

# ESTONIA 2019 HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Estonia is a multiparty, constitutional democracy with a unicameral parliament, a prime minister as head of government, and a president as head of state. The prime minister and cabinet generally represent the party or coalition of parties with a majority of seats in the parliament. The most recent parliamentary elections took place on March 3. The new coalition is composed of the Center Party, the Estonian Conservative People's Party (EKRE), and Pro Patria, and is headed by Prime Minister Juri Ratas, who took office on April 29. Observers considered the elections free and fair.

The Police and Border Guard Board and the Internal Security Service maintain internal security. The army is responsible for external security but also has some domestic security responsibilities. The Police and Border Guard Board and the Internal Security Service report to the Ministry of the Interior. The Defense Forces report to the Ministry of Defense. The Police and Border Guard Board and the Internal Security Service investigate civilian cases, while military police investigate defense force cases. The government has effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. Civilian authorities maintained effective control over the security forces.

There were no reports of significant human rights abuses.

The government took steps to investigate, prosecute, and punish officials who committed violations. There were no reports of impunity for abuses committed by members of the security forces during the year.

### **Section 1. Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom from:**

#### **a. Arbitrary Deprivation of Life and Other Unlawful or Politically Motivated Killings**

There were no reports that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings.

#### **b. Disappearance**

There were no reports of disappearances by or on behalf of government authorities.

### **c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment**

The law prohibits such practices, but there were reports that police used excessive physical force and verbal abuse during the arrest and questioning of some suspects. The number of cases brought against police officers for excessive use of force grew from previous years; there were three more excessive force cases registered in 2018 than in the previous year. During the first half of the year, authorities filed five cases against police officers for excessive use of force.

#### **Prison and Detention Center Conditions**

There were no significant reports regarding prison or detention center conditions that raised human rights concerns.

Physical Conditions: While inspecting Viru Prison in August, the legal chancellor found inadequate staffing for dealing directly with detainees and prisoners. There were no major concerns in prisons or detention centers regarding physical conditions or inmate abuse.

Administration: Authorities conducted proper investigations of credible allegations of mistreatment.

Independent Monitoring: The government generally permitted monitoring by independent nongovernmental observers, including human rights groups, media, and international bodies.

Improvements: The newly constructed Tallinn Prison began accepting prisoners in January, with the closing of an outdated Soviet-era facility.

### **d. Arbitrary Arrest or Detention**

The constitution and laws prohibit arbitrary arrest and detention and provide for the right of any person to challenge the lawfulness of his or her detention in court, and the government generally observed these prohibitions.

#### **Arrest Procedures and Treatment of Detainees**

Apart from those arrested during the commission of a crime, the law requires that in making arrests, authorities must possess warrants issued by a court based on evidence and must inform detainees promptly of the grounds for their arrest. There is a functioning bail system and other alternatives for provisional release pending trial. Authorities may hold individuals for 48 hours without charge; further detention requires a court order. Police generally complied with these requirements. Criminal procedure rules provide for a maximum detention of two months during preliminary investigations in cases where the accused is a minor and four months in cases of second-degree (less serious) crimes. Detainees are entitled to immediate access to legal counsel, and the government pays for legal counsel for indigent persons.

#### **e. Denial of Fair Public Trial**

The constitution provides for an independent judiciary, and the government generally respected judicial independence and impartiality.

#### **Trial Procedures**

The constitution provides for the right to a fair public trial, and an independent judiciary generally enforced this right.

Defendants enjoy the right to a presumption of innocence, prompt and detailed notification of the charges (with free interpretation if necessary), a fair and public trial without undue delay, be present at their trial, communicate with an attorney of their choice, adequate time and facilities to prepare a defense, free interpretation as necessary from the moment charged through all appeals, as well as the right to confront prosecution or plaintiff witnesses, and to present one's own witnesses and evidence. Defendants cannot be compelled to testify or confess guilt and have the right to appeal. A single judge, a judge together with public assessors, or a committee of judges may hear cases. In criminal proceedings, an attorney is available to all defendants at public expense, although individuals often preferred to hire their own attorneys. In civil proceedings, the government provides an attorney for indigents. Authorities generally respected these rights and extended them to all residents regardless of citizenship.

#### **Political Prisoners and Detainees**

There were no reports of political prisoners or detainees.

## **Civil Judicial Procedures and Remedies**

Individuals or organizations may seek civil remedies for human rights violations in domestic courts. They may appeal unfavorable decisions to the European Court for Human Rights after exhausting all domestic remedies.

## **Property Restitution**

The government has laws and mechanisms in place for property restitution, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and advocacy groups reported no issues with the government's resolution of Holocaust-era claims, including for foreign citizens.

## **f. Arbitrary or Unlawful Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence**

The constitution prohibits such actions, and there were no reports that the government failed to respect these prohibitions.

## **Section 2. Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:**

### **a. Freedom of Expression, Including for the Press**

The constitution provides for freedom of expression, including for the press, and the government generally respected these rights. An independent press, an effective judiciary, and a functioning democratic political system combined to promote freedom of speech, including for the press.

Press and Media, Including Online Media: Independent media were active and expressed a wide variety of views without restriction.

### **Internet Freedom**

The government did not restrict or disrupt access to the internet or censor online content, and there were no credible reports that the government monitored private online communications without appropriate legal authority.

### **Academic Freedom and Cultural Events**

There were no government restrictions on academic freedom or cultural events.

## **b. Freedoms of Peaceful Assembly and Association**

### **Freedom of Assembly**

The constitution provides for freedom of peaceful assembly, and the government generally respected these freedoms.

The annual remembrance ceremony commemorating the World War II Battle of Sinimae mentioned in previous years' reports again occurred. Three members of Parliament participated in the event.

### **Freedom of Association**

While the constitution provides for freedom of association, the law specifies that only citizens may join political parties. There were no restrictions on the ability of noncitizens to join other civil groups.

## **c. Freedom of Religion**

See the Department of State's *International Religious Freedom Report* at <https://www.state.gov/religiousfreedomreport/>.

## **d. Freedom of Movement**

The constitution provides for freedom of internal movement, foreign travel, emigration, and repatriation, and the government generally respected these rights.

## **e. Internally Displaced Persons**

Not applicable.

## **f. Protection of Refugees**

Access to Asylum: The law provides for the granting of asylum or refugee status, and the government has established a system for providing protection to refugees. The NGO Estonian Human Rights Center (EHRC) and other NGOs provided legal and social assistance to asylum seekers in cooperation with authorities. Government officials indicated that access to legal aid was available at every stage

of the asylum procedure. The EHRC continued to raise concerns about the prolonged detention of asylum seekers during adjudication of cases.

Safe Country of Origin/Transit: The government has a policy of denying asylum to applicants from a “safe” country of origin or transit. Authorities asserted that they granted interviews to all individual asylum seekers.

Durable Solutions: The government assisted in the safe, voluntary return of some refugees to their countries of origin under a program of the International Organization on Migration. The country worked with the EU and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to implement a refugee resettlement program. Naturalization is open to all permanent residents of the country after five years’ residence, provided they pass mandatory citizenship and language examinations.

Temporary Protection: The government provided temporary protection to individuals who may not qualify as refugees. Temporary protection includes right to work, access to education, and health care. In 2018 the government granted temporary protection via residence permit to one person.

### **g. Stateless Persons**

UNHCR categorized 77,877 persons residing in the country as stateless as of the end of 2018. As of January 1, according to government statistics, there were over 72,400 residents of undetermined citizenship, or 5.5 percent of the population. Nearly all were ethnic Russians, Ukrainians, or Belarusians. These persons are eligible to apply for naturalized citizenship, and some of them may hold Russian, Ukrainian or Belarusian citizenship.

There are statutory procedures that offer persons over the age of 18 opportunities for obtaining citizenship by naturalization, but some human rights observers regarded them as inadequate, and their rate of naturalization remained low. To facilitate acquisition of citizenship, authorities adopted such policies as funding civics and language courses and simplifying naturalization for persons with disabilities. The government also simplified the Estonian language requirements so that applicants older than 65 are no longer required to take a written language examination, although they still must pass an oral one. The government also provides citizenship, without any special application by the parents, to persons younger than 15 who were born in the country and whose parents were not citizens

of Estonia or of any other country, and had lived in Estonia for five years at the time of the birth of the child.

### **Section 3. Freedom to Participate in the Political Process**

The law provides citizens the ability to choose their government in free and fair periodic elections held by secret ballot and based on universal and equal suffrage.

#### **Elections and Political Participation**

Recent Elections: Parliamentary elections on March 3 were considered free and fair and led to the formation of a three-party coalition government comprising the Center Party, the Estonian Conservative People's Party (EKRE), and Pro Patria. The new coalition is led by Prime Minister Juri Ratas.

Participation of Women and Minorities: No laws limit participation of women or members of minorities in the political process, and they did participate. The law allows only citizens to organize or join political parties.

Noncitizens who are long-term residents may vote in local elections but cannot vote in national elections or hold public office.

### **Section 4. Corruption and Lack of Transparency in Government**

The law provides criminal penalties for corruption by officials, and the government generally implemented these laws effectively. The government has effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. There were isolated reports of official corruption during the year.

Corruption: In December 2018 the Supreme Court terminated criminal proceedings (launched in 2015) against former prime minister, minister, mayor of Tallinn, and former long-serving Center Party chairman Edgar Savisaar due to his declining health. The Office of the Prosecutor General accused Savisaar of large-scale embezzlement, accepting bribes, money laundering, and accepting prohibited donations to his party.

In 2017 the Prosecutor General's Office pressed charges against two former top managers of the state-owned Port of Tallinn, former CEO Ain Kaljurand and former board member Allan Kiil, who were indicted on charges of accepting bribes on multiple occasions and engaging in money laundering from 2005 to 2015. Each

was charged with receiving millions of euros in bribes. The court case was pending.

In 2018 the number of corruption cases was approximately the same as in 2017. These cases were often related to the health sector.

Financial Disclosure: The law requires all public officials to disclose their income and assets. Designated offices have responsibility for monitoring and verifying disclosures. The financial declarations of high-level government officials were available to the public, and there are criminal and administrative sanctions for noncompliance with the law.

### **Section 5. Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Abuses of Human Rights**

A number of domestic and international human rights groups operated without government restriction, investigating and publishing their findings on human rights cases. Government officials were cooperative and responsive to their views.

Government Human Rights Bodies: The legal chancellor, an independent official with a staff of more than 45, performs the role of human rights ombudsman. The chancellor reviews legislation for compliance with the constitution; oversees authorities' observance of fundamental rights and freedoms and the principles of good governance; and helps resolve accusations of discrimination based on gender, race, nationality (ethnic origin), color, language, religion, social status, age, disability, or sexual orientation. The legal chancellor also makes recommendations to ministries and local governments, requests responses, and has authority to appeal to the Supreme Court. The chancellor compiles an annual report for the parliament. Public trust in the office was high, and the government was responsive to its reports and decisions.

### **Section 6. Discrimination, Societal Abuses, and Trafficking in Persons**

#### **Women**

Rape and Domestic Violence: The law criminalizes rape, including spousal rape, and physical abuse, including domestic violence. The law is effectively enforced. The penalty for rape, including spousal rape, is imprisonment for up to 15 years. According to the NGO Sexual Health Union, 13 percent of women have suffered sexual abuse, including rape.

According to NGOs and shelter managers, violence against women, including domestic violence, was a problem. Women constituted 80 percent of the victims of domestic violence registered by police. In the first half of year, the number of official reports of domestic violence grew as compared with 2018, partially due to a change in how the law considers such cases. In 2018 domestic violence crimes comprised 44 percent of all violent crimes in the country.

NGOs, local governments, and others could seek assistance for victims from the national government. There was a network of shelters for women, and women with children, who were victims of gender-based violence as well as hotlines for domestic violence and child abuse. There were four treatment centers for victims of sexual violence. Police officers, border guards, and social workers received training related to domestic and gender violence from NGOs, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of the Interior, and the Ministry of Justice.

Sexual Harassment: The law prohibits sexual harassment, but there were reports of such harassment in the workplace and on public transport. By law sexual harassment complaints may be resolved in court, before the legal chancellor, by the Labor Dispute Committee, or by the gender-equality and equal-treatment commissioner. An injured party may demand termination of the harmful activity and compensation for damages. The penalty for sexual harassment is a fine or detention for up to 30 days. All victims in reported cases of sexual harassment were women. The number of registered stalking incidents grew compared with 2017, and 82 percent of victims were women, while 83 percent of perpetrators were men.

Coercion in Population Control: There were no reports of coerced abortion or involuntary sterilization.

Discrimination: The law provides the same legal status and rights for women as for men. The government generally enforced such laws. There were reports of discrimination in employment and occupation, and unequal treatment, due to gender, age, disability, and sexual preference (see section 7.d.).

## **Children**

Birth Registration: Citizenship derives primarily from the citizenship of at least one parent. Either citizen parent may pass citizenship to a child regardless of the other parent's citizenship status. Children born to parents who are not citizens of

Estonia or of any other country and have lived in the country for five years, acquire citizenship at birth. Registration of births occurred in a timely manner.

Child Abuse: In 2018 approximately 87 percent of sexual crimes were committed against persons under the age of 18, which was 6 percent less than in 2017. The Police and Border Guard Board worked to combat child abuse, including sexual abuse. The legal chancellor acted as children's ombudsman. Police provided training to officers on sexual abuse in cooperation with the justice, education, and social ministries and local and international organizations.

Early and Forced Marriage: The legal minimum age for marriage is 18. A court may extend the legal capacity of a person who is at least 15 for the purpose of marriage.

Sexual Exploitation of Children: The law prohibits the commercial sexual exploitation of children and child pornography, and authorities enforced the law. The minimum age for consensual sex is 14. Conviction of engaging in child pornography carries punishment ranging from a fine to three years in prison. Girls are more frequently exploited than boys are.

International Child Abductions: The country is a party to the 1980 Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. See the Department of State's *Annual Report on International Parent Child Abduction* at <https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/International-Parental-Child-Abduction/for-providers/legal-reports-and-data/reported-cases.html>.

## **Anti-Semitism**

The Jewish community numbered an estimated 2,000 to 2,500 persons.

On March 16, the chief rabbi of Estonia was verbally attacked by a 27-year-old man under the influence of drugs, who insulted the rabbi and shouted anti-Semitic remarks in the center of the capital. The perpetrator was sentenced to eight days in prison for the offense. The prime minister condemned the incident, stating that discrimination based on religion, nationality, origin, or any other reason was totally unacceptable.

On June 23, unknown vandals knocked over and vandalized five gravestones at the Rahumae Jewish Cemetery in the capital. Police opened a criminal investigation which was pending at year's end.

On January 28, the government held an annual memorial event on Holocaust Remembrance Day at the Rahumae Jewish Cemetery in Tallinn. Schools participated in commemorative activities throughout the country. The Education and Research Ministry, in cooperation with the Estonian Jewish community, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, the Estonian Memory Institute, and the Museum of Occupation, organized an essay writing competition on topics related to the Holocaust for schoolchildren.

### **Trafficking in Persons**

See the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

### **Persons with Disabilities**

The law prohibits discrimination against persons with physical, sensory, intellectual, and mental disabilities. The government generally enforced these provisions.

Persons with disabilities may avail themselves of government assistance in accessing information and may request individual personal assistants when necessary. The law provides that buildings constructed or renovated after 2002 must be accessible to persons with disabilities. Few older buildings were accessible, but new or renovated ones generally were. In May 2018 the minister for entrepreneurship information technology introduced a regulation requiring public buildings to provide access and to ensure availability of information for persons with disabilities.

According to the legal chancellor, measures to safeguard the fundamental rights of individuals in mental health facilities remained inadequate. Problems included abusive use of physical restraints, weak documentation thereof, and inadequate medical care. NGOs complained that, while services typically were accessible in the capital, persons with disabilities in some rural areas had difficulty receiving appropriate care. There were reports of discrimination in occupation or employment (also see section 7.d.).

The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, and local governments are responsible for the provision of social welfare services to persons with disabilities. The government continued

implementing the work ability reform, which was intended for persons with reduced working ability and whose ability to be active in the society was assessed individually. The government focused on developing rehabilitation services to improve the ability of those with disabilities to cope independently. The government also provided compensation for some additional expenses incurred by persons with disabilities.

### **National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities**

In 2018 police registered five cases of physical abuse, breach of public order, or threats that included hatred against persons from racial or ethnic minorities.

On March 26, police opened investigations regarding a verbal attack and an attempted physical attack against two persons of color by four men in the center of Tartu. The investigations were pending at the end of the year.

Members of the Estonian Conservative People's Party (EKRE, a part of the governing coalition) made derogatory and racist public statements regarding ethnic minorities, immigrants, refugees, women, and the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) community. Of note, during parliamentary swearing-in ceremonies, members of parliament from EKRE made hand gestures associated with white nationalism. No disciplinary action was taken. Also notable, an EKRE member of the European parliament also referenced the Holocaust and "the final solution" in a social media post on how best to handle refugees living in Europe.

Knowledge of Estonian is required to obtain citizenship, and all public servants and public-sector employees, service personnel, medical professionals, and other workers who have contact with the public must possess a minimum competence in the language. Russian speakers stated that Estonian language requirements resulted in job and salary discrimination. The government continued to provide free and subsidized opportunities for Estonian language learning.

In districts where more than half the population spoke a language other than Estonian, the law entitles inhabitants to receive official information in their language, and authorities respected the law.

Roma, who numbered fewer than 1,000, reportedly faced discrimination in several areas, including employment. The government took steps to emphasize the

importance of education for Romani children, but their school dropout rate remained high.

Nonwhite residents reported discrimination in housing. The government faced difficulties finding housing for resettled refugees, which refugee advocates attributed to societal discrimination.

### **Acts of Violence, Discrimination, and Other Abuses Based on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**

The law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. While the law is not specific regarding the forms of sexual orientation and gender identity covered, the general understanding is that it encompasses lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex individuals. In 2018, police registered one case that included hatred against LGBTI persons. Advocacy groups reported societal harassment and discrimination against LGBTI persons remained common, but noted improving attitudes towards LGBTI persons. In October a group of anti-LGBTI protestors from the EKRE party attempted to force their way into a meeting of the LGBTI association in the city of Parnu. The police responded promptly to the situation, and the meeting proceeded in another location.

## **Section 7. Worker Rights**

### **a. Freedom of Association and the Right to Collective Bargaining**

The law, related regulations, and statutory instruments provide workers with the right to form and join independent unions of their choice, bargain collectively, and conduct legal strikes. The government generally respected these rights. The law allows unions to conduct their activities without interference and prohibits antiunion discrimination. Both employees and employers have the right to request that labor dispute committees, consisting of representatives of unions and employers, or the courts resolve individual labor disputes. The law prohibits discrimination against employees because of union membership and requires the reinstatement of workers fired for union activity. Public-sector employees do not have the right to strike, but they can negotiate their salaries and working conditions directly with their employers.

The government generally enforced applicable laws. Resources, inspections, and remediation were usually adequate to achieve compliance with the law. In most cases, violators incurred fines that were sufficient to deter violations. Criminal

proceedings and civil claims were also available. The penalties employers had to pay were related primarily to workplace accidents and occupational illnesses. Administrative and judicial procedures were not subject to lengthy delays.

The government and most employers generally respected freedom of association and the right to bargain collectively. Parties freely engaged in collective bargaining, and there were no reports that the government or parties interfered in the functioning of workers' organizations.

The Confederation of Estonian Trade Unions alleged frequent violations of trade union rights in the private sector during the year. Confederation officials claimed antiunion behavior was widespread. They also reported that some enterprises advised workers against forming trade unions, threatening them with dismissal or a reduction in wages if they did, or promising benefits if they did not.

#### **b. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor**

The law prohibits forced or compulsory labor, and the government effectively enforced the law. Authorities prosecuted and convicted five persons for labor-related trafficking crimes during the year. Penalties for human trafficking and forced-labor offenses were sufficient to deter violations, but sentences often failed to reflect the seriousness of the crime.

See also the Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* at <https://www.state.gov/trafficking-in-persons-report/>.

#### **c. Prohibition of Child Labor and Minimum Age for Employment**

The law prohibits the worst forms of child labor. In most cases, the legal minimum age for employment is 18. A 2017 amendment to the law removed several restrictions on hiring minors and made it possible for companies to apply for support for minors' salaries. Minors who have graduated from basic school may work full time. Fifteen- to 17-year-old children may work, depending on whether the child is still at school. Seven- to 12-year-old children may engage in light work in the areas of culture, art, sports, or advertising with the consent of the Labor Inspectorate. Minors may not perform hazardous work, such as handling explosive substances, working with wild animals, etc. The law limits the hours that children may work and prohibits overtime or night work. The Labor Inspectorate is responsible for enforcing these laws. The government effectively enforced laws and policies to protect children from exploitation in the workplace.

The Labor Inspectorate monitored whether the conditions for child workers were appropriate.

#### **d. Discrimination with Respect to Employment and Occupation**

The law prohibits discrimination in respect of employment and occupation. The government generally enforced the law prohibiting discrimination in employment and occupation, and penalties were sufficient to deter violations. If workers claimed discrimination and turned to the courts, and the Labor Inspectorate or gender equality commissioner and the appropriate institution found the suit justified, workers were indemnified by employers. With respect to employment or occupation, labor laws and regulations require employers to protect employees against discrimination, follow the principle of equal treatment, and promote equal treatment and gender equality. Nevertheless, discrimination in employment or occupation occurred with respect to age, gender, disability, ethnicity, and language (see section 6), and there were complaints to the gender and equal treatment commissioner, the legal chancellor, and the Labor Inspectorate.

Although women have the same rights as men under the law and are entitled to equal pay for equal work, employers did not always respect these rights. Despite having a higher average level of education than men, according to Eurostat statistics in March, women's average earnings were 25.2 percent lower than those of men for the same work. There continued to be female- and male-dominated professions. Women constituted one-third of mid-level managers.

Fewer than 25 percent of persons with disabilities had jobs. During the year the legal chancellor and the commissioner for gender equality and equal treatment received claims of discrimination based on disability. Persons with disabilities faced discrimination in employment and access to the workplace.

Russian speakers worked disproportionately in blue-collar industries and continued to experience higher unemployment than ethnic Estonians. Some citizens and noncitizen residents, particularly native speakers of Russian, alleged that the language requirement resulted in job and salary discrimination. Roma reportedly faced discrimination in employment (see section 6, National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities).

#### **e. Acceptable Conditions of Work**

The country had a national monthly minimum wage that was higher than the poverty income level. Authorities generally enforced minimum wage laws, and penalties were sufficient to deter violations.

The standard workweek is 40 hours. The law requires a rest period of at least 11 hours in sequence for every 24-hour period. Reduced working time is required for minors and for employees who perform work that is underground, poses a health hazard, or is of an otherwise special nature. The law provides for paid annual holidays and requires overtime pay of not less than 150 percent of the employee's hourly wage. The government effectively enforced these requirements. There is no prohibition against excessive compulsory overtime.

The government sets occupational health and safety standards. Authorities generally enforced minimum wage, hours of work, and occupational health and safety standards in all sectors. The Labor Inspectorate, the Health Protection Inspectorate, and the Technical Inspectorate were responsible for enforcing these standards and made efforts to do so in both the formal and informal sectors. Violations of health and safety standards were more common in the construction and wood-processing industries. The Labor Inspectorate had an adequate number of inspectors to enforce compliance. Penalties for violations included fines and were sufficient to deter violations. Men from Ukraine experienced labor exploitation, particularly in the construction sector, where "envelope wages" (nontaxed cash payments) were sometimes paid. The share of informal wage payments relative to the total wages paid across the economy decreased from 6.2 percent in 2018 to 4.7 percent during the year.