**Disability:IN Global Directory**

**Estonia**

**Disability Definition**

Disability is the loss of or an abnormality in an anatomical, physiological or mental structure or function of a person which in conjunction with different relational and environmental restrictions prevents participation in social life on equal bases with the others.

On the basis of this Act the severe, profound or moderate degree of disability of children of up to 16 years of age and persons of the retirement age is established proceeding from the need for personal assistance, guidance or supervision. For the purposes of this subsection, there are the following degrees of severity of disabilities:

Profound disability is the loss of or an abnormality in an anatomical, physiological or mental structure or function of a person as a result of which the person needs constant personal assistance, guidance or supervision twenty-four hours a day;

Severe disability is the loss of or an abnormality in an anatomical, physiological or mental structure or function of a person as a result of which the person needs personal assistance, guidance or supervision in every twenty-four hour period;

Moderate disability is the loss of or an abnormality in an anatomical, physiological or mental structure or function of a person as a result of which the person needs regular personal assistance or guidance outside his or her residence at least once a week.

Reference: [Social Benefits for Disabled Persons Act](https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/518122017011/consolide)

**Legislation**

On 21 March 2012, the *Riigikogu* ratified the [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and its Optional Protocol](http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf) by which Estonia assumed the obligation to promote the opportunities of the persons with disabilities to fully and independently participate in the society.

Reference: Estonia – [Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.oiguskantsler.ee/en/rights-persons-disabilities)

The Equal Treatment Act protects people against unequal treatment on grounds of primarily nationality (ethnic origin), race, colour, religion or other beliefs, age, disability or sexual orientation. This act does not preclude the requirement of equal treatment in labour relations on grounds of any characteristic not specified above, in particular due to family-related duties, social status, representation of the interests of employees or membership in an organisation of employees, level of language proficiency or duty to serve in defence forces.

**Employer Requirements**

In 2013, the Estonian Parliament passed the Disability Services and Benefits Act, which aims to protect the rights of persons with disabilities and promote their social inclusion. The act provides for a range of services and benefits, including education, employment, and healthcare.

**Accessibility Requirements**

The [Access For All initiative (in Estonian)](http://www.vordoigusvolinik.ee/siiasaab/)  was launched in September 2015 with the aim of motivating business owners and organisations to improve accessibility to their facilities, services and information. Those that do will be entitled to display an official badge or logo indicating that their facilities are accessible to all people. The initiative, developed in cooperation with the Commissioner and civil society organisations, acknowledges that adaptation is a process and that even small steps are valued. Therefore, the Access for All badge will be supplemented with similar formal recognition for organisations that have developed dedicated access for people in wheelchairs or for those with vision, hearing or learning disabilities. However, the quality standards and actual accessibility will not be monitored or inspected for compliance; the scheme is based on organisations acting in good faith. By December, 18 organisations had joined the initiative, including educational institutions, state enterprises, public sector organisations, restaurants and shops.

**Cultural Norms**

Currently unavailable.

**Insights**

The number of persons with disabilities who have been assigned a degree of disability has increased in Estonia year by year, whereas the size of population is decreasing.[[1]](https://humanrights.ee/en/protection-of-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-estonia/#_ftn1) Since 2004 the number of persons with disabilities has increased by 42%, thereby making 10.7% of the population as of 1 January 2013 (2011 – 9,6%) or 137,710 persons

* 40.8% of them are men and 59.2% are female;
* 6.7% or 9214 persons are children (0-15 year olds); 41.3% or 56,813 persons are working age (16-64 year olds); and 52% or 71,683 persons are old age pensioners;
* disability was detected for the first time for 21,483 persons.

Persons of working age who have a disability also are assigned incapacity for work in addition to degree of disability. Similarly to the rise in the number of persons with disabilities the number of persons receiving pension for incapacity for work is also increasing, and at an even faster pace. Each year a remarkable number of persons of working age are detected a permanent loss of capacity for work (15,885 cases of first time detection in 2012) and the overwhelming majority of persons, having entered the system of insurance against incapacity for work, won’t, unfortunately, ever leave it, remaining largely dependant of measures of social security and welfare services.

Reference: <https://humanrights.ee/en/protection-of-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-estonia/>

**Supplier Diversity**

Currently unavailable.

**Talent Sourcing Resources**

Currently unavailable.

**Additional Resources**

[Estonian Human Rights Centre](https://humanrights.ee/en/protection-of-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-estonia/)

[Unemployment Insurance Fund](https://www.eesti.ee/en/disabled-people/disabled-persons-at-work/disabled-unemployed-persons-or-jobseekers)

**References**

[Social Benefits for Disabled Persons Act](https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/518122017011/consolide)

[Estonia – Rights of Persons with Disabilities](https://www.oiguskantsler.ee/en/rights-persons-disabilities)

[Human Rights Estonia](https://humanrights.ee/en/protection-of-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-estonia/)

[Estonia – Guildelines for Equal Treatment](https://ut.ee/sites/default/files/inline-files/guidelines_for_equal_treatment.pdf)

**NGOs**

[The Estonian Chamber of Disabled People](https://www.epikoda.ee/) – The Estonian Chamber Disabled People represent about 285 organizations across Estonia. including 16 regional chambers of people with disabilities, 32 all-Estonian disability-specific unions and associations and 5 supporting members. They partner with the state, local governments, the private sector and other NGOs on issues related to people with disabilities. The mission of EPIK is to increase the quality of life, inclusion in society and opportunities for self-fulfillment of people with disabilities and chronic illnesses through advocacy and cooperation.

[Estonian Association of the Deaf (EAD](http://www.ead.ee/?set_lang_id=2)). EAD is a nonprofit organization that works to promote the inclusion of persons who are deaf or hard of hearing in all aspects of society. They provide advocacy, support, and resources to persons with hearing impairments and their families.