



REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS

Disability policy and current activities

Estonia

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Disability policy and current activities in Estonia

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Overall situation

- ✓ Population of Estonia: 1,328,439 million
- ✓ 11% of population is with assessed degree of disability, most of them are in the retirement age
- ✓ 12,2% of population at age 16–64 have reduced working capacity
- ✓ 39% of residents at age 16+ have self-reported activity limitations
- ✓ Estonia's population is aging and the health of our elderly is significantly worse than of our European peers
- ✓ As the number of people with disabilities is increasing, the pressure on social system is increasing too



Overall situation

- ✓ Support for people with disabilities are provided by both state and local governments either as social services or financial benefits
- ✓ Local governments, who act closest to persons have to identify the need for assistance of a person and determine corresponding assistance
- ✓ The need for local government organised services (e.g., social transportation, home service, support person service, personal assistant service) should be identified according to the need, not determined degree of disability. The requirement in several local governments, that a person must have determined degree of disability in order to receive services and other assistance, is not in accordance with the Social Welfare Act



Overall situation

- ✓ Services organised by the state include special care services, rehabilitation service and technical aids service
- ✓ Disability and workability assessment and related benefits

Disability assessment

- Disability is assessed by Social Insurance Board in three age groups in severe, profound and moderate degree:
 1. children (0–15 incl)
 2. persons of working age (16–65). Interlinks with work ability assessment. Work ability is assessed by Unemployment Insurance Fund (since July 2016)
 3. persons of retirement age (65+)
- Disability is assessed based on information in digital health information system and on person's application (paper-based assessment)

Disability assessment

Assessed degree of disability grants:

- 1) state-budget financed social benefits for persons with disabilities (eg allowance for a child/person in working age/person of retirement age with disability);
- 2) several social services (e.g. social rehabilitation, technical aids)
- 3) benefits outside social system (e.g. in museums, public transportation and scholarship for students with special needs)

1. Allowance for child with disability: 138,08–241,64 eur
2. Allowance for a person of working age: 16,62–53,70 eur
3. Allowance for a person of forking age: 12,79–40,91 eur

1. Partial work ability allowance: average 279,24 eur
2. No work ability: average 489,90 eur

Obstacles

- Persons with disabilities or their caregivers must apply support from several authorities and therefore undergo various assessments in a fragmented system (for example, separate assessments are made in social, educational, employment and health care) to find support, which they nevertheless may not receive in time.
- Responsibility for assisting persons with disabilities is divided between the state and local governments, but regional disparities have led to an unequal availability and quality of assistance
- The need for long-term care services is growing, while the current funding in the field is insufficient
- The need for official services significantly exceeds the current use of services, biggest shortcoming is the services provided to support a person in his or her own home
- Legal system, disability assessment methodology and purpose of disability benefits needs to be updated and rely more on evidence-based approach

Aim

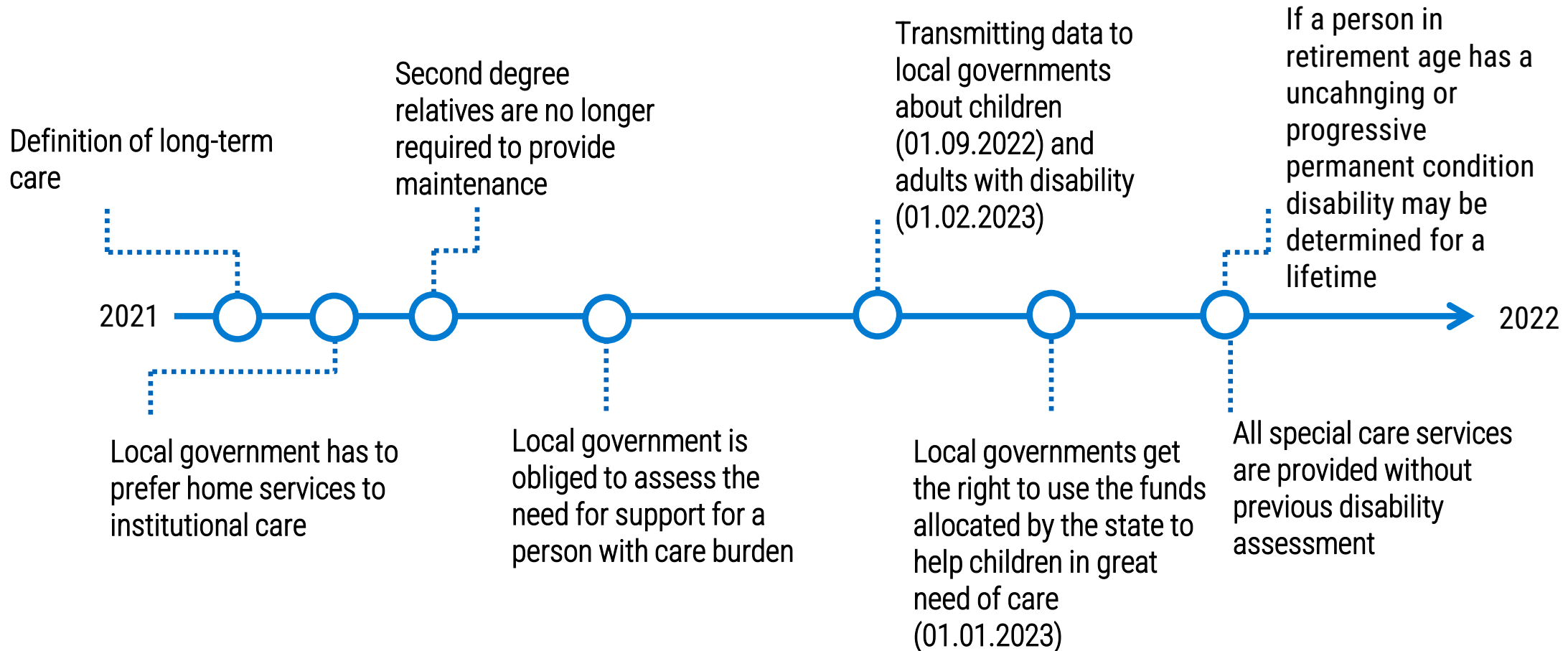
- To simplify and speed up access to necessary support in accordance with person's actual assessed needs, not officially determined degree of disability
- The journey should start from one contact point, preferably from local government who carries out an initial needs assessment and helps to navigate in the system
- There is a need to develop a clear CRPD-compatible human rights-based disability assessment methodology
- Public spending on long-term care should be increased
- Develop services to support home living

Planned reforms and policy measures



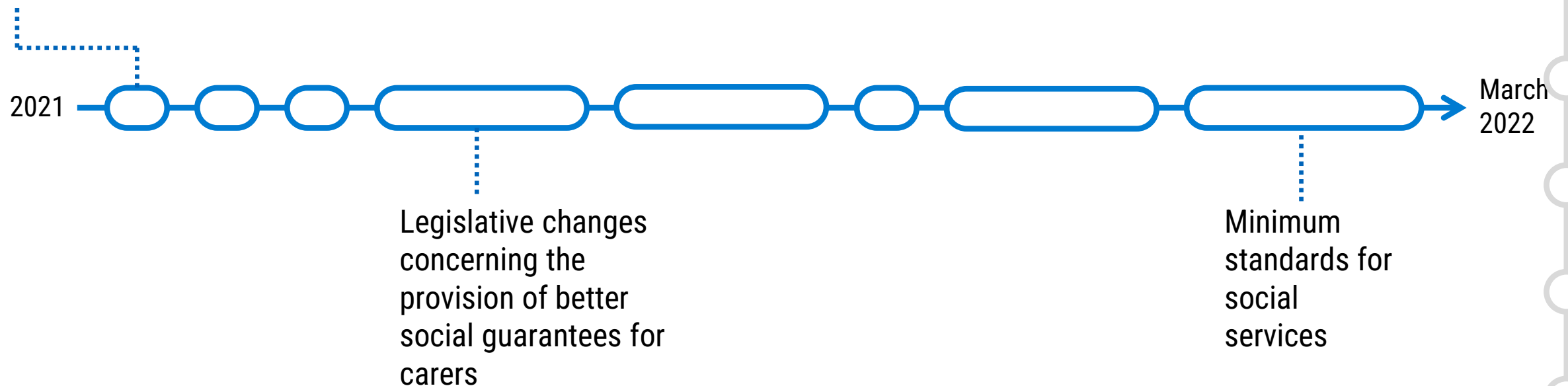
Legislative changes (2021-2022)

Social Welfare Act, Family Law Act, Child Protection Act - into force in the 2Q of 2022



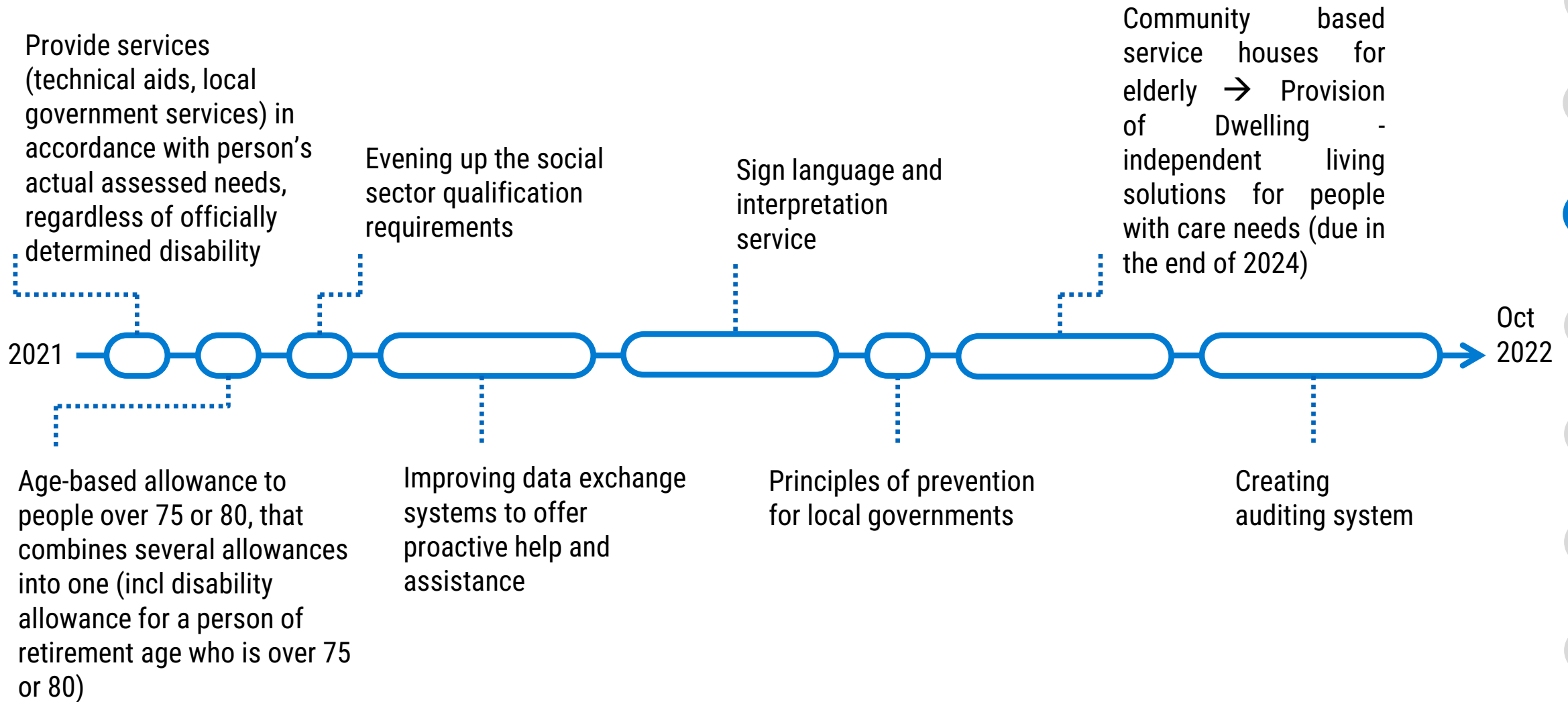
Long-term care legislative intent 1 (bill to government September 2022)

Component based financing scheme for general care service provided outside home



Changes on state budget decisions, estimated additional cost in 2023 is 41,2 M EUR.

Long-term care legislative intent 2





Reform of the support systems for children with disabilities and special needs

- Redesigning and integrating the health, education, social protection, and employment support systems
- Proposals for updating the disability assessment policy



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Thank you

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