



# Drinking water in Estonia

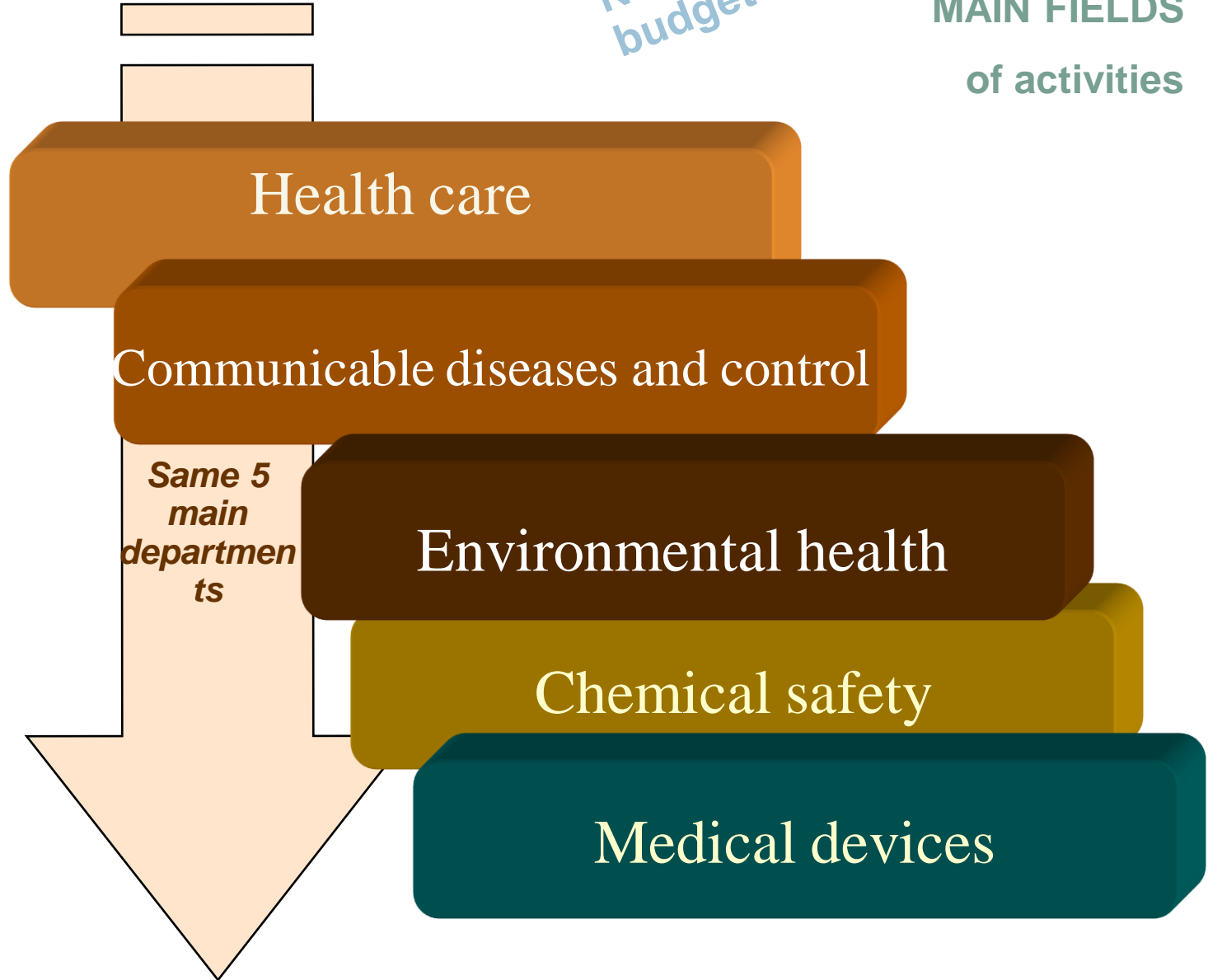
06.11.2012  
Health Board  
Environmental Health Department  
Leena Albreht

The **Health Board** is a governmental institution under the subordination of the **Ministry of Social Affairs**, who performs state supervision and enforces state direction on the basis of the legislative acts.

# Health Board

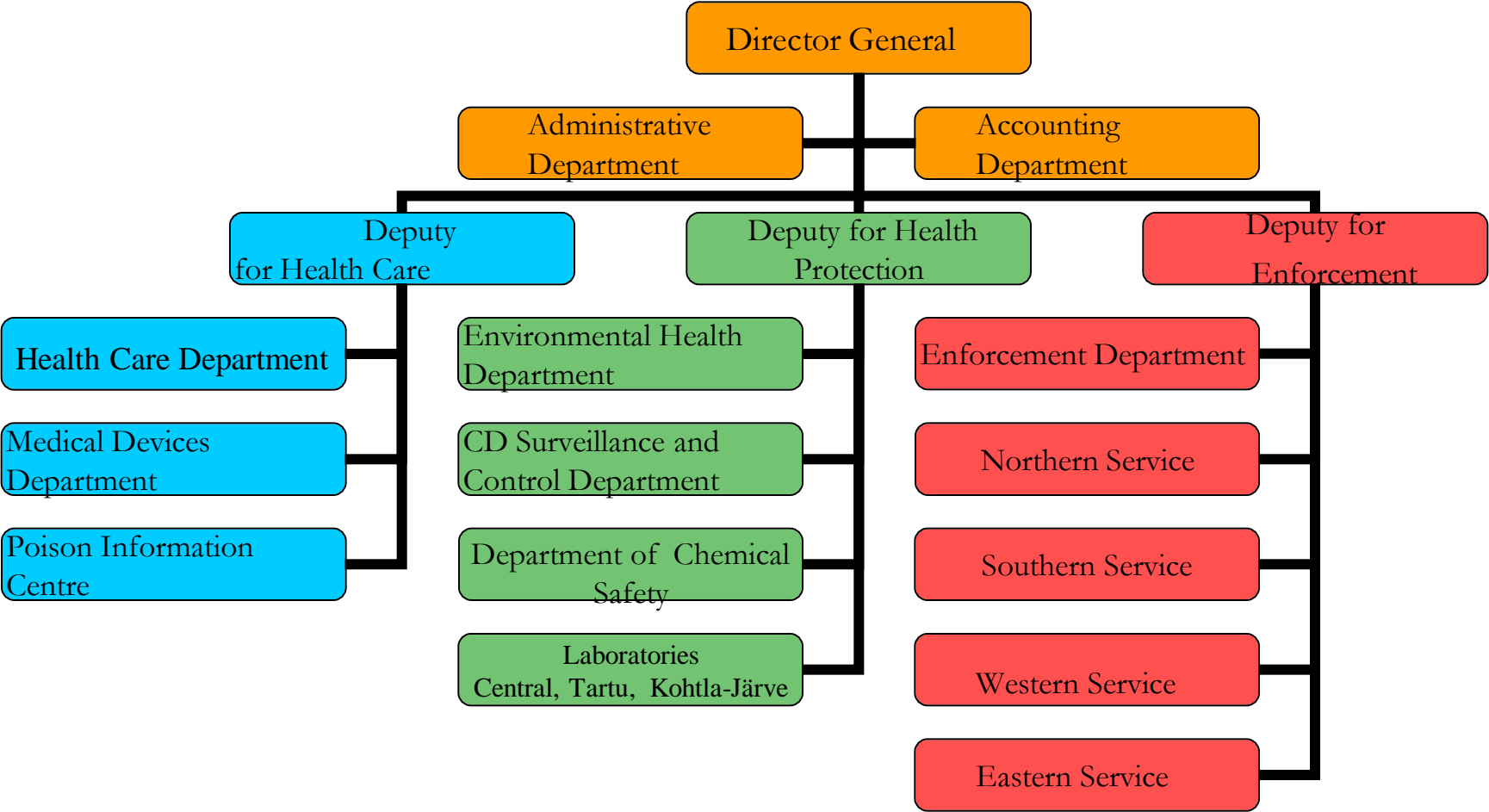
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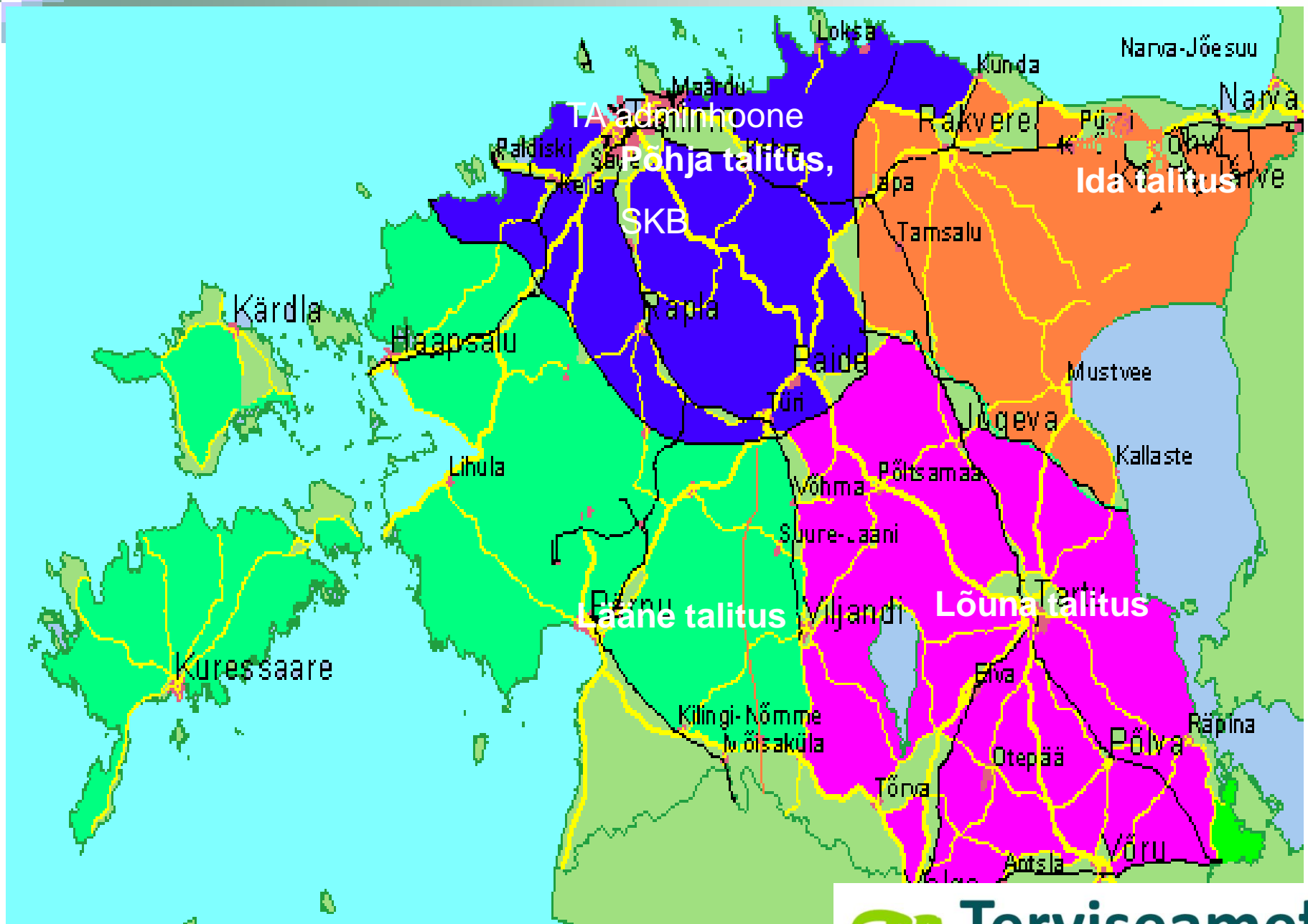
MAIN FIELDS  
of activities





# Structure of the Health Board





# The HB is the competent authority for

- Certification of the credentials of medical practitioners when these acquired abroad
- Regulation of medical devices
- Surveillance, prevention, and control of communicable diseases, risk analysis in epidemiology
- Cosmetic products
- Drinking water, bathing waters, NMW

# Health Board

- The HB performs an official control in different type of establishments.
- In area of environmental health the HB responsibilities include:
  - control of safety of drinking and bathing water, natural mineral water
  - control of environmental conditions in public establishments ( inc nutrition)
  - Environmental Noise
  - Other

# Drinking Water in Estonia

- **Drinking water is the responsibility of two Ministries:**
- the Ministry of Social Affairs
- the Ministry of the Environment



# Responsibilities of Ministry of Environment

- Assuring and preserving the quality of both groundwater and surface water, which is to be used as a source of drinking water
- Regulatory matters with the European Commission

# Responsibilities of Ministry of Social Affairs

- developing and implementing public health policy and strategy
- Drafting regulations

# The work of the Health Board is guided by

- The Public Health Act (1995)
- The Water Act
- MSA regulation No 82 “Quality and control requirements for drinking water and methods for testing”
- MSA regulation No 152 “Procedure and terms for temporary use of drinking water harmless for health but not fully meeting quality requirements”)
- MSA regulation No 1 “The quality and control requirements for groundwater and surface water used or intended to be used as drinking water“
- MSA regulation No 58 “The attestation of a person responsible for taking a sample of drinking water”

# The Drinking Water Directive 98/83/EC:

- Has been transposed in Estonian legislation
- Estonia must fulfil the requirements of directive as of the time accession – 1 May 2004

## EXCEPTIONS:

- Estonia will not be required to achieve the required limit concentrations for colour, hydrogen ion concentration, iron, manganese, odour and turbidity:
  - until 31 December 2007 at water works which supply more than 2000 persons
  - until 31 December 2013 at water works which supply fewer than 2000 persons
- Estonia will not be required to achieve the required limit concentrations for chlorides, electrical conductivity and sulphates:
  - until 31 December 2008 in communities of more than 2000 population
  - until 31 December 2013 in communities of fewer than 2000 population

# Drinking water quality requirements are divided into three group:

- microbiological parameters
- chemical parameters
- indicator parameters

# Microbiological quality

- There are no drinking water supply systems in Estonia in which constantly fail to meet the requirements of microbiological parameters
- Temporal deviations from required microbiological parameters have been noted in 5% of water works under surveillance (<0,01% water consumers)
- Mostly these deviations from requirements come up when there are some technical problems in the water supply
- Due to implementation of improved methods and government monitoring, there have been no outbreaks associated with drinking water during the past 14 years.

# Chemical quality


- 0,99 % of the cases drinking water didn't comply with the regulation requirements.
- The major problem is the regional excess of fluoride content (over 1.5 mg/l), which depends from the used groundwater level (42 small water companies)
- Sometimes fluoride rich ground water consists also more boron (3 water companies) .



# Indicators

- Failure of drinking water to conform to quality requirements is mainly related to excessive content of iron, manganese, ammonia, and chloride.
- There are **319** water systems (**28 %**) where water do not comply with the requirements of indicators.





Drinking water, which do not comply to the requirements, but is not harmful for consumer health

- The water producer must have permit for sale of drinking water which fails indicator standards (iron, Manganese, Hydrogen ion concentration, Colour, Odour, Turbidity, Chloride, Conductivity and Sulphate), but is not hazardous to health.
- They have also been presented action plans for improving water quality.

# This permit must contain:

- drinking water non-correspondence reasons
- area, where this kind of drinking water is sold
- the consumption volume of drinking water, which do not comply to the requirements, but is not harmful for consumer, (per year) and the number of consumers
- list of the business establishment, which is provided with such kind of drinking water
- drinking water non-compliance to the requirements
- elimination program
- duration of non-compliance to the requirements of the drinking water
- drinking water monitoring

# Organisation of drinking water supply

- There are **1136** drinking water supplies in Estonia
- 87% of total population in 2011 had access to a drinking water supply system, the remainder having private wells
- Only **2** of them use surface water for supply (Tallinn, Narva – 42,5 % of users),  
The others are groundwater supplies (57,5% of users).

# Duties of drinking water producer

- Must guarantee that drinking water conforms to the quality requirements
- Responsible for presenting information regarding such quality to the consumer and to government surveillance workers
- Must assure the performance of check and audit monitoring of all water within its system or issuing from its system in accordance with the requirements of directive
- Must compose a drinking water monitoring schedule covering at least three years and submit this for approval of its local health protection service

# Duties of Health Board

- Surveillance monitoring (check and audit)
- Approval the programme of monitoring carrying out by water producer (points of sampling, frequency of monitoring, parameters which needs to be monitor, quality of water)
- Issue of permits for sale water which is not harmful for health but doesn't comply to indicator parameters
- Advising water producers
- Issue precept
- Inform public
- Provide training for specialist
- Most important responsibility is prevention of water-borne outbreaks, avoidance of epidemics and protection of water supplies



**Public Health Services are controlling the compliance of drinking water with the quality requirements at the following points:**

- **In children care facilities**
- **In hospitals**
- **In food enterprises**
- **In stub networks**

# Information to the public

1. The water supply companies are responsible for informing consumers about the drinking water quality, derogations from the parametric values and the circumstances of potential danger to human health
2. Health Board
  - Information about permits for sale of drinking water, which do not comply to the requirements, but is not harmful for consumer is available on Web page.
  - Also information about drinking water quality is published our Web page, sometimes in newspapers.
  - organize information days

# Public awareness

<http://www.terviseamet.ee/>

A screenshot of the Terviseamet website displayed in a Mozilla Firefox browser window. The browser's address bar shows the URL <http://www.terviseamet.ee/nakkushaigused/uudised.html>. The website header features the Terviseamet Health Board logo and navigation tabs for 'Uudised', 'Tervishoid', 'Nakkushaigused', 'Keskkonnatervis', 'Kemikaaliohutus', 'Meditsiineseadmed', and 'Laborid'. The main content area is titled 'Uudised' and lists three news items: 1) '18. november on Euroopa antibiootikumipäev' (17. november 2010), 2) 'Eestis sageneb läkakõhasse haigestumine' (16. november 2010), and 3) 'Terviseamet hoiatab Kongoosse reisijaid poliomieliidi ohu eest' (08. november 2010). A sidebar on the left contains a 'Uudised' menu with options like 'Arhiiv', 'Nakkushaigused A-U', 'Gripi info', etc. A right sidebar contains various service links and logos, including 'EpiNorth', 'Mürgistusinfo 16662', and 'CLP'.





Thank you!