect of language and literature. At upper secondary school level, there are also different subject syllabuses in respect of language and literature, depending on the language of instruction, including the subject syllabus of Estonian as a second language. The Russian is taught as the native language in Russian schools and Russian literature is given more attention in literature classes. The new national curriculum also addresses cultural diversity and all teachers in both Russian and Estonian schools have the task to support the cultural identity of their students and to develop tolerance towards other cultures and ethnic groups.

In addition to language learning, attention is also paid to the opportunity of students and teachers to communicate in Estonian outside school. To that end, there are various education and youth work programmes: teacher and student exchange, joint trainings for teachers of schools with Estonian and Russian as language of instruction, students' cooperation activities, excursions etc. The upgrades to study materials, teachers' in-service trainings, which support the topics that put a greater emphasis on Estonian cultural diversity more than before, are supported. In addition to that, activities related to counselling and providing information to different target groups are important as well. The students and teachers of non-Estonian schools form the main target group and also the students and teachers of Estonian schools in cooperation activities.

Different in-service training courses are organised for the heads of schools, teaching and education deputies and teachers-methodologists of Russian schools. The main topics of the training courses are integrated subject and

language teaching, specificity and methodology of bilingual teaching, teaching in multicultural classes and implementing the curricula.

In order to ensure that university students would start working in Russian schools, the field trainings of the students of Tallinn University and the University of Tartu were funded in 2008–2009; during those field trainings, the students and their instructors were trained in the methodology of teaching a second language in both general education schools and institutions of higher education. Twenty students completed their field training at Russian schools in 2009 and received a corresponding scholarship for specific purposes.

Pursuant to the Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Research „Ratification of conditions and procedure rules of intensive Estonian language training at institutions of higher education” (<http://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=627012>), all matriculated students have the opportunity to take intensive Estonian courses as the official language, if their level of Estonian does not comply with the requirements stipulated for the level of higher education. Each institution of higher education prepares the corresponding curricula.

In 2008 and 2009, a total of 8 institutions of higher education received additional financial resources within the state commissioned education in order to organise intensive Estonian language training: University of Tartu, Tallinn University, Tartu Health Care College, Tallinn Health Care College, Tallinn University of Technology, Lääne-Viru College and Estonian Academy of Arts. Language training of different volume and different forms were conducted within the ESF programme „Language Training Development 2008–2010” in the following institutions of higher education: Tartu Health Care College, Tallinn Health Care College, Estonian University of Life Sciences, Estonian Maritime Academy, Tallinn University, University of Tartu, Institute of Humanities and Social Sciences, Tallinn University of Technology.

In Estonia, it is possible to obtain higher education in Russian and English as well. At the Catherine’s College of Tallinn University, one can obtain higher education in Russian and there are specialties available at the Tallinn University Baltic Film and Media School which can be studied in English. It is possible to commence studies in Russian on several specialties at the Tallinn University of Technology, where further training on Estonian is provided simultaneously (free of charge for non-state-funded students as well). Instruction is in Russian at the general and fundamental levels of the curricula (during the first academic year as a rule). Basic and special studies are already in Estonian (from the second academic year as a rule). At the Tallinn College and Virumaa College of the Tallinn University of Technology and at the Narva College of the University of Tartu, one can obtain several specialties in Russian in the form of regular study or distance learning.

The aim of cultural integration is to support minorities in learning and preserving their native language and culture in Estonia; to encourage active citizenship and contacts between people of different citizenship and cultural background; to promote a common cultural and information space and to introduce culturally diverse Estonia to Estonians and Estonian culture to ethnic minorities living in Estonia. Supporting intercultural communication is an important component in ensuring social security, recognising everyone’s right to be a part of their native language culture. The promotion of cooperation between people, based on their interests, such as cultural activities and sports, encourages integration, motivates learning and practicing Estonian, promotes social networking and tolerance in the society. In 2008–2010, contacts and common activities between Estonian and Russian youths and youth work agencies were supported in order to promote a better understanding of cultural differences and improve tolerance.

The Russian population has an excellent culture and education network in Estonia. All conditions have been provided to maintain Russian national traditions in the fields of culture, education and religion. There are Russian schools, Russian periodicals are published, different theatre troupes are operating, as well as libraries, community centres, arts communities. The Russian population has a major role in a number of spheres of life of this country: education, medicine, technology, law, music, choreography etc.

Activities that promote the work of culture societies of ethnic minorities and their connections with their country of origin are supported in the cultural field. Special attention is paid to the engagement of the representatives of different nationalities in the Estonian cultural life and in the introduction of the Estonian cultural space, as well as in the expansion of the common information space of the Estonian and Russian population. Increasing cultural contacts between Estonians and other nationalities and supporting cooperation activities is a priority in the cultural field. People of different ethnic backgrounds living in Estonia are the target group of the said actions; in the case cooperation activities — all Estonian residents regardless of their citizenship or ethnic-cultural background.

The support programmes of the Ministry of Culture and Integration and Migration Foundation Our People finance the folk culture and high culture of the Russians who live in Estonia: theatre, music, fine arts. Sport, where the participants blend quickly into Estonian society, learn the language and adopt similar values, has been the best example of successful integration so far.

In the field of fine arts, the Russian theatre has received the largest share of budgetary support; financial support has also been granted to Russian classical music ensembles. The largest activity support goes to the State Russian Drama Theatre: 808,749 euros in 2010 and 884,385 euros in 2011. Russian theatre troupes „Ilmarine” in Narva and „Melnitsa” („Windmill”) in Jõhvi (Ida-Viru County) receive activity support from the state budget as well. The Literature Foundation of the Cultural Endowment of Estonia has awarded Russian authors since 2003. According to the statute, the prize is awarded to a literary work in Russian the first edition of which was published within the previous calendar year. According to the Cultural Cooperation Programme of the Estonian Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, the Golden Mask, the Russian Festival of Performing Arts is held annually in Estonia. The Russian Theatre Studio operates at the Russian Theatre in Tallinn; in order to prepare actors and actresses for the Russian Theatre, a special training project where teaching is partially in Russian was launched at the Drama School of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre in 2010.

Renovating the churches of the Orthodox Church of Estonia, Estonian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate and the places of worship of the Old Believers are supported with the „Conservation and Development of Places of Worship 2003–2013”, which belongs to the area of cultural heritage of the Ministry of Culture and is coordinated by the National Heritage Board. The amount of the contribution for the three denominations has been 30.65% and 39.4% of the total budget of the programme in 2010 and 2011 respectively.

In order to support and introduce the culture of Russian Old Believers in Estonia, a virtual database (www.starover.eu) was created in 2008, a dictionary-textbook of Russian Old Believers was published, special stands for travelling and permanent exhibitions were constructed for the Old-Believers Museum in Kalka, meetings for singing *neumes* were organised and the iconostasis of Kallaste congregational church was conserved. The Ministry of Culture commenced the activities of the cultural programme „Peipsiveere Cultural Space 2009–2012” supporting, inter alia, the festivals „Peipus” and Culture Days of Peipsimaa. In December 2008, a photo exhibition of Estonian Old Believers „Back to Lake Peipus. Russian Old Believers in Estonia”, partly supported by the Ministry, was organised in the Tallinn Art Hall. The programme has financed 42 different projects in 2009–2011; in addition to that, the state has contributed to the activities of the Society of Old Believers Culture and Development.

In Estonia, there are slightly more than one hundred Russian cultural associations which are united in 7 umbrella organisations⁴ and the activities of which specified in the articles of association are related to the preservation of Russian culture and language. Nineteen umbrella organisations unite ca 250 actively operating ethnic minority cultural associations in Estonia. Russian cultural associations account for nearly a half of the minority cultural associations. In 2011, Russian cultural associations received a total of 132,552 euros or 42% of the total budget (313,167 euros) of the baseline support targeted on the umbrella organisations of ethnic minority cultural associations. Sixteen Russian societies are also the members of other ethnic minority umbrella organisations. Base funding for ethnic minority cultural associations can be applied for by a registered cultural society, the activities of which specified in the articles of association are related to the preservation of their ethnic language and culture. An organisation can apply for recourses from base funding to cover fixed costs of the organisation (accounting, premises, organising traditional events etc.).

One of the important tasks of the state in integrating the members of Estonian society is to provide ethnic minorities with an opportunity to preserve their native language and to promote their culture. In order to achieve this aim, the Ministry of Education and Research contributes to the provision of education by Sunday schools, including teachers' remuneration, purchasing native language teaching aids and literature. As of 2005, holding an education licence issued by the Ministry of Education and Research serves as the basis for funding. Pursuant to the Hobby Schools Act, an education licence is not required any more, nevertheless, the Sunday school must be registered in the Estonian Education Information System (EHIS). The Sunday schools that have been registered in EHIS can apply for base funding. Nineteen Sunday schools which were registered in EHIS in 2011 received state funding. There are two Russian culture and language Sunday schools among the Sunday schools: Sunday

⁴ Estonian Old Believers Culture Centre, Tallinn Slavic Cultural Society, NPO Russki Dom-Estonia, Association of Russian Cultural Societies RUTHENIA, Association of Russian Creative Collectives Kalinka in Estonia, NPO Society of Russian National Culture Organisations SADKO in Estonia, Union of the Russian Education and Charity Societies in Estonia.

school of the Friends of Russian Culture in Viljandi and NPO Cultural Education Society Russian Sunday School.

Non-Estonian periodicals account for 17% of all periodicals published in Estonia (2010). Russian culture magazines Tallinn and Voshgorod are operating, Russian literature is published. The largest Russian publishers are KPD and Aleksandra. There is 1 national daily newspaper and 8 regional newspapers in Russian, 5 national weekly newspapers and 14 magazines. In Estonia, 426 Russian publications are officially distributed, which makes up nearly 30% of all publications. The following programmes intended for cultural minorities are financed from the budget of the Ministry of Culture through calls for proposals.

- Support programme for the cultural projects of minorities. The programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture. The budget of the programme was 83,817 euros in 2010, Russian societies were allocated 55,175 euros or 66% of the programme funds.
- The cultural programme „Peipsiveere Cultural Space 2009–2012” aimed at the region’s coastal villages, particularly at maintaining the viability of the cultural space of Russian Old Believers. The Ministry of Culture has allocated a total of 55,795 euros to the programme and the Society of Old Believers Culture and Development; the support to Russian cultural associations accounted for 76% of the allocation. The programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture.
- The base funding budget of the cultural associations of minorities was 313,167 euros in 2010, whereas 128,398 euros thereof was allocated to the umbrella organisations of Russian minorities, accounting for 41% of the programme budget. The programme is coordinated by the Integration and Migration Foundation Our People.
- The programme „Promoting a common cultural space through cooperation activities” supports collective projects related to performing arts and simultaneous interpretation service for performing arts institutions. The budget of the programme is 76,374 euros, 34,476⁵ euros or 45% of which were allocated to Russian cultural organisations.
Subprogrammes: „Cooperation activities in the field of performing arts” and „Simultaneous interpretation”⁶
- Promoting a common field of information through cultural activities. The programme was created in 2010 during the Year of Reading in order to translate Estonian children’s and youth literature into Russian. The programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture.
- The Integration and Migration Foundation (MISA) is the delegated authority of the European Fund for the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (EIF). Projects aimed at civil society organisations, cooperation projects, language training, media and youth activities receive support from the calls for proposals of EIF.
- Media-related activities in the field of integration receive support from the state budget. These are for example the Russian weekly culture programme Batareja on ETV2 (TV channel of the Estonian Public Broadcasting), the portal rus.err.ee and etnoweb.ee, as well as the English portal news.err.ee. With the help of the calls for proposals in the field of media organised by EIF, Russian TV and radio programmes, Internet portals and activities of print media are supported.

Social and economic integration

The aim of the sector is to ensure equal opportunities for economic self-determination and social coping to all Estonian residents regardless of their nationality, native language or place of residence.

In order to increase competitiveness in the labour market, it is necessary to support non-Estonian people in learning Estonian with different activities. These activities also include teaching aids and curricula of Estonian are developed pursuant to the proficiency levels of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) and in-service courses for language teachers are organised. Estonian courses and the adaptation programme for newly arrived inhabitants are also supported.

The Russian community has principally converged in two regions, i.e. Ida-Viru County and North Estonia (that is, Tallinn and Harju County for the most part).

Among unemployed people, there are a number of people with obsolete qualifications or those who have not

⁵Amount of the support: Russian Theatre Foundation (15,978 euros), NPO Cultural Association Kirill and Meffodi (15,978 euros) and NPO Russian Theatre School (2,520 euros).

⁶http://www.meis.ee/loppenud-konkursid?project_id=238

gone through professional training before. Therefore measures are implemented to help them to independently seek employment in the open labour market and find a job. These measures include different counselling services (incl. psychological and career counselling), job clubs to maintain work readiness, trainings (both in-service training and retraining) and work practice.

In 2011, the priority is to provide different training measures in order to support the increase of competitiveness of unemployed people. 2011. The efficiency of labour market training as a measure has increased over the past 1.5 years 2.5 times, which proves it to be a useful measure.

One of the hindrances that Russian-speaking Estonian residents may face in getting a job can also be their lack of knowledge of Estonian and this depends on the region. Non-formal education centres provide language courses at different levels to job-seekers on the basis of the programme „Adult education in non-formal education centres” and the „Language learning development” programme of the European Social Fund. The latter includes that persons who have paid for their language courses and have then passed the Estonian language proficiency examination may receive, on request, compensation up to 383 euros for their expenses. Speciality language is taught, incl. to students of higher education and vocational education institutions, also individual language training with the help of a mentor is supported, free language courses are organised, a special language learning method in the form of workforce exchange programmes for practicing Estonian is supported (for police officers, librarians, medical staff and educational workers).

In 2009, Tallinn University developed a web-based environment for testing the level of Estonian (level tests, www.meis.ee/testest), which contains example tasks of the proficiency examination and language tests. There are free language courses held for the citizens of third countries and for persons with undetermined citizenship in Harju County and Ida-Viru County. Development and implementation of cultural and language teaching aids, as well as language and adaptation programmes for new adult immigrants have been commenced in order to successfully integrate them into Estonian society. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund organises Estonian courses (300 academic hours) as well as integrated specialty and language trainings in order to increase the competitiveness of risk groups in the labour market. The Government Office arranged Estonian courses for public sector officials in 2008–2009.

The following have the right to receive the labour market services and benefits: permanent residents of Estonia, refugees staying in Estonia, aliens residing in Estonia on the basis of temporary residence permits and citizens of the European Union, European Economic Area and the Swiss Confederation staying in Estonia. The labour market services and benefits provided to them are: providing information on the situation on the labour market and on the labour market services and benefits; job mediation, labour market training, career counselling, work practice, public work, coaching for working life, wage subsidy, business start-up subsidy, adaptation of premises and equipment, free use of special aids necessary for working, support at interviews, working with support person etc.

In 2010, the state allocated its resources mainly to measures that boost job creation and prevent long-term unemployment. The more favourable measures are wage subsidies, start-up subsidies and practical training but also measures that encourage active attitude.

Legal and political integration

The aim of the sector is to ensure equal opportunities resulting from legislation for self-realization in social life and politics to all Estonian residents regardless of their nationality or native language. The aim of legal-political integration is to help inhabitants whose native language is not Estonian, including new immigrants, to accustom themselves to Estonian society and become active members of society. The sector supports the increase of reciprocal tolerance between different ethnic and cultural groups and the creation of a common state identity.

The relevant activities include supporting the naturalisation process with the aim of decreasing the number of persons with undetermined citizenship, particularly among children and young people. An important activity is the promotion of possibilities for adult non-Estonian speaking adults to learn the official language and prepare for the citizenship examination.

Attention is also paid to involving the local government in integration activities. To that end, different training courses are conducted for state and local government officials and the accessibility of information and public services is improved for people who speak different native languages.

The development and cooperation of the Russian media in Estonia is supported within the integration strategy. The aim of this is to create a positive image of cultural diversity through media channels in Estonian society and to increase the share of common information field of Estonian people with different native languages. In August 2008, a new TV channel of the Estonian Public Broadcasting, ETV2, started to broadcast. With the help of the new TV channel, the share of programmes aimed at and produced with the participation of Russian-speaking residents were increased, with a special emphasis on information programmes and programmes covering current public and political affairs. On the channel ETV, popular programmes are broadcasted with Russian subtitles. Also a Russian language radio, Radio 4, is operating under the Estonian Public Broadcasting.

On 1 July 2010, Estonia transferred to digital television which changed television-related consumption pattern and possibilities. The viewing of major TV channels is decreasing slowly and is divided among several new channels. According to viewer rating, Estonian-speaking residents are divided as follows: Kanal 2 (22%), ETV (19%) and TV3 (16%); Russian-speaking: PBK (25%), RTR Planeta Baltic (10%) and NTV Mir (9%). The monitoring results of the integration strategy 2010 indicate that 90% of Russian-speaking TV viewers observe channels originating from Russia daily or once a week. Radio 4 (44%) is the most listened media channel produced in Estonia. It has become evident from the group interviews carried out by the Estonian Public Broadcasting that not the small volume of Russian media in Estonia is a problem for a Russian-speaking TV viewer, but the approach and the limited awareness of possibilities available.

The translation of several information portals into Russian was supported in 2010 in order to improve the involvement and participation of Russian-speaking population in social life: www.kultuur.info (information in Russian about Estonian cultural events); www.tallinn2011/kalender (information about cultural events); online encyclopaedia Estonica <http://www.estonica.org> has been working in English and Estonian since 2000 and also in Russian since 2010 (a comprehensive collection of articles about Estonian society, culture, history, nature, education, science, public order and economy and relations between these sectors); portal www.ngo.ee/rus (Russian information portal of the Estonian Civil Society). Two information portals of the Estonian Public Broadcasting, in Russian www.rus.err.ee and in English www.news.err.ee, were established in 2010; at the end of the year, the Russian portal was visited 45,000 times a week on average and the English one was used by 5,000 readers a week, 51% thereof in foreign countries. Information portal <http://kodanik.err.ee/> assembles references and overviews of all questions concerning the application of Estonian citizenship. The portals www.lapsedtrenni.ee, <http://www.sekundomer.ee/> that support active citizenship and introduce possibilities related to youth sports, as well as <http://www.okokratt.ee> that improves environmental awareness, got their own Russian modules.

The state finances a free information line 800 9999 which provides information on preparing for the citizenship examination as well as different possibilities to learn Estonian. The work of the information line is coordinated by the Migration and Integration Foundation.

The Estonian Integration Strategy monitoring 2010 indicates that the interest in applying for Estonian citizenship (or that of any other country) decreased significantly after the Russian Federation decided to waive the visa requirement for people with an Estonian alien's passport. The supplementary results of the survey confirm that the reasons behind not applying for Estonian citizenship are first and foremost of practical nature and one of the most important of them is the side-effect which accompanies the status of an Estonian citizen: travelling to Russia becomes more complicated. However, it should be observed that the number of persons with undetermined citizenship has decreased from 32% in 1992 to 7.3% in 2010.

Estonia has taken several measures in order to improve the naturalisation process and continually decrease the number of persons with undetermined citizenship. Special attention has been paid to minors under the age of 15, who can apply for Estonian citizenship pursuant to the simplified procedure. A corresponding active information campaign commenced in 2007 was particularly aimed at the parents of such children. As the language requirement has been referred to as one of the hindrances in applying for Estonian citizenship, possibilities to learn Estonian free of charge⁷ have been broadened in addition to the compensation for the costs of language courses laid down in the Citizenship Act. This way, Estonian language training supports the creation of better possibilities for people in the labour market as well.

Managing and assessing the activities of the Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013

As of 1998, a foundation currently with the name Migration and Integration Foundation „Our People” – specially

⁷ As of the autumn of 2009, a programme funded by the European Fund of the Integration of Third-Country Nationals started. The programme enables to provide all persons with undetermined citizenship or citizens of third countries with Estonian courses regardless of whether they take a citizenship exam or not.

established for integration purposes – is engaged in integration affairs and counselling ethnic minorities. The ethnic minorities policy and issues related to integration are coordinated by the Ministry of Culture. Also several other ministries are continually contributing to the field. The strategic management of the integration strategy is being performed with the help of a steering committee and a steering group of the integration strategy; the cooperation with the counselling bodies of ethnic minorities has also become increasingly close and substantial, one of the outlets thereof is the Council for Ethnic Minorities operating at the Ministry of Culture and another one is the Round Table of Nationalities of the Estonian Cooperation Assembly. The said Round Table is a cooperation and advisory institution for the President of the Republic and for the relevant institutions of legislative and executive power. The advisory boards of local governments and round tables at the offices of county governors (the round table of ethnic minorities at Ida Viru County governor, Domestic Peace Forum in Tallinn) function in the regions.

The implementation of the Integration Strategy is appraised by an assessment of the achievement of the target level of visionary objectives and the indicators of the measures. Data for the assessment of the implementation are obtained from the following sources: Statistics Estonia, Integration monitoring, Integration Strategy monitoring, statistics of The National Examinations and Qualifications Centre, statistics of the Citizenship and Migration Board of the Police and Border Guard and Estonian Rescue Service, statistics of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, statistics of the Estonian Education Information System, statistics of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, statistics of the Ministry of Social Affairs, statistics of the Ministry of Culture, statistics of the Ministry of Education and Research, data from the Migration and Integration Foundation Our People and different surveys related to the field.

In order to find out how Estonians and people of other nations get on with each other, what are their priorities, views, opinions and future, integration has been monitored consistently. The integration monitoring 2008 involved nine fields in connection with the Estonian and Russian population: financial situation and satisfaction with life, education, language skills, perception of ethnic relations, relations between ethnic groups, attitude and the „our” feeling, informedness and media use, citizenship, citizens and non-citizens, state identity and the coherence of the public sphere of the society. The survey is comprehensive and provides a general picture but, on the other hand, the results depend on the present political situation.

According to a survey of integration carried out in 2008, the positive attitude among both Estonian and Russian-speaking residents towards a multicultural society has been relatively stable over the years. 90% of Russian-speaking respondents and 70–80% Estonian-speaking respondents agreed that different nations can get on well in one country and that different languages and cultures enrich society. Compared to the previous surveys (carried out in 2000, 2002 and 2005 respectively), the indicators that characterise structural integration in Estonian society have improved step by step — this applies to the knowledge of Estonian, the share of Estonian citizens in the population as well as several social-economic indicators.

In 2010, the mid-term appraisal of the Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013 was carried out and the progress in achieving the visionary objectives was monitored⁸, which also was an input for the preparation of the new implementation plan 2011–2013 of the integration strategy. The 2010 report brought out several positive tendencies. The results of the monitoring indicated that contacts between Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking residents are becoming closer. It becomes evident from the monitoring that contacts between people of different nations living in Estonia have become closer, the knowledge of Estonian of non-Estonian people has improved, and closer communication is not seen as a threat to one’s cultural characteristics. About two thirds of both Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking inhabitants have friends or close acquaintances among the other ethnic group. The attitude to contacts with people of other nations is prevalingly positive or neutral among both Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking residents. The vast majority of both Russian-speaking residents (83%) and Estonians (72%) disagree that close communication between people of different nations could lead to losing their cultural characteristics. Also the knowledge of Estonian has improved among Russian-speaking residents, and Estonians, in turn, value the knowledge of Russian more than before. The communication skills in Estonian of more than two thirds of respondents of the age up to 39 are at sufficient level; about three quarters of respondents can read in Estonian. The majority of Russian-speaking respondents find it necessary to start using Estonian as the language of instruction already at nursery schools or basic schools. Also the Estonians’ need for the knowledge of Russian has increased at work and as well as outside of working hours. The completed survey is an important basis for outlining future integration activities.

The integration of Estonian society will be monitored again in 2011.

⁸ The summary of the results can be found on the homepage of the Ministry of Culture: http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/ELK_monitoring_2010_kokkuv6te.pdf

8. Please provide detailed information on the impact of the implementation the 2009-2010 integration programme for new immigrants.

All legal acts valid in Estonia apply equally to native inhabitants and new immigrants, in addition to that, the rights of new immigrants are regulated by the new Aliens Act entered into force in 2010. Procedural acts and conditions provided for in the previous act (2005) remained prevalingly the same for aliens. Compared to the previous act, the principal amendments concern the obligations of educational institutions and employers and cross-border carriage of passengers. The act regulates the studies and employment of aliens in Estonia and stipulates the basis for legal liability in the case of violation of law. The current act establishes a possibility to issue a residence permit upon settling in Estonia due to voluntary service activities in a youth organization cooperation programme or project and commencement of master or doctoral studies at Estonian institutions of higher education and upon experts or skilled workers settling in Estonia. Also the issuing of long-term residence permit and its maintenance has been simplified which, in its turn, simplifies the possibilities of acquiring Estonian citizenship.

The operational programmes for the periods of 2008–2010⁹ and 2011–2013¹⁰ of the development programme¹¹ of the integration strategy 2008–2013 and the Government of the Republic Action Programme 2011–2015¹² endorsed by the Government of the Republic include activities aimed at new immigrants.

The new immigrants who have settled in Estonia have the option to take part in the adaptation programme which provides them with Estonian courses and introduction to Estonian culture and information space. People who have lived in Estonia on a legal basis for three years and whose native language is not Estonian are regarded as new immigrants falling into the target group of the support programmes implemented within the European Fund of the Integration of Third-Country Nationals (EIF). The Statistics Estonia published an analytical publication „Immigrant Population in Estonia”¹³ in 2009. The publication focuses on the situation of immigrants in the labour market; the employment, income and salary of immigrant population are analyzed and their professional structure and its relation to the educational level are examined. Within the next integration monitoring in 2011, a separate survey for the new immigrant focus group will be carried out.

The state language immersion programme¹⁴ for a better acquisition of Estonian as a second language has been implemented successfully in Estonia since 2000. The aim of the language immersion is to ensure equally excellent skills in both one’s native language and Estonian.

The new immigrant integration project¹⁵ has been carried out in cooperation between the Integration and Migration Foundation Our People and the Ministry of Education and Research since 2003.

The following has been completed.

- The guidelines „The children of New Immigrants in Estonian Education. Principles of Education Policy and Organising Education” (2004, Ministry of Education and Research), which introduce international and Estonian legal acts, present development trends and measures in organising education for the children of new immigrants.

⁹ http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/Loimumiskava_rakendusplaan_2008_2010.pdf

¹⁰ http://www.kul.ee/webeditor/files/integratsioon/Loimumiskava_2008_2013.pdf

¹¹ <http://www.kul.ee/index.php?path=0x2x1424x1432x1777> and <http://valitsus.ee/UserFiles/valitsus/et/valitsus/arengukavad/L%C3%B5imumine/L%C3%B5imumiskava%20rakendusplaan%20aastateks%202011-2013.pdf>

¹² <http://www.valitsus.ee/et/valitsus/tegevusprogramm>

¹³ <http://www.stat.ee/31389>

¹⁴ Homepage of the language immersion programme <http://www.kke.ee/index.php?lang=est> and <http://www.meis.ee/keelekumblus1>

¹⁵ <http://www.meis.ee/uusimmigrantlaste-haridus>

- The term new immigrant has been defined: a child of the migrants, asylum seekers, refugees arriving from the European Union countries but also from third countries, who wants to start his/her studies at an Estonian school and who has lived/stayed in Estonia less than three years. He/she usually needs support in adapting and studying (may not know the language of instruction of the school) as well as learning Estonian as a second language.

Study materials prepared in 2009–2011.

- An Estonian textbook „Astu sisse!” (Come in!), specially aimed at children arrived in Estonia from a foreign country has been compiled, in addition to that an accompanying teacher’s book and a handbook for the general public. Schools can subscribe to the textbook and teacher’s book free of charge.
- An e-dictionary for students studying at a non-Estonian basic school to support them in learning Estonian vocabulary. It is a comprehensive e-learning environment where students can acquire Estonian vocabulary and develop their reading, speaking, listening and writing skills. Visual materials, audiolised texts and interactive tasks make the e-dictionary varied. There are 300 words altogether in the dictionary, which have been divided into different subjects. The e-dictionary is available for everyone who is interested: <http://els.leveranse.com/> or on the homepage of the foundation at www.meis.ee.
- A specialised homepage has been completed. The homepage „Tere-tere!” (Hello there!) aimed at informing new immigrant students, their parents and teachers at www.teretere.eu. Information about Estonia, organisation of schools, experiences of teachers and schools, references to study materials and more useful information is available on the webpage, which is updated on an ongoing basis.
- There are several materials completed for working with new immigrant children in educational institutions.
- A collection of articles „Käsikäes” (Hand in Hand) which introduces different possibilities to integrate the children of refugees and asylum seekers into Estonian education system has been published.
- Pamphlets in Estonian, English and Russian providing an overview of the organisation of Estonian education. The aim of the pamphlets is to assist the parents of new immigrant children in understanding the Estonian education system.
- A booklet in Estonian and English that introduces the Estonian education system for parents. The booklet concerns practical matters such as an overview of the Estonian school system, school day of a student, clothing in Estonian schools, teaching materials, obligations of school staff, cooperation between parents and school, school holidays, national holidays etc.
- Study materials for teaching students arrived in Estonia from abroad: six study sets for training Estonian skills, vocabulary and grammar to the students whose language spoken at home is not the school's language of instruction.

Several in-service training courses have been conducted for teachers at the universities in Tallinn and Tartu: „In-service training for Estonian and Russian schools’ subject teachers” for 50 teachers and „Training for education officials and managers of pre-school child care institutions and teachers” for 50 educational workers, both in 2009.

In connection with new migrants, activities of schools and nursery schools are funded, study trips for teachers and education officials are organised (for example to Poland and Sweden in the autumn of 2009; to Sweden in the spring of 2010 and to Finland and Denmark in the autumn of 2010). There have been several conferences on the issues of new immigrants’ education.

In 2010–2011, in-service trainings for teachers have been organised; project specific funding for nursery schools in order to provide the new immigrant children going to nursery schools in 2010/2011 with additional support in language learning and for creating a suitable learning environment; trainings for teachers to prepare them for work with multilingual children; preparing methodical materials to support the learning process of new immigrant students. In the new implementation period 2011–2013 of the integration strategy, a survey of the achievement and educational possibilities of new immigrant students will be carried out.

Several activities funded by the EIF have been aimed specifically at new immigrants during the period of 2007–2010. A new immigrant adaptation programme was prepared and piloted in the cities of Tallinn, Jõhvi and Tartu in 2009. In the programme piloting, 56 people from 15 countries took part. A handbook, pamphlets, a website, study materials and the website www.kohanemisprogramm.com were made during the activities. A number of materials for working with new immigrant children in educational institutions were compiled as well.

In Ida-Viru County¹⁶, Tallinn and Harju County, 42 new immigrants started to participate in the first adaptation programme training in 2010. Developing a special support person service has been commenced, as well as training the support persons¹⁷.

In addition, new immigrants have the opportunity to participate in different integration activities based on their needs: language learning programmes for adults and young people, language learning courses for the unemployed and different cooperation activities.

One of the aims of the current Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013 is to promote and value multicultural Estonia. Indirectly it supports both integration and Estonian economic activities by helping the qualified workforce that has come to Estonia to integrate quickly and contribute to the development of Estonia. It is planned to establish a service of offering a support person to new immigrants as well as to involve them in civil society organisations, activities of the society and information space. People whose native language is other than Estonian working in the public sector should be acknowledged more than before.

Article 3 - Equal right of men and women

9. Please inform the Committee as to whether the State party has adopted a national strategy and action plan to ensure the equal right of men and women to the enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights. In view of the prevailing stereotypes in the State party, please provide information on the impact of measures taken to raise the public's awareness of gender roles, including among the youth.

Work in the area of ensuring the equal rights of men and women to enjoyment of all economic, social and cultural rights is based on the Ministry of Social Affairs' development plan and the Ministry of Social Affairs' annual action plan.

In order to facilitate the implementation of the Gender Equality Act by stakeholders and its usage by people to protect their rights, Estonia has conducted awareness-raising activities under the program “Promoting Gender Equality”. The Ministry of Social Affairs has organised several awareness raising activities, of which the most notable in 2010 was the campaign on gender stereotypes in the labour market, which included the following activities:

- Outdoor campaign
- Television campaign
- Contest of short films on gender equality (carried out in schools)
- Seminars and lectures in schools on gender stereotypes

In addition to the campaign mentioned above, specialists from the Ministry of Social Affairs Gender Equality Department have given lectures and carried out seminars (including in schools) on gender equality in general and on gender stereotypes more specifically.

Further measures, concerning gender inequality on labour market, are highlighted under issue 12.

10. Please provide detailed information on the implementation of the project 'flexible forms of work and study - best possibilities for reconciling work and family life,' particularly in the private sector.

The project has yielded two major results.

Publishing a comprehensive collection of articles „Töö ja Pere” (Work and Family), containing also a summary in English. The collection provides different opinions regarding flexible work arrangement and combining work and family life.

¹⁶ <http://www.narva.ut.ee/845204>

¹⁷ <http://www.bda.ee/?id=12346>

Developing a training programme for parents of small children for returning to the labour market and piloting the programme in four different training groups.

Further information relating to the project is available in English on the web page:
<http://www.cb.ee/index.php?id=2766>

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

Article 6 - Right to work

11. Please provide detailed information on the 'risk groups' that benefit from the new labour market services, under the new Labour Market Services and Benefits Act adopted in 2006. Please also inform the Committee about the impact of targeted measures taken to address unemployment among (a) the long-term unemployed, (b) persons with disabilities, (c) persons belonging to minority groups, (d) older women, and (e) single mothers.

Pursuant to § 10(5) of the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act, the following groups constitute 'risk groups' in the labour market:

- 1) unemployed persons with disabilities who, due to the disabilities, need additional help upon commencing employment;
- 2) unemployed persons of sixteen up to twenty-four years of age;
- 3) unemployed persons released from prison within the twelve months preceding registration as unemployed;
- 4) unemployed persons of fifty five years up to the pensionable age;
- 5) unemployed persons who, prior to their registration as unemployed, have been caring for a disabled person;
- 6) the long-term unemployed who, for at least the twelve months immediately preceding registration as unemployed, have not engaged in work or in an activity equal to work. A young person of sixteen up to twenty-four years of age is deemed to be a long-term unemployed if he or she, for at least six months immediately preceding registration as unemployed, has not been engaged in work or in an activity equal to work;
- 7) unemployed persons who are not proficient in Estonian and whose employment is difficult for such reason.
- 8) any other unemployed person whose possibility to find employment is particularly hindered.

Table: Proportion of registered unemployed in the risk group:

Proportion of the registered unemployed in the risk group*	2008 Q1	2008 Q2	2008 Q3	2008 Q4	2009 Q1	2009 Q2	2009 Q3	2009 Q4	2010 Q1	2010 Q2	2010 Q3	2010 Q4
55 and older	16.10%	17%	16.90%	15.10 %	12.60%	13.00%	13.10%	13.50%	13.90%	15.00 %	15.20%	15.38%
16–24	12.20%	10.40%	11.12	14.40 %	17.10%	16.10%	16.20%	15.70%	15.9 %	14.50 %	13.70%	13.42%
Persons not proficient in Estonian	24.90%	25.20%	24.80%	23.40 %	23.20%	22.60%	22.80%	26.20%	35.7%	37.90 %	37.30%	37.24%
Caregivers	1.50%	1.50%	1.20%	0.90%	0.80%	1.00%	0.80%	0.60%	0.10%	0.10%	0.10%	0.36%
Long-term unemployed	38.60%	36.80%	34.50%	30.40 %	28.00%	29.40%	31.60%	41.00%	47.40%	52.10%	54.70%	56.63
Disabled	8.80%	8.40%	8.30%	6.60%	5.20%	5.20%	5.00%	4.50%	3.20%	3.50%	3.70%	3.33%
Released from prison	3.00%	2.60%	2.20%	1.90%	1.50%	1.40%	1.20%	1.00%	0.60%	0.70%	0.90%	1.17%
Persons in risk groups, total (%)	69.30%	67.70%	66.90%	64.40 %	63.40%	62.50%	64.30%	59.90%	72.50%	76.30%	78.00%	78.60%
Total unemployed	17,078	16,972	20,065	30,307	54,979	67,100	76,444	87,282	95,087	81,050	69,829	65,260

Source: Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund

The proportion of long-term unemployed of all the registered unemployed decreased continuously from the second half of 2007 up to the first half of 2009, as many new unemployed were added. From the second half of 2009, the proportion of the long-term unemployed started to grow again as many of the persons, who became unemployed during the crisis became long-term unemployed: At the end of 2009, 41% of all registered unemployed had been without a job for a long period (i.e. at least 12 consecutive months; adolescents at least 6 consecutive months); by the end of 2010 their proportion had increased to almost 57%.

The proportion of persons not proficient in Estonian increased somewhat during 2010 (about 25% before, it increased to 37% in 2010). The proportion of persons with disabilities among the long-term unemployed, on the other hand, has continuously decreased over time (8.8% in early 2008, but it had dropped to approximately 3% by early 2011). The proportion of persons belonging to at least one risk group has surged from the beginning of 2010 (69.3% in 2008, at the end of Q1; 60% at the end of 2009; 79.2% at Q1 of 2011).

Although the unemployed who belong to risk groups are explicitly listed in the Labour Market Services and Benefits Act, for whom a detailed individual action plan shall be drawn up at an increased pace, the list of risk groups is still indicative and the specific need for support services is established based on needs separately for each case.

The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund started to regularly assess the return to employment of the unemployed and the efficiency of the labour market services (once in six months) from 2010. Efficiency is assessed on a more general basis, by labour market measures and not by risk groups (i.e. it is not possible to indicate specific efficiency by risk groups). Assessment results show that in 2009, almost 50% of the registered unemployed returned to work during 12 months. The efficiency of the labour market training and practical training is examined separately, i.e. the proportion of the persons entering employment (total impact of a measure) 6 months after the end of a specific measure. As the measure can be assessed only after 6 months, the assessment of measures contains a certain delay. It can be said on the basis of available data that the efficiency of the labour market training has improved in since 2010 (compared to data from the end of 2009), which is related to the approval of the new training principles that forming a closer link between the unemployed and labour market needs. The results of 2010 related to training sessions completed in the period from the end of 2009 to the beginning of 2010 showed that 36% of the participants in labour market training returned to work during 6 months. The efficiency of practical training (coaching takes place in enterprises on site) has improved also. While the proportion having returned to work among the participants of practical trainings completed in Q2 and Q3 2009 reached 39%, it amounted to 59% regarding practical trainings completed in early 2010.

Article 7 - Right to just and favourable conditions of work

12. In light of information provided by the State party in Para. 326 of the report on discrimination against women in the labour market, including the wage gap, please provide information on the impact of measures taken to address such discrimination. Please also provide information on steps taken to ensure the effective enforcement of the Gender Equality Act, the Employment Contracts Act and the provisions of the Wages Act on the principle of equal pay, including the mechanisms in place to monitor the implementation of these Acts.

The measures taken to address discrimination against women in the labour market, including the wage gap, are indirect in nature. Studies conducted in 2005 and 2009 on attitudes towards gender equality issues indicate that there has been some improvement in a number of areas.

While the gender pay gap in Estonia remains high, there has been a change in attitudes towards equal pay for men and women. In the 2005 Gender Equality Monitoring study 63% of women but only 43% of men felt that men and women should receive equal pay. A similar question was asked in 2009 with a somewhat different wording, which limits the comparability of the studies. In 2009, the question included the concept of equal pay for equal work, with 94% of women and 90% of men stating that men and women should receive equal pay for equal work. The change in attitudes might be attributable to the fact that people have become more aware of the issue of equal pay for men and women, and this topic has since become an issue of frequent debate in the Estonian media.

The studies also addressed the issue of segregation on the labour market, and asked whether people believed that

so-called male jobs are valued more highly than so-called female jobs. In 2005, 63% of women and 44% of men agreed with the statement that female jobs are valued less, while in 2009, 66% of women and 60% of men agreed with this statement. This shows a change in the attitude of men towards this issue.

The Gender Equality Act and the Equal Treatment Act establish that an independent and impartial gender equality and equal treatment commissioner monitors compliance with the requirements of the law. The discrimination disputes on the principle of equal pay can be settled by the Commissioner, by the courts or labour dispute committees.

Article 8 - Trade union rights

13. Please update the Committee on progress made in relation to the review of the State party's legislation on the prohibition of strikes, as referred to in paragraph 387 of the State party report, and to what extent it has brought the State party's enactments in line with article 8 of the Covenant.

The government has prepared a new Public Service Act (draft), whereby, while the prohibition on strike for state officials will remain in force, the Act will considerably restrict the circle of officials providing that a state official is only a person who executes public authority at his post, i.e. performs the following functions:

- 1) Administration of a state agency;
- 2) Exercising state, administrative and official supervisory control, and conducting internal audit;
- 3) Substantive guaranteeing of national security;
- 4) Substantive preparation of the administration of justice;
- 5) The application of coercive measures;
- 6) The representation of state prosecution and its substantive preparation;
- 7) Extrajudicial misdemeanour proceedings;
- 8) Diplomatic representation of the state;
- 9) Preparation of policy-shaping decisions in the area of government of a ministry or Government of the Republic as an organ.

Persons who are employed by the state or local government but do not perform the above functions are not considered as state officials, and the prohibition on strike does not apply to them.

At the same time § 21 section 1 of the Collective Labour Dispute Resolution Act still applies according to which strikes are prohibited in government and other state agencies and local governments. The Ministry of Social Affairs has started an analysis with the view to thoroughly reforming the collective labour relations regulations, including the issue of strike.

Article 9 - Right to social security

14. Please inform the Committee of measures that the State party envisions as regards its social security system to ensure that those who live on social security benefits and assistance, such as unemployed persons and pensioners, are not at risk of poverty.

Salary and old-age pensions are the most important incomes of the Estonian population. Both incomes have continuously increased over the years. Last years have been characterised by the rapid growth of old-age pensions compared to gross wages. The average old-age pension increased more than 1.8 times in the period 2005–2009, while the average gross wages grew 1.5 times. As a result, the average old-age pension comprised 47.3% of the average estimated gross wages, which is 7.5 percentage points more than in 2005 (Table 1).

Whereas the old-age pension increased by more than 800 kroons (51 euros) in 2008 compared to 2007, the old-age pension comprised only 41.5% of the average estimated gross wages. This was caused by the fact that although the old-age pension still grew in 2009 (by almost 360 kroons or 23 euros), but the average monthly wages decreased almost 650 kroons.

Table 1. Average gross wages and old-age pension, 2005-2009

Indicator	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
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Average net income of a household member, euros per month	222	278	338		
Average gross wages, euros per month	516	601	725	825	784
Average old-age pension, euros per month	163	193	226	278	301
Average old age pension as a percentage of the estimated net wage, %	39.8	40.0	38.8	41.5	47.3
Average old age pension of average net wages of an unskilled male production worker (in October of the respective year, %)	55.7	56.1	56.1		
Average pension of a pensioner with 30 years of pensionable service of average net wages of an unskilled male production worker (in October of the respective year, %)	43.4	44.1	44.5		

Source: Statistics Estonia, Social Insurance Board, calculations by the Ministry of Social Affairs

The data in Table 1 reveal that Estonia has managed to adhere to the minimum standard of the European Code of Social Security which specifies that the average pension of a pensioner with 30 years of pensionable service should form at least 40% of the average net wage of an unskilled male production worker. In 2007, the average pension of a pensioner with 30 years of pensionable service comprised 44.5% of the average net wage of an unskilled male production worker.

To assess the economic situation of individuals, the rates of absolute and relative poverty are used. Relative poverty is determined by comparing household incomes with the threshold of a certain average in the society and this indicates the distribution of income in that society.

Relative poverty threshold shows the proportion of individuals whose income level remains below the agreed level of relative poverty. In Estonia, similar to other EU member states, a measure set at 60% of the median population income at equivalence scales of 1.0:0.5:0.3 is applied as a relative poverty threshold.

Absolute poverty threshold (subsistence minimum) establishes the income level allowing a person (a household) cope in a specific environment.

Households living below an income level acknowledged in this society as a socially acceptable living standard or the absolute poverty threshold, live in absolute poverty. The absolute poverty rate shows the proportion of households or persons below the absolute poverty threshold.

Statistics

Changes in economy starting from 2008 (drop in income at the same time with the increase in old-age pension) contributed to the situation where the relative poverty rate of old-age pensioners decreased in 2008 compared to 2007.

Table: Rate of relative poverty (%)

	2005	2006	2007	2008
<i>By age</i>				
Total	18.3	19.4	19.5	19.7
65 and older	25.1	33.1	39.0	33.9
<i>By employment status:</i>				
Employed	7.5	7.0	7.3	8.1
Unemployed	31.6	35.9	38	35.4
... old-age pensioners	28.7	36.9	43.3	37.9
<i>By household type:</i>				
All households without dependent children	20.1	23.1	24.4	22.5
A couple of at least 65 years of age	7.6	10.9	14.5	11.6

Table: Relative poverty threshold* and equivalent income** (annual)

		2005	2006	2007	2008
In euros:					
Average net income	annual equivalent	4 354.62	5 303.90	6 333.01	7 206.36
Median net income	annual equivalent	3 637.91	4 447.04	5 547.08	6 209.02
Relative poverty threshold		2 182.77	2 668.25	3 328.26	3 725.41
in Estonian kroons:					
Average net income	annual equivalent	68 135	82 988	99 090	112 755
Median net income	annual equivalent	56 921	69 581	86 793	97 150
Relative poverty threshold		34 153	41 749	52 076	58 290

* 60% of the median annual equivalent net income of household members.

** Household income divided by the equivalence scales of household members. Equivalence scale — a weight designated to a household member depending on his/her age, which takes the joint consumption in the household into account.

While the relative poverty threshold has continuously increased in 2005–2008 (total growth 1.7 times), the rate of relative poverty increased by 1.4 percentage points. The largest change took place in 2006, when the growth amounted to 0.9 percentage points compared to 2005.

Regarding the elderly (65+) and old-age pensioners, the growth has been significantly higher. Thus the relative poverty rate regarding persons 65 and older increased by 8.8 percentage points and even more in the group of old-age pensioners, 9.2 percentage points. At the same time, the poverty risk of a couple of 65 years is considerably lower, amounting to 11.6% in 2008 (a growth of 4 percentage points compared to 2005).

Table: Estimated subsistence minimum of a one-member household and minimum food basket for 30 days (in euros)

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Estimated subsistence minimum* (absolute poverty threshold)	124	133	150	169	170
cost of minimum food basket**	52	56	66	76	75

* Monthly (30 days) estimated subsistence minimum of a one-member household includes the cost of a minimum food basket, housing costs and other individual expenses.

** In finding the cost of the minimum food basket, calculations were based on a sample food basket prepared by nutritional researchers, which should ensure the average person's need for energy of 2,400 kcal per day, and on the average purchase prices in the I-V expense deciles according to the Household Budget Survey.

Table: **Distribution of households, household members, children and elderly by the levels of absolute poverty¹**, 2005–2007 (%; data related to the distribution of households and household members by the absolute poverty threshold are available from 2007. Data on 2008 and 2009 are not published yet.

Poverty level	Households			Household members			Elderly among the household members (65+)		
	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007	2005	2006	2007
Below the absolute poverty threshold (APT)	12.4	7.6	6.2	13.2	8.2	6.5	6.8	3.4	2.9
in deep poverty	6.9	3.9	3.7	7.7	4.4	3.5	2.2	1.0	1.2
poverty	5.5.	3.7	2.5	5.5.	3.8	3.0	4.6	2.4	1.7

endangering subsistence										
Poverty risk	9.9	5.8	4.9	8.8	5.8	4.7	13.1	6.0	5.2	
Out of poverty risk	77.7	86.6	88.9	78.0	86.0	88.8	80.2	90.5	92.0	

¹ Levels of poverty: direct or deep poverty — below 80% APT; poverty endangering subsistence — 80–99% APT; poverty risk 100–124% APT; out of poverty risk — at least 125% APT.

Equivalence scales applied: 1.0 : 0.7 (the second and each subsequent adult household member) : 0.5 (each household member up to 13 years of age).

Consistent decrease in the proportion of elderly household members living in poverty and the increase of the proportion of elderly household members who are out of poverty risk is related to the significantly higher increase of pensions compared to the increase of the absolute poverty threshold. While in the period 2005–2009, the growth of old-age pension amounted to 1.84 times, the absolute poverty threshold rose only 1.37 times.

Pursuant to the provisions of the State Pension Insurance Act, state pensions are not subject to indexation, provided the index is less than 1.000. Thus, state pensions are not subject to reductions. On the other hand, the Government of the Republic is entitled to set off the part of the index within five years at the same time with approving the new index. Thus, minimum pensions are not subject to reductions either.

In order to ensure the gradual increase exceeding the previous increase of smaller pensions, it has been established on the basis of the provisions of the State Pension Insurance Act that the basic amount of a pension is multiplied by the index, the incremental part of which has been multiplied by the coefficient 1.1 and the value of a year of pensionable service is multiplied by the coefficient 0.9.

On the basis of the provisions of the State Pension Insurance Act, both salary and pensions can be generally received without limitations. Thus, in case a pensioner is working, he or she receives the pension without any limitations. There are certain exceptions regarding this provision for some particular pension types (early-retirement pension etc).

Unemployment insurance

The rate of unemployment insurance benefit applicable today, i.e. 50% during the first 100 days and 40% thereafter of the previous salary of the insured, meets the international obligations assumed, primarily the standards of the European Code of Social Security.

Below we specify the indicators regarding average unemployment insurance benefits.

Table: Average monthly benefit granted for new unemployment insurance benefit recipients during the first 100 days of benefit period (euros)

Year	ANNUAL AVERAGE/ EUR
2003	154
2004	172
2005	183
2006	212
2007	256
2008	319
2009	350
2010	325

Source: Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund

Inflow of unemployment insurance benefit recipients (new unemployment insurance benefit recipient) - unemployed persons who submitted an application for unemployment insurance benefit during the specified period and received a positive decision from the Unemployment Insurance Fund.

Average monthly benefit granted for new unemployment insurance benefit recipients during the first 100 days - average benefit for 30 days which was granted for new unemployment insurance benefits for the first 100 days of their benefit period (benefit calculated for 30 days based on daily benefit rate).

Unemployment insurance benefit replacement rate is 50% of previous average wage during the first 100 days of benefit period and 40% thereafter (minimum and maximum rates apply). Unemployment insurance benefit is taxable.

Average unemployment insurance benefit payment - average benefit paid during the month. Is affected by for how many days a person was eligible for benefit (benefit is not re-calculated for 30 days). Unemployment insurance benefit is taxable.

Table: Average unemployment insurance benefit payment (in euros)

Year	ANNUAL AVERAGE/ gross	ANNUAL AVERAGE/ net
2003	117	117
2004	128	128
2005	135	135
2006	154	154
2007	183	183
2008	231	231
2009	287	287
2010	265	265
Year	Annual average	Annual average

Source: Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund

We would like to state that on 1 July 2009, an amendment to the Unemployment Insurance Act came into effect increasing the minimum benefit level of the unemployment insurance from the level of the amount of unemployment allowance (benefit 30 days: 987 kroons or 63.08 euros) to the level of 50% of the national minimum monthly wage for the previous calendar year (benefit 30 days: 2175 kroons or 139.01 euros).

Thus a person having lost his/her job, who has earned a low income before becoming unemployed, is ensured an unemployment insurance benefit as a minimum benefit that constitutes 50% of the national minimum monthly wage for the previous calendar year approved by the Government of the Republic, i.e. in case a person has worked part-time and earned a wage that is lower than the national minimum monthly wage, he is still ensured an unemployment insurance benefit in the amount of 50% of the national minimum monthly wage for the previous calendar year in case of unemployment.

In 2008–2011, the national minimum monthly wage in case of a full-time job amounted to 4350 kroons or 278.02 euros in 2011.

Most of the recipients of the unemployment insurance benefit receive a benefit that is higher than the minimum benefit. Below we specify the numbers and proportions of recipients of the minimum benefit of all the benefit recipients in the last years.

Table: Number of new recipients of the unemployment insurance benefit who received the minimum benefit

Year	New recipients of the unemployment insurance benefit	Number of new recipients of the unemployment insurance benefit who received the minimum benefit	% of the new recipients of the unemployment insurance benefit who received the minimum benefit
2009	55,337	5,347	9.7%
2010	32,553	4,200	12.9%

Comparison of the data in the tables above shows that the monthly average unemployment insurance benefit paid exceeds the APT, thus a recipient of the unemployment insurance benefit should not be facing the risk of absolute poverty.

Comparing the average unemployment insurance benefit paid during the first 100 days with the relative poverty threshold, the average unemployment insurance benefit for the first 100 days exceeds the relative poverty threshold.

The amount of the average unemployment insurance benefit of the total benefit period still remains below the relative poverty threshold.

On the other hand, by comparison we can state that a person who has worked full-time for a month and receives wage equal to the national minimum wage, is also below the relative poverty threshold due to his/her income level.

For example, in 2009, the national minimum monthly wage was 4350 kroons, i.e. 278.02 euros, while the relative poverty threshold was at 286 euros.

In case the beneficiary's housing expenses are high and he/she has less than 1200 kroons or 76.70 euros after paying the residence costs, he/she can apply for subsistence benefits.

Based on the 2011 State Budget Act, the annual subsistence rate was set at 76.70 euros for a person living alone or the first household member and 61.36 euros for the second and each subsequent household member. A beneficiary of the subsistence benefit whose all family members are minors is entitled to an additional social benefit in the amount of 15 euros together with subsistence benefit.

Subsistence level is established based on minimum expenses made on consumption of foodstuffs, clothing, footwear and other goods and services which satisfy the primary needs.

Article 10 - Protection of the family, mothers and children

15. Please inform the Committee about the impact of measures taken to combat domestic violence, including whether they comprise large-scale campaigns to raise awareness of domestic violence and violence against women, and the incorporation of specific provisions in national legislation which criminalize and punish domestic violence.

In April 2010, Estonian government accepted Development plan for violence reduction 2010-2014.

Implementation of the development plan is coordinated by the Ministry of Justice. Cooperation between different sectors is important for the achievement of the objectives of the development plan upon the prevention and dealing with the consequences of violence. The Ministry of Education and Research, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs together with the agencies within the area of their government, local governments, and non-profit associations participate in the implementation of the development plan besides the Ministry of Justice. In addition, private undertakings and the general public as a whole shall be involved in combating violence.

The government development plan covers four areas: violence against children; violence committed by minors; domestic violence and violence against women, and trafficking in human beings, including prostitution. For each area, a special network was created consisting of officials and NGOs representing adequate institutions responsible for the issue. Under the domestic violence chapter, measures for preventing domestic violence and violence against women and support for victims are being dealt with. Prevention includes improving dissemination of information on domestic violence and ways how to prevent it. Schoolbooks will be analysed and changed according to the need, teachers are expected to discuss topics such as human rights and gender equality in the classroom. Corresponding materials will be produced and disseminated in schools. Also, websites of different ministries and youth centres will be updated, so they will provide materials on violence prevention and victim support. In 2010, first empowerment training for 2 pilot groups of girls took place, and in 2011 we will continue with those. Research will be conducted on the reasons of domestic violence, and victim's needs, also we want to improve collection of statistics from women's shelters. Trainings of teachers, social and youth workers, and medical practitioners have important part in the development plan, both from prevention point of view and from victim support aspect. We are not planning to organise large scale campaigns at the moment, but are considering of doing so in future years.

Victims of domestic violence receive help from women's shelters (we have 11 of those in Estonia), where they receive flexible and tailored support, including psychological, social, legal counselling and accommodation. These shelters are mostly run by NGOs and financed mostly by the State through Gambling Tax Foundation. Victims can also use the national Victim Support system. The Victim Support Act entered into force on 1 January 2004; the part covering victim support services entered into force on 1 January 2005. The law provides for the establishment of a network of victim support centres in all counties. The main duty of regional victim support services is to create and employ a network of organizations in the region which offer assistance and services to victims of crime, and to develop and strengthen this network where possible. All persons who have fallen victim to negligence, mistreatment or physical, mental or sexual abuse, i.e. all those to whom suffering or injury have been caused, are entitled to victim support. Compensation is also available for victims of crime.

In Estonian legislation there is no separate section for domestic violence. Also, there is no separation between sexual offences done between partners at home or done in public places and between strangers. So we can note that separation in the legislation doesn't make difference between domestic violence and all other violent cases. Estonia has also not enacted any special legislation on domestic violence. Domestic violence falls into the category of ordinary violence, i.e. crimes against the person. For example causing damage to the health of another person, or beating, battery or other physical abuse which causes pain, is punishable; causing of health damage, which results in a danger to life, a severe physical illness, a severe mental disorder, miscarriage, a permanent mutilating facial injury, or the loss or cessation of functioning of an organ, is punishable; and so on.

16. Please provide detailed information on the results achieved by the measures taken by the State party, including the 2006-2009 Development Plan for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings, mentioned in paragraph 117 of the State party report, on reducing trafficking assisting victims. Further, given the low number of criminal cases relating to trafficking registered, please indicate why trafficking in persons is still not a specific criminal offence in the State party.

Final report of the Government Development plan for combating trafficking in human beings 2006-2009 was accepted by the Government in spring 2010.

Several studies were completed in 2006-2009. In the framework of prevention activities, lectures and workshops for victim support officials, child protection officials, youth workers, teachers of social education and history, schoolchildren, students, (youth) police officers, prosecutors, officials, workers of non-profit associations were continued, the development and distribution of educational materials (incl. through consular services and employment mediation) was continued, the crime prevention website was updated. The development of a national study programme and subject syllabuses for basic schools was commenced, which is aimed for increasing social skills of the students. Additional lesson allocated for the national human study curricula will create a possibility to deal with the topic of crime prevention in the 8th class.

Helpline for the prevention of human trafficking and counselling continued its work through which 643 persons received help in 2010, 639 in 2009 and 416 in 2008. Helpline is run by NGO Living for Tomorrow and financed by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

In 2008, 2 international projects ended: the ESF EQUAL project "Integration of Women Involved in Prostitution Including Victims of Human Trafficking into Legal Labour Market" and the Nordic-Baltic Pilot Project "Support, Protection and Rehabilitation of Women Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings for Sexual Exploitation". The participation in other international networks like the Council Baltic Sea States Working Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk and the Council of Baltic Sea States Task Force Against Human Trafficking and in the implementation of the action plan of the European Union for combating trafficking in human beings and in other projects was also continued. An important development in connection with the Nordic-Baltic Pilot Project (which was mostly financed by the Nordic countries, and the ESF EQUAL project), is the fact that as a result of preliminary work done in 2008 the shelters for the victims of trafficking were established in the project framework. Further rehabilitation centre ATOLL will receive activity support from the social protection allocations of the Ministry of Social Affairs. In 2009, 78 trafficking victims were identified and in 2010, 57 by NGOs Eluliin (rehabilitation centre ATOLL for trafficked and prostituted women) and Ida-Virumaa Women's Support Centre-Shelter. All were women, who were sexually exploited. Services were financed by the state.

Nationwide helpline for children 116 111 has continued work for the purpose of increasing the children's sense of security and possibilities to get help and support.

A new Advertising Act entered into force in 2008 that prohibits advertising of services offered for satisfaction of sexual desire, including advertising of prostitution or advertising referring to such services, advertising of works which contain pornography or promote violence or cruelty and advertising contributing to mediation of prostitution is prohibited.

Complete report of the Development plan, its aims and results is available at <http://www.just.ee/18886>. Unfortunately, the final report covering all years is available in Estonian only. Estonia is planning to criminalize trafficking in human beings as a separate crime in our Penal Code. The draft law proposal should reach the Parliament in autumn 2011.

17. Please explain the reasons for lowering the legal minimum age from 18 to 14 for models or actors in the production of pornographic pictures, film or other works.

The legal minimum age for models or actors in the production of pornographic pictures, film or other works in Estonia is 18 years and it has not been lowered. The Act adopted on 11/02/10, amending the Penal Code, split the former single offence into two different paragraphs. The relevant (former) paragraph prohibited:

- "the use of a person of less than 14 years of age as a model or actor in the manufacture of a pornographic or erotic picture, picture, film or other work, and use of a person of less than 18 years of age as a model or actor in the manufacture of a pornographic picture, film or other work."

The new wording of the Penal Code prohibits, in Para 177(1):

- "the use of a person of less than 18 years of age as a model or actor in pornographic performances, as well as in the manufacture of a pornographic picture, film or other work;"

and in Para 177¹ (1):

- "the use of a person of less than 14 years of age, or of a helpless person of less than 18 years of age as a model or actor in erotic performances, as well as in the manufacture of a erotic picture, film or other work."

Thus, just as before the amendment, the current general age limit for participation in pornographic works is 18 years and for erotic works 14 years, or in case of a helpless person, 18 years for participation also in erotic works. Further, in line with the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse the amendment made punishable the use of minors also in erotic performances.

Article 11 - Right to an adequate standard of living

18. Please inform the Committee of the impact of measures taken by the State party to address the shortage of social housing, as mentioned in paragraphs 717 and 718 of the State party report.

The need for municipal and social housing is highest in the city of Tallinn. Pursuant to the data of the City Property Department of the Tallinn City Government, the Tallinn has built and completed in cooperation with the private sector a total of 1,751 flats in the period 2008–2011, 15 of them have been approved as social flats. 12 of the social flats are meant for persons in wheelchairs and 3 flats (5-room flats) for the supported life of persons with mental disabilities (leased by rooms, while one room and rooms in public use are meant for common use).

As of 1 May 2011, 2,694 persons have applied for housing from the city of Tallinn,

- persons having applied for municipal housing 1202
- persons having applied for social housing 397
- young families* 962
- employees required by the city** 133

*A young family is a family or a single parent raising at least one child under 16 years of age.

** Employees required by the city are the employees of schools, child care institutions, social welfare institutions, museums, libraries and theatres, employees of public transport companies providing services to the City of Tallinn, nurses, midwives, caregivers and carers employed in the health care facilities in the City of Tallinn and police and rescue officers providing services to the city of Tallinn.

Also construction of housing was continued with the dwelling construction programme in order to provide support to young people when entering the labour market and finding a home in the city.

On 16 December 2010, Tallinn City Council adopted a programme for renovating the dormitory-type buildings. As a result of the programme, buildings in poor technical condition will be fixed up, which will prolong the service life and increase the energy efficiency of the buildings. This prevents the restored buildings from falling out of usage and it also improves city scenery. The dwelling stock for lease in the City of Tallinn will be more diversified on account of the renovated buildings and the living conditions of the inhabitants of the said buildings are improved. The socially under-privileged persons will have a better getting housing.

Compared to the previous accounting period, the Building Associations Act and Debt Restructuring and Debt Protection Act have been added.

The Building Associations Act (adopted 09/06/04, entered into force 01/01/05, published in RT I 2004, 53, 368) regulates the activities of the legal persons whose aim is to provide specified parts of building to the use of their members. The Act established a regulation that ensures such members equal rights with flat owners and better protection compared to the present situation. Since 1 January 2008, minimum energy efficiency requirements for new and existing buildings with ensured indoor climate were established. The socio-economic impacts of the establishment of minimum energy efficiency requirements include:

- expected impact on the real estate market: the consumers will have an opportunity to compare offers and it is assumed that offers with lower energy costs will be preferred by the consumers. Predictable energy costs direct the pricing trend of offers and simplify the consumer's deliberate choice;
- increasing attention on the energy saving options and implementing saving measures motivates entrepreneurs to develop services that are required for the implementation of energy saving projects;
- increased employment in the companies engaged in the insulation of buildings or reconstruction of the utility systems of buildings;
- an opportunity to obtain an overview of the condition of the Estonian housing stock that is valuable background information for the state in shaping housing policies;
- decreasing the possibility of the price shock resulting from a potential hike of energy prices.

The aim of the Debt Restructuring and Debt Protection Act (adopted 17/11/10, entered into force 05/04/11, published in RT I, 06/12/10, 1) is to offer an opportunity for the natural persons who have temporary solvency problems for debt restructuring, overcoming solvency problems, avoiding bankruptcy proceedings, learning to cope with future financial obligations and restoring their solvency. The court proceeding prescribed by law provides an opportunity for the restructuring of the debts of a natural person, incl. prolonging the payment term, accepting the performance of an obligation in parts or also reducing an obligation. Pursuant to the data of the Bank of Estonia, 4.4% of the persons who have taken housing loans, i.e. approximately 6,900 people with home loans have faced problems regarding repayment of housing loans. On the other hand, a large proportion of the loan arrears will be paid already before the passing of 60 days and court proceedings are extremely rare.

19. Please provide information measures taken to combat ethnic disparities in relation to the extent and depth of poverty in the State party.

The relative poverty rate of non-Estonians has been slightly higher than that of Estonians for years (see the Table). The unemployment rate of non-Estonians has also been higher and the average wage level has been lower. The goal of the Estonian Integration Strategy for 2008–2013 is to decrease differences in employment and income of employees of different nationalities.

Table: relative poverty rate of Estonians and non-Estonians 2007–2009 (%)

	2007	2008	2009
Total	19.5	19.7	15.8
Estonians	18.4	18.1	14.1
Non-Estonians	22	23.4	20

Source: Statistics Estonia

Losing a job and remaining unemployed are the main risk factors for falling into and remaining in poverty. Among immigrants and native non-Estonians, the risk of becoming unemployed is largely influenced by the knowledge of Estonian. Related to the general increase in unemployment, the distinctive importance of the

knowledge of Estonian in remaining in employment and returning to the labour market has become obvious: while the unemployment rate of immigrants who do not speak Estonian had increased to 22% in 2009, the unemployment rate of native non-Estonians who do not speak of Estonian had increased as high as 28% (Source: Statistics Estonia).

Related to the above, significant attention was paid to learning Estonian in the social and economic integration goal of the Estonian Integration Strategy. Major projects have been the following.

- 01/07/08 new levels of language proficiency established in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/ert/act.jsp?id=13118480>) of the Council of Europe (CE) were adopted in Estonia for determining mandatory work-related proficiency in Estonian allowing to determine language skills (grammar, vocabulary etc.) more distinctly. First proficiency exams complying with the CE framework document took place in October and November 2008. Estonian language proficiency examinations must be taken by the persons who have not acquired formal education in Estonian for working in certain positions and for applying for the citizenship of the Republic of Estonia and permanent residence permits.

In 2008–2009 language courses were arranged for a total of 1,000 employees of the public sector from Ida-Viru County whose mother tongue is not Estonian (policemen, library, medical and educational workers) for improving their language proficiency and labour exchanges were arranged for 101 persons.

Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (UIF) arranged training in Estonian (300 hours) as well as integrated speciality and language trainings for increasing the competitiveness of risk groups. In 2008, 738 and in 2009, 1,182 unemployed persons underwent the Estonian studies arranged by the UIF. In 2009, 1,210 persons participated in the integrated speciality and language training. Language studies will be compensated until 2013. Detailed information regarding training is available at <http://www.ekk.edu.ee/eksaminandile/eesti-keele-tasemeeksamid/eesti-keele-oppe-kulude-huvitamine>: Besides that, the UIF has gathered information regarding opportunities for individual study of Estonian at its web page: <http://www.tootukassa.ee/index.php?id=14693>. In 2008–2009, the Government Office arranged language training for 330 public sector employees.

In 2009, Tallinn University developed a web-based system for testing the level of Estonian (www.meis.ee/testest), which contains example tasks of the proficiency examination and language tests. The system supports people in preparing for the language proficiency exams and developing language skills.

In 2009, free language courses were arranged for 1,000 citizens of third countries or persons with undetermined citizenship from Harju and Ida-Viru counties. The test for establishing the initial language level for forming groups was developed, reminder for the student and study materials were prepared.

Starting from 2009, compensation was paid for costs related to language studies to all who had participated in language courses and passed the language proficiency exam. 752 persons received compensation for the costs of language studies from the programme of the European Social Fund „Development of Language Studies 2008–2010”. Terms and conditions and detailed information are available at www.denginazad.ee.

With the support of the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country nationals (EIF Fund) cultural and language learning materials and language and adjusting programmes for better integration of adult new immigrants were prepared and applied in 2009. An adjusting programme was completed and piloted (in Tallinn, Jõhvi and Tartu) comprising measures for the newly arrived citizens of third countries. 56 people from 15 countries participated in the pilot test of the adjusting programme. During the process, a handbook, information booklets, a web page and study materials (worksheet, instructional film) were prepared. A web page to introduce the programme is available at www.kohanemisprogramm.com

At the moment, the Ministry of Culture is supervising the preparation of the new action plan of the integration strategy for the next three years. The action plan is to focus more attention on the cooperation activities and facilitating interpersonal contacts that is supposed to contribute to the levelling of employment rates.

Article 12 - Right to health

20. Please inform the Committee about the impact of the implementation of the health development plan referred to in paragraph 851 of the State party report.

In order to apply the trends in health policy approved in 2006 by the Government of the Republic the National Health Plan 2009–2020 and implementation plan 2009–2012 were prepared. The plan compiles all programmes and strategies in the area.

All ministries according to their area of competence have been engaged in the application of the trends in health policy by implementing the National Health Plan. Also, each year, a report of activity results and an implementation plan for the following year is prepared.

Application of health policy through the National Health Plan 2009–2020 takes place on the national level as well as on the local governments and organisations level. Through empowering local governments and organisations, the trends in health policy are applied on the individual level.

According to the report on the Actions in 2009 under the Implementation Plan 2009-2013 for the National Health Plan 2009-2020¹⁸, 2009 was a difficult year globally as well as for Estonia. General recession, decreasing incomes and increasing unemployment were the unavoidable keywords. Still, the population health was not unaffected by the negative impact of recession, even though there were several positive developments in this area. The negatives include certain increase in the number of suicides and decreasing availability of health services. The wider negative impact of recession on population health also manifests in the risk of poverty, which can be expected to increase. However, despite the changes in healthcare sector, there were no changes in public satisfaction with health services. Another positive development in 2009 was the general decrease in mortality and in the number of traffic-related deaths, as well as decreasing rate of alcohol consumption.

21. Please indicate why infant mortality rate is higher in rural areas in the State party. Please also comment on how availability, accessibility and quality of health care services in rural areas and in the North-Eastern part of the State party are guaranteed, particularly in view of the problems mentioned in paragraph 831 of the report. Please provide detailed information on the impact of measures taken in this regard.

We would like to explain that as the number of births is relatively low in Estonia, each single case has a very strong impact on the statistics of infant mortality. Therefore, the 5-year average indicated in Article 811 of the Report does not give cause to claim that infant mortality is higher in rural areas. On the other hand, the area of Estonia is so small that all regions have good access to II and III stage specialist medical care. Pursuant to the data of the Primary Health Care Development Plan approved in 2009, there are no geographic locations where the distance to the nearest family physician would be more than 30 km.

22. In light of the increasing incidence of substance abuse and the spread of HIV among drug users in the State party, please provide information on the impact of measures taken to increase the availability of substitution therapy and syringe exchange programmes in all regions concerned.

Thanks to the service for minimisation of damage, infection with HIV among intravenous drug addicts has decreased and our service coverage is good according to the assessment of WHO. Problem regions like Ida-Viru county and Tallinn have been ensured with an extremely good preventive network of needle exchange points. Elsewhere in Estonia, the problem is not topical.

In order to minimise damage from injecting drugs, Estonia uses needle exchange and opioid addicts are offered substitution treatment. Needle exchange points offer clients sterile syringes and needles and collect used ones, clients are counselled on the options for getting help, safe injecting and sexual behaviour, they are motivated to give up injecting and if possible, take up substitution or detoxification treatment. Low threshold centres also offer social counselling and services. In 2010, a total of 36 needle exchange and counselling centres were

¹⁸ In English:

http://www.sm.ee/fileadmin/meedia/Dokumendid/Tervisevaldkond/Rahvatervis/RTA/RTA_2009_tegevusaruanne_english.pdf

operating in nine organisations. First-time visits amounted to almost 2,800, the total number of visits to 173,000. The number of repeat visitors with client codes neared 7,500. In total 2,403,480 needles and 585,000 condoms were distributed. Compared to 2009, the amount of distributed needles increased by 6% and the plans for 2010 were exceeded by 5%. The number of needles exchanged has increased over the years and the coverage of the target group with this service has reached a good level by now. 66% of the needles were distributed in Ida-Viru county, 32% in Tallinn and 2% elsewhere in Estonia.

Regarding substitution treatment, the National Strategy offers methadone substitution treatment. In 2010, this service was provided by 7 service providers in 9 different locations (715 treatment places in total); during the year, 1,064 persons received treatment and at the end of the year, 662 patients were being treated (utility rate 93%). Also the number of clients receiving methadone substitution treatment has increased over the years, but the target group coverage with the service is low, remaining below 10%.

23. Please provide detailed information on the prevalence of mental health problems among the various groups of the population (urban/rural, ethnic groups) and the response given by the State party, including on availability, accessibility and quality of mental health care services. Please also provide information on the impact of policies and measures taken to reduce suicide risk, including among the youth.

Availability of psychiatric in-patient service is characterised by the number of beds and hospitalisations that has remained on the same level throughout the reporting period.

		Beds	Beds per 100,000	Hospitalised	Hospitalised per 100,000
Psychiatric beds	2004	709	52.6	14624	1083.8
	2005	723	53.8	14195	1054.5
	2006	743	55.3	14285	1063.2
	2007	754	56.2	14809	1103.8
	2008	762	56.8	14376	1072.3

In Estonia more attention has been paid to improving availability of out-patient services. The number of out-patient psychiatric appointments is slowly increasing.

Year	Appointments
2004	229,834
2005	233,054
2006	241,392
2007	253,276
2008	241,495

(Source: NIHD health statistics)

Estonia is looking for possibilities to offer more high-quality mental health care services. For example, with the help of Norway, the Mental Health Centre for Children should be completed in Tallinn and Peedu Milieu Therapy Centre in South Estonia by 2015. The first centre provides various psychological and psychiatric help to children. Peedu Centre provides help to children suffering from complicated psychiatric problems.

Besides that, the Estonian-Swedish Mental Health and Suicidology Institute (<http://www.suicidology.ee/index.php?page=3>) carries out projects aimed at the facilitation of mental health for both children and adults. As one of the examples of the activities, carried out under the project, suicidal pupils are established who are then referred to a psychiatrist.

24. Please inform the Committee about the availability, accessibility and affordability of sexual and reproductive health services, including for adolescents. Moreover, please provide information on sexual and reproductive health programmes education in school. Please also provide statistical data on abortion rate, disaggregated by age groups.

First, people have access to aid regarding sexual health on the primary level health care, i.e. from their family physicians. Besides that, it is possible to make an appointment with a gynaecologist, midwife and andrologist.

Additionally, various sexual health services are offered in Estonia. There are e.g. AIDS counselling centres, services to the persons involved in prostitution and also drug addicts.

Estonia's system of counselling for young people in the area of sexual health has proved extremely successful - In cooperation with the Estonian Sexual Health Association there are 19 counselling centres for young people or separate counselling for the youth.¹⁹ In the centres, the youth have free access to counselling and also tests regarding various venereal diseases and contraceptives. Starting from 2012, the youth have access to counselling regarding sexual health also via Internet.

In 2010, a new curriculum for basic schools and upper secondary schools was adopted. In connection with this, a new subject syllabus of human studies will be applied starting from autumn 2011 where emphasis on sexual health is stronger.

Articles 13 and 14 - Right to education

25. Please provide statistical data on rates of enrolment in vocational and higher education, on a yearly comparative basis, disaggregated by sex and field of study.

Please see **Annex I** - Table on enrolment to vocational education, 2006-2010

26. In view of the gender segregation in employment and the predominance of women in low-paying works, please inform the Committee about the impact of measures adopted by the State party to encourage girls and young female students to pursue education in traditionally male-dominated fields of study.

No restrictions based on gender are applied while commencing vocational education, all study options are open for everybody (except in the case of medical contraindications).

Clear trends towards gender segregation can be seen among the persons commencing vocational education:

- 2/3 of the students commencing studies in vocational upper secondary education (on the basis of basic education) are young men and 1/3 girls;
- vice versa, 2/3 of the students commencing studies in post secondary VET are girls and 1/3 young men;
- the numbers of students commencing VET without educational prerequisites and VET on the basis of basic education are small and establishing explicit trends would not be correct.

It must be still noted that *summa summarum* gender balance is prevailing among the students commencing vocational education, ca 55% of the students in vocational education are male and ca 45% are female.

Pursuant to the gender division of the students between types of vocational education, technical specialities also dominate the selection of specialities taken up after acquiring basic education and service specialities are selected in case of post-secondary VET.

Still, regarding many specialities, one can see signs of the reduction of the previous typical gender-based study choices among students.

No separate activities are scheduled in vocational education for changing study choices based on gender stereotypes. But it is planned to strive for closer connections between the classification of vocational education and qualification system and in the course of that, to offer more study opportunities in the service specialities just after the basic education and to open continuing training opportunities in the technical specialities after secondary education. This meets the expectations of basic school graduates as well as those who have already obtained a vocational education.

Compared to 2000, the increase in the proportion of male students by study fields has increased the most in technical, production and construction specialities (in 2000/01, 22% of male students; in 2009/10, 26% of male students) and the proportion of male students studying social sciences, business and law has decreased (from 39% to 32%). The proportion of female students has decreased the most compared to the academic year 2000/01

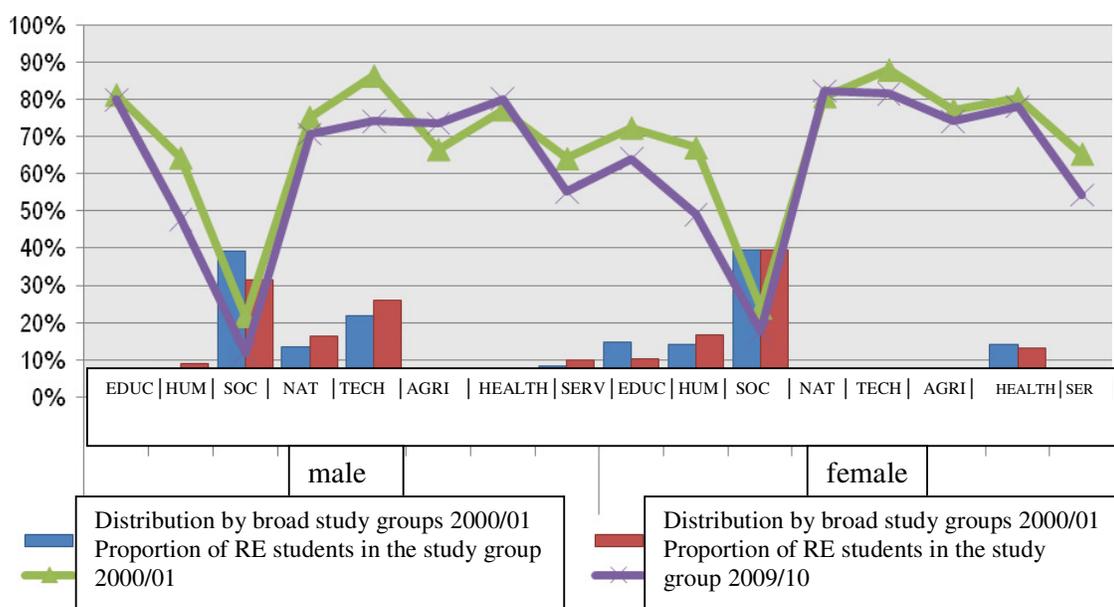
¹⁹ <http://www.amor.ee/?set lang id=1>

in education (from 15% to 10%) and increased the most in the service area (from 4% to 7%).

In 2010, with regard to the Gender Equality Monitoring (referred to under Para 12) indicating a high gender pay gap also a study on the factors influencing the wage differences was carried out²⁰. It did indicate impact factors such as women's career breaks, gender segregation in the labour market, personnel practices in organizations, the legal environment in the state, as well as the attitudes and stereotypes prevailing in society. However, the researches found that, on the basis of the empirical analysis in this study it can be said that although there are more women amongst those with higher education, the men receive on average a higher wage than women with the same level of education and the same background characteristics (occupation, sector of activity, age etc). The qualifications held by women and men only impact the gender pay gap to a small degree, which in turn increases the unexplained pay gap, i.e. the different subject field choices of women and men need not necessarily definitely correspond overall to the gender-differentiated choices in the labour market, which also means that in the formation of the gender pay gap the acquired qualification plays a relatively minor role compared to other factors. This result indicates that encouraging women into higher-paid fields, a popular measure for balancing the labour market, would not provide the desired result if the aim were to reduce the gender pay gap. However, the researches also indicated that there may be some subject fields where the gender segregation in education could be linked to the gender segregation in the labour market and therefore contribute to the formation of the pay gap, but further analysis is necessary to identify those fields.

Gender equality in higher education.

Graph Distribution of female and male students by fields of study and source of funding 2000/01 and 2009/10 academic years.



Article 15 - Cultural rights

27. Please inform the Committee of measures taken by the State to guarantee the protection of the cultural heritage of the various ethnic groups in the State party. Please also provide information on how the culture and cultural heritage of minorities have been incorporated into the national education programme as well as in cultural events and activities in the State party.

The goal of the Ministry of Culture is to support the cultural life of ethnic minorities living in Estonia and to

²⁰ Anspal, S., Kallaste, E., Karu, M. 2010 *Sooline palgalõhe Eestis: poliitikameetmete analüüs. Uuringuraport*. Eesti Rakendusuuringute Keskus CentAR, Poliitikauuringute Keskus PRAXIS, Sotsiaalministeerium

contribute to the preservation and development of their languages and cultural authenticity. The Ministry of Culture supports the activities of cultural associations of ethnic minorities, assists the promotion of their cultural life and activities in compliance with legal acts currently in force. The Ministry of Culture is in charge of the general coordination of the integration activities of the Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013 and is in charge of the implementation of the European Fund for the Integration of Third-country Nationals 2007–2013. In 1998, Estonia joined the European Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. The responsibility for the application of the Convention rests with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A more complex approach to the subject of cultural diversity is also required by the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, which was approved by the government on 23rd November 2006 and entered into force on March 2007. More than 100 states have joined the convention. The Ministry of Culture is responsible for the implementation of the Convention in Estonia.

Estonian ministries have developed several programmes and development plans that in one way or another approach the issue of cultural heritage and which goal is to preserve, develop cultural heritage and notification thereof. The initiated programmes and development plans have acutely highlighted horizontal development activities important for everyone, such as heritage preservation, extending access to heritage and more extensive involvement of the public in the heritage preservation.

Under the supervision of the Ministry of Culture, the following regional programmes supporting the culture of areas where dialects are spoken were completed in 2002 and 2002 in addition to the programmes of schools in old manor and religious buildings approved by the Government of the Republic: Language and Culture of South Estonia 2005–2009 and Cultural Programme of Old Võrumaa 2010–2013, Setumaa Cultural Programme 2006–2009 and 2010–2013, Kihnu Cultural Space 2008–2010 and 2011–2014, Folkloristic Cultural Environment of the Islands 2008–2010 and 2011–2014, Peipsiveere Cultural Space 2009–2012, Folklore Programme of Virumaa 2011–2014. In addition, the plan of action for the Estonian Architectural Policy and Field of Architecture (2004–2008), development programmes for digitalisation of cultural heritage (2007–2010) and rural architecture and landscapes (2007–2010), Estonian historical natural holy places (2008–2012) have been completed. In 2006, the strategic document aimed at the museums „Estonian Museums of the 21st Century. Basic Development Trends 2006–2015” was completed.

By now, the Ministry of Culture has shaped a uniform area of heritage preservation, developed specific plans of measures as programmes and development plans through its development activities. This means that the preparatory work has been completed and the necessary „pillars” to form the support for the uniform development plan for the Estonian cultural heritage has been completed.

The goal of the support programmes for cultural heritage initiated and coordinated by the Ministry of Culture also have a social aspect in addition to the cultural dimension: to develop the cultural identity of the area, to improve community participation and awareness of the values of regional cultural heritage; to facilitate local economy through cultural heritage, to create new international partnerships and also between various communities.

The Republic of Estonia provides funding for all communities of ethnic minorities to support the preservation and introduction of their cultural life, cultural peculiarities and language and to develop cultural ties with their ethnic mother country through their cultural associations and associations. The activities are also reflected in the valid Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013 that is the framework document for measures taken to develop the language and culture of ethnic minorities. The objective the document is to support the feeling of belonging to Estonian society of every permanent resident, through sharing common values and command of the state language and to value the cultural diversity of Estonia. As a result of successful integration, everyone has the opportunity for self-realisation and feels safe, and also participates in the economic, social, political and cultural life of the society. In Estonia, the opportunities to speak other languages and develop national cultures are safeguarded.

The action plan for the period 2011–2013 of the integration strategy 2008–2013 also establishes preservation and valuation of the cultural heritage of ethnic minorities as well as safeguarding possibilities to learn one’s mother tongue the priority activity. The action plan of the integration strategy establishes the advancement of the culturally diverse Estonian society, valuation of the cultural heritage of the Estonian indigenous minorities and making it available to the public, introduction of culturally diverse Estonia to Estonians and introduction of Estonian culture to the ethnic minorities living in Estonia, supporting cooperation projects between cultures, supporting cultural cooperation between Estonian residents coming from different cultures.

The number of cultural associations of ethnic minorities has rapidly increased: while there were 156 cultural

associations in 2007, the number of financed associations has increased to 250 in 2010. In 2010, the information portal www.etnoweb.ee was opened that reflects the cultural life of ethnic minorities. The portal is a database for the national cultural associations in Estonia as well as a calendar of diverse range of cultural events, it also reflects other topical information.

The following activities and measures are related to the preservation of cultural heritage of the ethnic minorities.

- The state programme „Conservation and Development of Places of Worship” has been initiated with the aim of ensuring the preservation of places of worship as a relevant part of the Estonian heritage in cultural and art history. The programme targets all places of worship of all registered denomination irrespective of their status as a monument. The programme is coordinated by the National Heritage Board. The programme has supported the renovation of the churches of the Orthodox Church of Estonia, Estonian Orthodox Church of Moscow Patriarchate and the places of worship of Old Believers.
- The general aim of the cultural programme „Folkloristic Cultural Environment of the Islands 2008–2010” is to value and revive the way of life, practices and traditions, skills and language traits characteristic of the Estonian islands. The cultural heritage of the Estonian Swedes is also supported with this programme. The programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture.
- The aim of the programme „Peipsiveere Cultural Space 2009–2012” is to preserve the vitality of the coastal villages of Lake Peipus, especially the cultural space of the Russian Old Believers. The programme attempts to contribute to the preservation, restoration and development of the mental and material heritage of Peipsiveere, the extension of the circle of persons involved in the local cultural life and especially tying young people with the language and culture of their ancestors. The programme is coordinated by the Ministry of Culture.
- The Society of Old Believers Culture and Development in Estonia is financed from the state budget with the aim to allow this ethnic group, who has lived in Estonia for centuries, to develop their culture in their own language. A virtual museum and database has been created at www.starover.eu, the preparatory work for compiling a reader about Old Believers is underway and a dictionary has been published; an exhibition at the Old-Believers Museum in Kolkja has been completed; singing lessons for Old Believers in Estonia have been organised, the places of worship of Estonian Old Believers have been conserved and tidied.
- Base funding of the societies of ethnic minorities has been organised from early 1990, when cultural associations of ethnic minorities, one of the basic principles of cultural policy aimed at the ethnic minorities, emerged in the Republic of Estonia that had regained independence. From 2008, cultural associations of ethnic minorities are financed through umbrella organisations. From 2009, the operating costs of cultural associations of ethnic minorities are financed from the budget of the Ministry of Culture. In 2011, 17 umbrella organisations uniting 250 different, ethnic cultural associations receive aid. From 2007, the Integration and Migration Foundation Our People coordinates the base funding of cultural associations. The amount of base funding has continuously increased: in 2003, it was 159,770 euros; in 2006, 204,517 euros and in 2011, 313,167 euros. Organisations of ethnic minorities have been in regular contact with all relevant ministries and local governments, they regularly meet in different forums addressing issues related to the culture, language and education etc. of ethnic minorities.
- The activities of Sunday schools regarding studies of languages and culture of ethnic minorities are supported from the state budget by the Ministry of Education and Research. Currently it is possible to acquire general education in Estonian and in Russian, as concerns teaching the languages of ethnic minorities, it is mainly the task of the Sunday schools operating at the ethnic cultural associations. For arranging extensive training not targeted only to the pupils of basic school age, the cultural associations of ethnic minorities are entitled to establish Sunday schools on the basis of the Private Schools Act. The Sunday school is also a suitable form of activity in case potential students are studying in different local governments. In the academic year 2010/2011, the activities of 17 Sunday schools were financed, including the salaries of the teachers and acquisitions of study materials and literature in mother tongue. There are 270 students in these schools altogether from 4 to 18 years of age. The activities of the Association of Sunday School Teachers, the cooperation partner of the Ministry of Education and Research, were continuously supported. Integration and Migration Foundation Our People is supporting the in-service training of the teachers of Sunday schools of the cultural associations of ethnic minorities in their ethnic mother countries.
- Supported by the Ministry of Education and Research, a series „Ethnic Nationalities in Estonia” is published targeted for use in the general education schools in the history and civic instruction classes. Books introducing the traditions and culture of various nations have been published in these series: „Lithuanians” (2005), „Kazakhs” (2006), „Russians” (2007), „Uzbeks” (2008), „Azerbaijanis” (2009), „Armenians” (2010) and „Chuvash” (2011). The aim of the books published in the series is to introduce

the culture of the ethnic nationalities living in Estonia to the population in Estonia and to enhance multiculturalism.

The support programmes of cultural projects of ethnic minorities also finance the preservation of the cultural heritage of the cultural associations of ethnic minorities. The Ministry of Culture applies again, since 2008, the support programme of the cultural projects of ethnic minorities which support various projects of cultural associations of ethnic minorities for the preservation and introduction of their ethnic culture, organisation of song and dance festivals, training camps, introduction of traditions and many other activities.

Furthermore, cultural activities of ethnic minorities are supported by the local governments, Ministry of Culture and Ministry of Education and Research, Integration and Migration Foundation Our People (founded in 1998), Cultural Endowment of Estonia, Gambling Tax Council and National Foundation of Civil Society.

The Ministry of Culture support professional and hobby theatres of ethnic minorities, concert organisers, museums, publishing projects and also arranging literary events, festivals and other cultural events of ethnic minorities in Estonia on a regular basis. Each year, support has been provided from the programme „Music Festivals and Competitions” to the Russian Orthodox music festival Credo, Narva City Symphony Orchestra, the international Jevgeni Mravinski music festival in Narva, the Jewish deep culture festival „Ariel”, Russian song and dance festival „Slaavi Pärj” (Slavic Wreath), cultural festival of the Estonian Old Believers „Peipus” and many others. The Music Foundation of the Cultural Endowment of Estonia also provides large-scale support to music events of ethnic minorities.

Since 2008, the Council for Ethnic Minorities is operating at the Ministry of Culture as a body providing counsel to the minister of culture, uniting representatives of 32 cultural associations. The Council for Ethnic Minorities meets four times a year. Topical subjects include funding of cultural associations, project competitions, cooperation with media etc. Supported by the Ministry of Culture, the newspaper MK Estonia publishes a monthly section on the work of the Council for Ethnic Minorities and ethnic societies. In 2010, the Youth Council of Estonian Ethnic Minorities was founded under the Council, uniting the active representatives of younger generation of the cultural associations of ethnic minorities. Supported by the state, the members of the Youth Council have participated in several international projects. Etnofest „People Next Door” and a photo exhibition of the same title were arranged during one of the largest film festival in Estonia, PÖFF. On the day of ethnic minorities on 24 September, conferences, seminars and exhibitions are organised. The organisations of ethnic minorities have positively noted the establishment of several consultative bodies dealing with issues of ethnic minorities such as the National Minorities Cultural Advisory Council in the Ministry of Culture and the advisory and consultative councils at the local governments: the round table of ethnic minorities of Ida-Virumaa, the round table of ethnic minorities in Pärnu, the Domestic Peace Forum in Tallinn. In 2010, the Round Table of Nationalities was founded operating at the Estonian Cooperation Assembly.

Money has been allocated from the state budget to the Swedish and Finnish cultural autonomies. The Ministry of Culture concludes an annual contract with the organisations representing each of the ethnic minorities, and on the basis of the contract, support is allocated from the state budget. In 2011, the support reached 83,085 euros. Both ethnic groups are active in valuing their language and culture. Starting from 1991, Estonian Ingerian-Finnish Union arranges Ingerian-Finnish song festivals, language courses as well as collecting folklore and biographies each year. Since August 1993, a newspaper in Finnish, Inker, is published. The ethnic minority of Estonian Swedes is actively striving for restoring awareness of their cultural heritage. The aim of activity of the Rannarootsi Museum in Haapsalu is to engage in the culture of the Estonian Swedes, who have inhabited the islands and mainland of West Estonia, and to record and promote its folklore. The activities of the museum are financed from the state budget and private donations. The library of the museum, the best respective collection all over Estonia, is a major prerequisite for the development of scientific work. Good cooperation with the universities and Estonian National Museum ensures continuous research regarding the life and history of Estonian Swedes. The museum has revived the traditional construction of fishing boats of the Estonian Swedes. Folklore is actively collected, the most important places of cultural and historical importance have been mapped and equipped with notice boards.

Tallinn is the European Capital of Culture in 2011. The programme of the Capital of Culture also reflects the cultural events of the ethnic minorities. The programme of the Capital of Culture includes 251 events, special focus is set on children (29 projects), the youth (48 projects), ethnic minorities (36) and events targeted to different communities (7 projects).

In the area of fine arts, Russian theatres have received the most of support, support was also provided to the

Russian classical music groups. The activity support to the Russian Theatre has been the largest: 808,749 euros in 2010 and 884,385 euros in 2011.

Project competition of the Integration and Migration Foundation Our People „Let us act together” supports the cooperation activities of the cultural associations, incl. recording of oral folklore and making the society aware of the history and culture of the cultural minorities. In 2010, 3400 persons participated in the activities of 27 projects, 1/3 of them were citizens of third countries. Activities took place in Tallinn, Harju County, Ida-Viru County, Pärnu County, Tartu County, Võru County and Lääne County.

In accordance with the aims of the Integration Strategy, the national curricula for basic schools and upper secondary schools have been supplemented with programmes supporting the teaching of topics related to multicultural environment and valuing the culture of different ethnic groups. In January 2011, the Government of the Republic approved the new national curriculum for the basic school and upper secondary school. The curricula will be applied in the period 2011–2013. In the new curricula, the issues of culture and origin of ethnic minorities have been included in the core curriculum as well as in subject syllabi. The national curriculum for basic schools and upper secondary schools focuses on the values arising from the Constitution of Estonia, Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UN, Convention on the Rights of the Child and ethical principles cited in the basic documents of the European Union.

When addressing the issues of the culture and origin of ethnic minorities in the national curricula, four different levels are distinguished. Level 1 addresses cultural diversity, the ability to perceive and value connections to the cultural heritage of one's own nation and other nations. Activities of Level 2 address issues that are considered important in the society that allow shaping an understanding of the development of the society as a whole throughout the whole curriculum above subject. Regarding the issues of the culture and origin of the ethnic minorities, cultural identity constitutes the most important issue. Level 3 deals with specific subjects. Here, first civic instruction can be pointed out where the above-mentioned topic is directly introduced in the content of study in the basic school. But other subjects like literature, geography, art etc. also contribute. On Level 4, perception of cultural diversity is achieved through elective subjects. State curriculum prescribes an opportunity for schools to use a certain number of lessons for teaching elective subjects or courses.

In addition, the new national curriculum imposes an obligation on the upper secondary schools to offer at least 11 courses that take into account the peculiarity of the school and the regional distinction. For example the Tallinn Jewish School offers for several years already an extensive block covering the Jewish culture. Russian lycées can offer elective courses related to Russian culture.

Through various programmes, translating several information portals into Russian is supported in order to facilitate the engagement and participation of the Russian-speaking population in the community life: www.kultuur.info (information on cultural events in Estonia in Russian); www.tallinn2011/kalender (information on cultural events); web-based encyclopaedia *Estonica* <http://www.estonica.org> is available in Estonian and English since 2000 and since 2010, also in Russian. The portal provides a comprehensive collection of texts regarding the Estonian society, culture, history, nature, education, science, state and economy and the links between these areas, incl. the culture of Estonian ethnic minorities; portal www.ngo.ee/rus (news portal in Russian of the Estonian Civil Society). In 2010, the Russian-language news portal of the Estonian Public Broadcasting, www.rus.err.ee, was founded that at the end of the year, had a weekly average of 45,000 visits, and also the English information portal www.news.err.ee, which has 5000 users per week, 51% of them from abroad. Information portal <http://kodanik.err.ee/> is a collection of links to and reviews of all issues relevant to the application of Estonian citizenship. Also portals www.lapsedtrenni.ee, <http://www.sekundomer.ee/> supporting active citizenship and introducing the opportunities of sports to the youth and the portal raising environmental awareness <http://www.okokratt.ee> were provided with a Russian module.

The Ministry of Culture supports the Estonian Jewish Museum, Russian Museum, the museums of Russian Old Believers at Lake Peipus, Museum of Estonian Swedes, Ukrainian Cultural Centre and other institutions preserving cultural heritage of minorities. The largest collections of ethnographic cultural heritage of the ethnic minorities living in Estonia are in the Estonian National Museum.

The information need of the Estonian population, including ethnic minorities, are satisfied by two TV channels (ETV and ETV2), news portal, Internet media services, one local and four national radio programmes in the Estonian Public Broadcasting (EPB). There are 3 major free-to-air commercial channels operating on the basis of a broadcasting licence and also channels with conditional access (11 based on cable network licence), plus almost 30 commercial radios. Law related to audiovisual media complies with the international legal acts binding for Estonia, amendments to this law depend on the developments in the European Union and Council of Europe and proceed from national developments.

Since 2008, Russian programmes are broadcasted in ETV2, including news in Russian. Radio station Raadio 4 is continuously the most popular Estonian radio programme among the target group of non- Estonians and thus also the most efficient channel for satisfying the information need of ethnic minorities. Radio station Raadio 4 broadcasts a programme in Russian 24 hours a day. The programme includes programmes also for other ethnic minorities (in Polish, Georgian, Ukrainian, Armenian, Belarusian, Azerbaijani, Chuvashi and Hebrew). Public radio and TV are financed from the state budget.

17% (2010) of the periodicals published in Estonia are in other languages than Estonian. Russian cultural magazines (Tallinn and Vošgorod) are available, fiction is published in Russian (major publishing houses are KPD and Aleksandra). There are 1 Russian national and 8 regional daily newspapers published in Estonia. There are also 5 national weekly newspapers and 14 magazines. Officially, 426 Russian publications are distributed in Estonia, comprising approximately 30% of all publications.

28. In view of the statistical data available on participation in cultural activities in the State party and on reasons restricting participation, please provide detailed information on measures taken by the State party to increase interest in, and access to, culture among its population, particularly among ethnic groups.

84% of the Estonian population have Estonian citizenship, 8.5% are citizens of other countries and 7.5% are persons with undetermined citizenship. 68.8% of the population of Estonia are Estonians, 25.5% are Russians and the rest is made up of other nations (Ukrainians, Belarusians, Finns etc.).²¹

The budget allocated to the cultural sphere in 2009 amounted to 152.1 million euros, comprising 2.66% of the total state budget; in 2010 it amounted to 147.6 million euros (2.57% of the total state budget) and in 2011, 173.1 million euros (2.88% of the state budget). In 2010, 19 umbrella organisations comprising 231 cultural associations received state support.

In Estonia, culture, education and social sphere are subsidised from tax revenues from sales of alcohol and tobacco products and gambling. Additional support for cultural activities can be asked from the Gambling Tax Council²² and Cultural Endowment of Estonia²³.

The survey on the population's culture consumption conducted in 2006²⁴ revealed that compared to non-Estonians, Estonians visit theatres, museums and libraries more often. Compared to Estonians, non-Estonians go more often to the cinema, read more books and buy more works of art. There are no differences between Estonians and non-Estonians regarding buying books, visiting art exhibitions and doing sports. High prices, lack of spare time and lack of cultural institutions near the place of residence prevent cinema, theatre and concert-going.

Related to the economic crisis, structural and organisational reforms have not been conducted in the cultural sphere. No national cultural institutions have been closed. In Estonia, the Ministry of Culture coordinates fine arts, cultural heritage, foreign relations in the field of culture, public media, sports and integration policy. Ministry of Education and Research coordinates education in art and youth work.

Tallinn is one of the European Capitals of Culture in 2011. In addition to the usual cultural events enriching the

²¹ Statistics Estonia. Arve ja fakte 2011. http://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=25595

Minifacts about Estonia 2011: http://www.stat.ee/publication-download-pdf?publication_id=25643

²² <http://hmn.kul.ee/>

²³ <http://www.kulka.ee/>

²⁴ Saar-Poll. Kultuuritarbimise uuringu aruanne 2006. Elanikkonna küsitlus:

http://docs.google.com/viewer?a=v&q=cache:uxDenM4GLfIJ:https://kule.kul.ee/avalik/esitlused/kultuuritarbimine/kultuuritarbimise_uuring_2006_aruanne.doc+2006.+aasta+kultuuritarbimise+uuringust&hl=et&gl=ee&pid=bl&srcid=ADGEESiOXokj8X0tQDPUSMK6iluS0CRNr-t-b6ZHAJu9FRLZLVppGMVcSlz7YGtQoL5GUGxPf7fjF2vs2AWp-ryxIz10CEiljsyEPCf15-Gpywc3Pc3B8sDA0zz197tUPA99MqDPajCAC&sig=AHIEtbRUA_pfAdq5tZFMJaHfvnxjkoJORw&pli=1

spare time opportunities, several international festivals take place here bringing people of culture and tourists from Europe and other places in the world to Estonia.

The aims of the Estonian Integration Strategy 2008–2013 are target group-based approach, the need to make the public aware of integration more as a bilateral process and to pay more attention to the engagement of the non-Estonian population in the community life and strengthening of state identity.