WORK ABILITY REFORM IN ESTONIA

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Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund
FACTS ABOUT ESTONIA

POPULATION: 1 319 133

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION: 15 COUNTIES, 79 MUNICIPALITIES

LABOUR FORCE (15-74): 698 800

ETHNIC GROUPS: ESTONIANS 68.8%, RUSSIANS 25%, UKRAINIANS 1.8%

AVERAGE MONTHLY GROSS WAGE: 1445 EUROS

MINIMUM WAGE: 500 EUROS
UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND

INDEPENDENT PUBLIC BODY

AUTONOMY
TRIPARTITE MANAGEMENT
INDEPENDENT FUNDING

FAST AND FLEXIBLE RESPONSE TO LABOUR MARKET NEEDS
MISSION
WE SUPPORT FINDING WORK AND EMPLOYEES

VISION
WE ARE THE BEST AND MOST INSPIRING LABOUR MARKET ORGANISATION IN ESTONIA AND EUROPE
WORK ABILITY REFORM
Fundamental changes

- Reform changed work ability assessment and benefits
- More support available in employment and every day life
- Positive thinking: people with disabilities can and want to work

**WORK ABILITY REFORM 2016**

- **WORK ABILITY BENEFIT**
  - ~236 vs 414 EUR earnings-related reductions

- **WORK ABILITY ASSESSMENT**
  - able to work
  - partially able to work
  - not able to work

- **ACTIVATION**
  - benefit claimants (partially able to work) are required to work, study or look for job

- **EMPLOYMENT COUNCILLING and MEASURES**
  - extended and new measures

- **SOCIAL WELFARE MEASURES**
  - extended and new measures

Enhancing employment opportunities for people with long-term health problems and disabilities
## Reform Road Map

### PROPOSED
- MoSA

### DECIDED
- Government

### ADOPTED
- Parliament

### IMPROVED and POSTPONED
- Government + Parliament

### ACTION: 1st STAGE
- EIF

### ACTION: 2nd STAGE
- EIF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2012 April</th>
<th>2013 June</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tr>
<td>▪ Proposal on work</td>
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<td>▪ Government supports, MoSA</td>
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**Demonstration against the reform, Oct 2014**
WORK ABILITY ASSESSMENT
METHODOLOGY AND PROCESS
Work Ability Assessment: New Methodology

Functional Abilities
- *self-assessment*

- Communication
- Manual Performance
- Moving
- Selfcare and consciousness
- Learning and applying knowledges
- Adaptability to changes
- Interpersonal interaction

Medical Diagnosis and Data
- *medical confirmation*

Functional Abilities are assessed in 7 domains
Application vs Expert opinion

**APPLICANT**
- Describes as accurately as possible all his functional disorders and limitations
- *For example:*
- *I can sit no longer than 30 minutes because my back starts to hurt and my left leg becomes numb*

**EXPERT DOCTOR**
- Compares sayings of applicant to person`s existing health data (eHealth database), justify using objective data and medical diagnoses
- Determines degrees of severity of limitations according to medical diagnoses and epicrises
- Summarizes the limitations and based on holistic view of the applicant determines extent of work ability
Work Ability Assessment: Process

VISIT THE PHYSICIAN WITHIN 6 MONTHS

SUBMISSION OF AN APPLICATION FOR ASSESSMENT OF WORK ABILITY TO THE UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FUND

ASSESSMENT OF WORKABILITY BY EXPERT DOCTORS

WORK ABILITY ASSESSMENT DECISION

WORK ABILITY ALLOWANCE and EMPLOYMENT COUNSELLING
Registers

TETRIS is connected to 13 national registers to ensure high-quality data and support automated decision-making.
eHealty data in REDIS infosystem
Workability Assessment Decision

Evaluation with reasoning

Extent of WA with legislative stand (missing WA)

Limitations by domains (severe limitation in moving)

Restricted activities: moving on different surfaces because of reduced endurance

Valid for 3 years
Services

➢ Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund offers services for people with decreased working ability

➢ Case manager uses the expertise
EUIF DELIVERY

EMPLOYMENT MEASURES
• Job mediation and counselling
• Career information and counselling
• Training and traineeships
• Business start-up and follow-up support
• Job creation support (wage-subsidies)
• Mobility allowance
• Coaching for working life
• Voluntary work
• Psychological, debt and addiction counselling
• Individual solutions

DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT MEASURES
• Technical aids and workplace adjustments
• Supported employment
• Peer counselling
• Employment rehabilitation
• Travel-to-work-allowance
• Mobile counselling for students with special needs
• Disability management at work for employers

PREVENTIVE MEASURES
• Skills training
• Study allowance (vocational or higher education)
• Employer’s training grant (recruitment or change)

BENEFITS
• Unemployment insurance benefit and allowance
• Redundancy benefit
• Insolvency benefit
• Workability benefit
• Social tax benefit

WORKABILITY ASSESSMENT

In 2017 41% of jobseekers participated in ALMP every month

JOBSEEKERS
EMPLOYEES
EMPLOYERS
ASSESSMENT SERVICE AND EXPERT DOCTORS
Assessment service providers

Public procurement requirements for service provider – 7 (2019)

- an activity licence for the provision of health services
- rooms for the face-to-face assessments
- the information technology readiness to use web based assessment information system
- qualified assessors:
  - medical doctors (at least one psychiatrist and one occupational or physical medicine/rehabilitation doctor)
  - non-medical team: one physiotherapist or occupational therapist and one speech therapist or special educational needs teacher
Qualification of Expert doctors

• **medical doctors** – 111 (2019)
  – registered as a health care professional (National register of health care professionals)
  – have worked as medical doctors at least 2 years during the last 5 years
  – have to work in clinical medicine in addition to the assessment
  – Training: special course in work ability assessment methodology

• **non-medical team** – 24 (2019)
  – have worked in one's own specialty at least 2 years during the last 5 years
  – have to work in one's own specialty during the contract
IMPACT OF WORK ABILITY REFORM
Decreased number of people with reduced work ability

Number of people with reduced work ability and their share of people 16 until retirement age

Social Insurance Board, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, Statistics Estonia
More people with long-term health problems and disabilities work
Every second jobseeker with reduced work ability finds a job within a year

Newly registered jobseekers back in employment within 12 months

Estonian Tax and Customs Board, Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund
Main challenges of work ability assessment

- data of functional disorders and limitations
- poorly filled medical data
- external experts and quality control
- new methodology - monitoring
- week connections with social service information systems
- cross-sectoral use of evaluation results (input to vocational/social rehabilitation service provision)
SUCCESS
- More people with disabilities work or are looking for employment
- Every 2nd jobseeker finds a job within a year
- Job opportunities are diverse

CHALLENGES
- Skills gap (limited choices in education)
- Availability of social services
- Wage gap: 25% lower income from work
- Sustainable employment
THANK YOU!