# Estonia

## COVID-19 cases

On 31st August 2020 there were 2,373 registered COVID-19 cases and 64 deaths in the overall population.[[1]](#endnote-1) To our knowledge, data on COVID-19 cases, deaths, job-loss, and poverty were not disaggregated by disability.

## Emergency, lockdown, and confinement

The state of emergency in Estonia started on 12th March 2020[[2]](#endnote-2) and ended on 18th May 2020.[[3]](#endnote-3) Many health, rehabilitation and disability related services were suspended. In education, parents of children with disabilities could request organization of studies either partially or completely at school. However, the school was responsible for making the decision and according to the information provided by Estonian Chamber of Disabled People, schools chose to close, and the care of children was left to parents.

## Involvement of organisations of persons with disabilities

Even though civil society was not directly involved in task forces during COVID-19 emergency, there was a consultancy role for DPOs regarding specific decisions for people with disabilities, children with disabilities, and their families.[[4]](#endnote-4)

## Communications and announcements

The Government of Estonia provided some information about COVID-19 in easy-to-read formats[[5]](#endnote-5) and according to Estonian Chamber of Disabled People government communications and announcements were accessible in sign language. These announcements did not specifically mention persons with disabilities, but they mentioned risk groups that include persons with disabilities.[[6]](#endnote-6)

## Institutions and closed settings

There was no publicly available data on COVID-19 cases and deaths in institutions and closed settings. According to the order enforced on 3rd April 2020 order, people in general and special care homes were prohibited from leaving the territory of their social welfare institution until the end of the emergency situation (with limited exceptions, such as going to the hospital). The order did not specify guidelines for community-based services. Therefore, some community-based service providers began to restrict the freedom of movement of clients living in their services (group homes, etc.). On 20th April 2020, the Parliament approved amendment to the Code of Civil Procedure and Code of Enforcement Procedure Implementation Act, which reduces judicial control over involuntary placement or extension of involuntary placement in a psychiatric hospital during the emergency. The Chancellor of Justice raised alarm and issues regarding restriction of movement of community- based service clients and involuntary placement or extension of involuntary placement were solved.[[7]](#endnote-7)

## Healthcare

We found no information indicating that there was a policy on triage or admissions in hospitals. Nevertheless, all nonessential health care services were suspended (i.e. elective operations etc.).[[8]](#endnote-8)

## Social protection

All referral decisions for social rehabilitation services[[9]](#endnote-9), disability and corresponding benefits that ended with or during the establishment of the state of emergency were automatically extended for 6 months.[[10]](#endnote-10) Parents of children with disability who had to take a temporary leave from work to care for their children received financial support from the government.[[11]](#endnote-11)

1. WHO Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard, Estonia, available at: https://covid19.who.int/table [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Information provided by EDF. [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Baltic news network, Estonia ends state of emergency, but keeps restrictions in place, available at: <https://bnn-news.com/estonia-ends-state-of-emergency-but-keeps-restrictions-in-place-213471> [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. Information provided by Estonian Chamber of Disabled People, 25 August 2020 to 15 September 2020. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Government website for COVID-19 related information, available at: <https://www.kriis.ee/et/koroonaviiruse-abc> [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. Information provided by Estonian Chamber of Disabled People, 25 August 2020 to 15 September 2020. [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. EDF, Actions and responses of our members, Estonia, available at: http://edf-feph.org/covid19estonia [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Information provided by Estonian Chamber of Disabled People, 25 August 2020 to 15 September 2020. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. EPIKODA, Emergency social rehabilitation service, available at: <https://www.epikoda.ee/uudised/sotsiaalse-rehabilitatsiooni-teenus-eriolukorras> [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. EPIKODA, The duration of partial and absent incapacity for work, permanent incapacity for work and disability is extended, available at: <https://www.epikoda.ee/uudised/osalise-ja-puuduva-toovoime-pusiva-toovoimetuse-ning-puuete-kestust-pikendatakse> [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. EPIKODA, Support for parents of disabled children who have to be temporarily away from work, available at: <https://www.epikoda.ee/uudised/toetus-puuetega-laste-vanematele-kes-peavad-ajutiselt-toolt-eemal-olema> [↑](#endnote-ref-11)