

322 PE I

Communication of the Riigikogu of the Republic of Estonia to the Eduskunta of the Republic of Finland

The Riigikogu emphasises the importance of cooperation between the two close neighbours and kindred nations in resolving the epidemiological crisis that we are experiencing. Our relations are rooted in a long tradition and together we have overcome difficult obstacles on our paths.

Estonia and Finland have been engaged in a close cooperation throughout the corona crisis, on the foundation of our mutual trust and understanding. Our governments, state officials and experts are in constant professional contact with each other to find solutions to the challenges set by the corona crisis. The Riigikogu thanks Finland for its cooperation and is particularly grateful for the assistance of the Finnish authorities in bringing Estonian nationals home from third countries during the first wave of the virus.

Estonian and Finnish economies are closely interlinked in a number of fields, and this synergy has served both countries. Since 27 January 2021, the Republic of Finland has decided to close its borders to labour migration, save for a very few specified professions. This has had an immediate and significant effect on the normal labour migration between Estonia and Finland. Many Estonian residents who do contractual work in Finland now find themselves in a difficult situation. These thousands of people divide their work and home between the two countries, and this restriction creates great difficulties for them and their families. The Riigikogu has received a petition with 1,002 signatures from concerned citizens who are personally affected by this.

We hope to garner the support of the Eduskunta in finding confidence-building measures that would reduce the spreading of the virus but would enable to restore the cross-border movement of workers between our countries. If the cross-border movement of commuting workers remains impossible to the full extent in the near future, a temporary regime that would enable workers to visit their families and to return to work should be found in cooperation between our two countries.

Jüri Ratas
President of the Riigikogu

Tallinn, 2021

Presented by the Foreign Affairs Committee 19 April 2021.

(approved digitally)
Marko Mihkelson
Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee