

## TEMPLATE POLICY PAGE

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| Category: | Public Perceptions of Safety |
| Country:  | Estonia                      |
| Year:     | 2015                         |

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| Main policy page/trends: | <p>International Crime Victims Survey (ICVS) has been carried out previously in Estonia in 1992, 1994 and 1999, 2003, 2008.</p> <p>Last survey report is available at: <a href="http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/et/estonian-crime-victim-survey-2009-english">http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/et/estonian-crime-victim-survey-2009-english</a>.</p> <p><b>Summary of the findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>The Crime Victim Survey was carried out in Estonia for the fifth time.</b> The Estonian Statistical Office carried out the population survey in the end of 2008 and during the first six months of 2009. More than 4,000 people were interviewed. The population consisted of people aged 15-74.</li><li>• <b>The number of both crimes and crime victims has decreased.</b> 26% of people were victimized by some criminal offence in 2008; in 1999, the percentage of victims was 33%. 42 criminal offences were committed per 100 persons interviewed; in 1999 it was 72 criminal offences. In international comparison the percentage of people victimized in the past year exceeds the average indicator for other European countries and is similar to Denmark and Switzerland.</li><li>• <b>The number of all crimes against property has decreased.</b> Most frequent criminal offences are vehicle thefts: theft from a car and car vandalism. There are considerably more incidents when something is stolen from a car in Estonia compared to other countries. In Estonia, people living in the Virumaa region are most frequently exposed to different types of thefts and robberies.</li><li>• <b>Compared to the previous survey, the number of assault victims has increased.</b> Within 12 months, 2.4% of people were victimized by assault and 2.1% by threat. With these indicators, Estonia is among the European average countries. There are slightly more women than men among the victims of violence: women are exposed to violence more frequently at home, men outside home. For the first time, Estonians were exposed to violence more frequently than people from other nationalities.</li><li>• <b>In most cases the victims of violence do not turn to the police or the doctor.</b> A victim or some other person at the victim's request informed the police of 17% of violence incidents. Health care professionals were approached by 30% of victims, including 40% of women and 15% of men.</li><li>• <b>Nearly every twentieth person is exposed to sexual harassment</b> in the past year. In 2008, 2% of the population was exposed to physical harassment and 3.6% to non-physical harassment. Young non-Estonian women are at the highest risk of becoming the harassment victims. Based on the nationality, the indicators level off starting from 30</li></ul> |
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years of age.

- **The percentage of people exposed to consumer frauds has significantly decreased.** In 2008, 18% of the population were victimized by frauds caused by the quality or quantity of goods or services; according to previous surveys, the highest number of people exposed to frauds occurred in 2,000 – 39%. People are most frequently exposed to frauds shopping for goods in stores and other points of sale; the number of victims is smaller, for example, in case of e-commerce and construction and repair works. In international comparison, Estonia is one of the weakest countries in terms of customer security.
- **The exposure of the population to asking a bribe has considerably decreased.** Only 0.5% of the people (17 respondents) noted that a border guard, a police officer or some other official had asked them to give a bribe. According to the survey, 5% of the population is willing to offer a bribe to some official. Younger people and non-Estonians are more inclined to pay a bribe.
- **Less criminal offences are reported to the police.** 61% of crime victims did not report to the police what had happened. Compared to the previous survey, the reporting decreased with respect to thefts that had been committed from cars and living quarters. Estonian people turn to the police less frequently compared to other countries, for example, in Austria 70% of incidents are reported. In Estonia, people living in the Virumaa region report the crimes less compared to others. In international comparison, the Estonian people's faith that the police will do something to solve crimes is also smaller.
- **Satisfaction with police actions in solving incidents of violence has considerably increased.** The otherwise low satisfaction of people with the police has also increased, for example, with respect to incidents of personal property theft, car theft and car vandalism. Main cause to dissatisfaction is the inability of the police to find stolen or robbed items.
- **Most people think that the police can maintain public order sufficiently or very well.** In 2009, this was the opinion held by 63% of the population, at the same time this indicator remained below the international average and is considerably lower, for example, than the Finnish outcome where 89% of the population assessed the police actions to be good. People's assessments concerning the professional standards of police have grown year by year: while in 2003, 17% of the population considered the professional standards to be fairly good, 69% did so in 2009.
- **Attitudes towards punishment continue to be stable.** 57% of the population would impose community service and 23% of the population would impose imprisonment on a 21-year old man who has stolen a TV and has been convicted for burglary for the second time. There were more people in favour of imprisonment among city dwellers and non-Estonians. More strict punishment is requested also by those who themselves have been victimized by some crime, who feel unsafe in their neighbourhood and who are not satisfied with police actions.
- **People's fear of crime is decreasing.** 72% of Estonian people feel completely or quite safe walking alone on the street in their neighbourhood after dark. Compared to 2,000 when the Estonian people's fear of crime was the highest in comparison with other

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|                                     | <p>countries, Estonia is now among the average countries. The people living in Kohtla-Järve feel the least safe.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Increasingly more security measures are used for the protection of domestic property.</b> In 2009, 30% of households did not use any security measures, while in 1995 the number of such households was twice as big - 59%. The use of safety locks and the construction of fences for the protection of property have increased the most. However, less window and door bars are used than before.</li> <li>• <b>The percentage of people who have been exposed to drug problems has decreased.</b> When in 2004, 10% of the population was frequently exposed to drug problems, 6% were exposed to it in 2009. At the same time, the percentage of population that has been exposed to offering drugs and whose acquaintances use drugs has remained almost the same. City dwellers and non-Estonians are exposed to drug problems considerably more frequently. Every fifth Estonian person knows somebody or is acquainted with somebody who uses or has used drugs.</li> <li>• <b>Young people are exposed more to violence and less to thefts.</b> Compared to the previous survey, the percentage of 16 to 26-year-old young people who have been exposed to violence increased from 8% to 9.4%. 5% were exposed to physical sexual harassment. At the same time, twice as less young people were exposed to personal thefts in 2008 than in 2003 (10.7% in 2003; 5% in 2008).</li> </ul> <p>Official statistics on crimes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Statistics from State Statistics Bureau:<br/> <a href="http://pub.stat.ee/px-web.2001/l_Databas/Social_life/07Justice_and_security/03Crime/03Crime.asp">http://pub.stat.ee/px-web.2001/l_Databas/Social_life/07Justice_and_security/03Crime/03Crime.asp</a> </li> </ul> <p>In addition there are smaller studies done about the feeling of safety and these are found in here: <a href="http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/et/uuringud-ja-analuusid/ohvriuurung">http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/et/uuringud-ja-analuusid/ohvriuurung</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crime statistics from Ministry of Justice:<br/> <a href="http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/et/statistika-ja-uuringud/kuritegevus-eestis">http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee/et/statistika-ja-uuringud/kuritegevus-eestis</a> </li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Relevant legislation:</b></p> | <p>There is no special legislation concerning the perceptions of safety. The main legal act describing criminal offences is the Penal Code and for the public order Law Enforcement Act.</p> <p>See the acts in English (may not include the latest changes):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Penal <span style="float: right;">Code:</span><br/> <a href="https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/Riigikogu/act/519032015003/consolide">https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/Riigikogu/act/519032015003/consolide</a> </li> <li>2) Law <span style="float: right;">Enforcement Act:</span><br/> <a href="https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/Riigikogu/act/516062015011/consolide">https://www.riigiteataja.ee/en/eli/ee/Riigikogu/act/516062015011/consolide</a> </li> </ol>   |
| <p><b>Contacts:</b></p>             | <p>Website on criminal policy issues: <a href="http://www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee">www.kriminaalpoliitika.ee</a></p>  |

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