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ANNEX

EUROPEAN REFUGEE FUND DRAFT ANNUAL PROGRAMME 2006

1. MEMBER STATE:

ESTONIA

2. GENERAL RULES FOR SELECTION OF PROJECTS TO BE FINANCED UNDER THE ANNUAL PROGRAMME

Are the general rules for selection of projects to be financed under the Annual Programme in conformity with those laid down in the Multi-annual Programme? If not, could you provide details of any changes below.

The programme for the year 2006 is completely in conformity with the provisions of the multi-annual programme, i.e. all general rules for the selection of projects to be financed under the programme for the year 2006 are in conformity with the provisions of the programme for the years 2005–2007.

Taking into consideration that Council Decision 2004/904/EC foresees multi-annual programmes and, derived from the ERF 2004 evaluation report and the opinion of the projects' recipients (who are involved in the implementation of the projects) indicates that there was necessity for the projects' with the duration longer than 12 months. Thus, taking that into account we have provided the project applicants with the possibility of carrying out multi-annual projects. To illustrate the case, in the call for proposal concerning the resources of the Funds for 2005, we have one project that will last for 18 months (starting from 30 June 2006 and lasting up to 31 December 2007). Fostering the project proposals with longer duration is justified in case the project applicant would like to carry out comprehensive projects that require more time resources. In this case the resources of the funds (ERF) for 2005 are used for the period 30 June – 31 December 2006 and respectively the resources for 2006 for the second part of the project (01 January - 31 December 2007). Therefore, taking this into account we also foresee the possibility for the applicants' in the call for proposals for the resources of 2006 to finance multi-annual projects in such a way that the first part of the project is to be financed under ERF resources for 2006 and the second part relevantly for the ERF resources for 2007.

3. ACTIONS

3.1 ACTION A): RECEPTION CONDITIONS AND ASYLUM PROCEDURES

i. Requirements justifying implementation of action

The number of asylum applications lodged in Estonia has not increased after Estonia's accession to the European Union. Some figures are provided here: for example, if 15 asylum applications were lodged in 2003, out of which 14 were initial and 1 repeated, the relevant figure in 2004 was 11, out of which 11 were initial and 4 repeated; 11 asylum applications were lodged in 2005 (all initial); in 2006 (from 01 January up to 30 August 2006) only 3 asylum applications have been lodged. Despite a small number of asylum-seekers Estonia

shall be ready for an increase in the number of asylum-seekers, including also for a mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving temporary protection. In connection with the entry into force on 1 July 2006 Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, it is continuously necessary to train the officials who come into contact with asylum seekers; to renew the information and information materials distributed to asylum seekers; to notify the public about different forms of international protection, the reasons for lodging asylum applications and etc. As the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens stipulates the establishment of an initial reception centre, which has not been established so far, it is necessary to establish an initial reception centre. On one hand, it was already part of the AP 2005, but on the other hand, the Ministry of Social Affairs did not submit a project proposal under the ERF funds for 2005. Thus, it is justified to include the establishment of an initial reception centre in the AP 2006 as well. At the moment the Ministry of Social Affairs has not stated clearly whether they will be able to submit a project proposal under 2006 programme or not.

ii. Purpose of the action

The action is aimed at improving the reception conditions for asylum seekers and to foster the asylum proceedings. Foremost, it is essential to train the officials on the new Act (Granting International Protection to Aliens), to compile information materials related to the rights and duties of the person seeking International protection; it is also important to educate the public in the field of asylum and in this way increase their understanding towards the asylum-seekers and the persons seeking international protection. Increasing Estonian readiness for a mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving temporary protection will continuously be of primary importance.

In essence, it also means Estonian readiness for the real implementation of the Temporary Protection Directive, as Estonia transposed Directive 2001/55/EC by the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, which entered into force on 1 July 2006.

iii. Financial plan

European Refugee Fund allocation	A	239 816,67 €	75.00 %
State allocations	B	47 963, 33 €	15.00 %
Allocations from Regions	C	0.00 €	0.00 %
Allocations from Local Authorities	D	0.00 €	0.00 %
National Allocations	E=B+C+D	47 963,33 €	15.00 %
Total Public Allocations	F=A+E	287 780 €	90.00 %
Private Allocations	G	31 975,56 €	10,00 %
Total Cost	H=F+G	319 755,56 €	100,00 %

The financial plan has been made up in euros. The financial plan is compiled on the basis that 75% of the projects' related cost are financed by the European Refugee Fund, 15 % is relevantly financed by the Ministry of Interior via the state budget and 10% remains to be born by the applicants/recipients' as co-financing.

iv. Timetable

(Starting dates for projects should be in the period between 1st January and 31st December of the programme year.

Start date: between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2006

End date: 31 December 2007

v. Actions to be implemented (operational outline)

Refer to the actions detailed under Article 5 of Decision 2004/904/EC

The implemented actions that could be financed under the European Refugee Fund are provided as follows:

- Estonian language instruction and, if necessary, other language instruction for asylum seekers;
- provision of social, psychological and legal assistance (including representation in court) to asylum seekers;
- training of persons (border guard officials, officials of the Citizenship and Migration Board, including lawyers, judges, persons employed at the reception centre for asylum seekers etc.) who come into contact with asylum seekers;
- Improvement of reception conditions for asylum seekers at the reception centre (the already existing reception centre in Illuka is meant here) and the registration centre;
- Introduction of an initial reception centre (there are several buildings in Illuka reception centre, thus introduction of an initial reception means transforming one existing building that is located on the premises of Illuka reception centre into an initial reception centre. According to the information at our disposal the Ministry of Social Affairs has made a decision not to build a new building. Should we elaborate this in more detail in the programme?)
- preparation of information materials about the rights and duties of asylum seekers;
- engagement of interpreters in asylum proceedings;
- Increasing Estonian readiness in the event of mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving subsidiary protection (including training exercises). It denotes providing technical assistance to the Estonian authorities (namely to the Ministry of Social Affairs) in order to prepare the national crisis plan for the event of mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving subsidiary protection, training of officials and reserve officers of the Citizenship and Migration Board for the event etc. Should we elaborate this in more details in the programme?
- Raising awareness in the Estonian society about asylum seekers and asylum proceedings by means of different articles as well as radio and television programmes.

vi. Target groups

Persons defined under Article 3 of ERF Decision 2004/904/EC (specify the legal status).

The target groups will include asylum seekers and persons benefiting from temporary protection, and persons' receiving subsidiary protection.

vii. Grant recipients

(NGOs, federal, national, regional or local authorities, other non-profit organisations)

Organisations from the public sector, the private sector as well as the third sector may participate in the call for proposals for using ERF resources. Applications may be submitted and grants may be received possibly by e.g. different ministries, sub-offices of ministries, local governments, scientific establishments; training centres non-profit organisations, different international organisations as well as private organisations. Projects financed by the European Refugee Fund must be of a non-profitable nature. Project applications may be submitted by organisations separately or with various partners.

viii. National authorities involved

Specify if other than responsible authority under article 13 of ERF Decision is involved

No other national authority except for the Ministry of Interior will be involved in the programme administration.

ix. Expected quantified results

The list of examples detailed below is illustrative not exhaustive:

Improvement in accommodation infrastructure or services (quantify)

Provision of material aid and medical or psychological care

Provision of social assistance, information or help with administrative formalities

Provision of support services such as translation and training to help improve reception conditions and the efficiency and quality of asylum procedures

Improvement of provision of information for local communities who will be interacting with those being received in the host country

Type and amount of special assistance to vulnerable groups

Contact time (by specialist legal or other counsellors) with target group beneficiaries

Number of users of products produced by the projects (information resources, translation of documents, etc.)

Concrete improvements in processing asylum applications

Improvements in representation of asylum seekers (e.g. legal assistance)

Other (specify)

- improve Estonian language skills and, if necessary, other language skills among asylum seekers – at least two language lessons per month;
- increase the social, psychological and legal assistance provided to asylum seekers – at least 2 visits per year to the reception centre;
- increase, by provision of training, the knowledge of persons (border guard officials, officials of the Citizenship and Migration Board, judges, persons employed at the reception centre for asylum seekers, lawyers etc.) who come into contact with asylum seekers – composing of a training programme for 30 officials;
- improvement of reception conditions at the reception centre for asylum seekers and the registration centre with the aim to guarantee access to the reception centre for disabled persons;
- creating of 1 initial reception centre;
- improvement of asylum seekers' knowledge about their rights and duties by means of various information materials – 50 leaflets for asylum seekers;
- greater engagement of interpreters in asylum proceedings – using at least 1 interpreter in asylum proceedings;
- Improvement of Estonian readiness in the event of mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving temporary protection - training of 10 officials, carrying out 1 exercise);
- Increase in the number of different articles, radio and television programmes about asylum seekers and asylum proceedings – at least 3 articles in newspapers, 1 radio and one television programme.

x. Visibility of ERF co-financing

Describe mechanisms for assuring visibility of ERF funding for any activity linked to the projects financed under this measure.

All project applicants and grant recipients will be informed about ERF co-financing. Project application forms prepared by the Ministry of Interior will prescribe that upon submission of applications, the applicant must point out the method of providing information about ERF co-financing. Grant agreements will contain provisions whereby the grant recipients must print the EU logo and signs indicating the ERF co-financing on all pieces of equipment obtained, and to all buildings and rooms renovated, with support from the Fund. ERF co-financing must also be mentioned if the project is presented to the public.

xi. Complementarity with similar actions financed by other instruments and additional-ity to national measures

Please demonstrate that the proposed actions are fully integrated and co-ordinated with similar actions financed by other national or Community instruments and also that they are complementary to and not replacing national actions.

Actions related to the reception of the asylum-seekers and asylum procedures financed from ERF are complementary to national actions.

Based upon the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, an asylum –seeker is generally required to stay at the reception centre. The wording “generally” is used due to the fact that on the basis of the written permission of the Citizenship and Migration Board the applicant may in certain conditions reside outside the reception centre. The conditions for residing outside the reception centre are the following: the accommodation and support of the ap-

applicant is ensured by a person legally residing in Estonia; the applicant has sufficient financial resources to ensure his or her accommodation and support; it is necessary for the applicant to reside outside the reception centre in order to ensure his or her safety. Should we have to elaborate this in more detail in the programme?

The reception centre as necessary arranges for the following assistance to applicants during asylum proceedings or proceedings of temporary protection

- 1) accommodation;
- 2) supply of foodstuffs or provision of food, supply of essential clothing, other necessities and toiletries, and supply of money for urgent small expenses ;
- 3) emergency care and medical examinations;
- 4) essential translation services and Estonian language instruction;
- 5) information regarding their rights and duties;
- 6) transportation necessary for the performance of acts pursuant to procedure established by law;
- 7) provision of other essential services.

The reception centre is a state agency administered by the Ministry of Social Affairs, the duty of which is to organise the provision of necessary services to aliens during asylum proceedings. In Estonia, asylum proceedings are conducted mainly by the Citizenship and Migration Board. If an application for asylum is submitted on the border, the initial proceedings will be conducted by officials of the Border Guard. Based upon the State Legal Aid Act, a natural person may receive state legal aid if the person is unable to pay for competent legal services due to his or her financial situation at the time the person is in need of legal aid or is able to pay for legal services only partially or in instalments or whose financial situation does not allow meeting basic subsistence needs after paying for legal services.

In order to ensure the compatibility of the ERF programme with the Community EQUAL initiative, a representative and a deputy representative of the Ministry of the Interior are engaged in the steering committee for the programme of the EQUAL initiative. The steering committee gathers regularly and also information in writing to committee representatives is sent regularly. One of the main reasons for having Ministry of the Interior's representatives included in the steering committee of EQUAL is to guarantee that there is no overlapping between EQUAL and ERF. Given the small number of projects the steering committee discusses matters on project level. At the current programming period only one project in EQUAL addressed to asylum seekers has been chosen. This project is implemented by Jaan Tõnisson Institute.

In turn, the representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs (hereinafter referred as MoSA) participate in the ERF working group that was formed by Minister of Interior with the purpose to elaborate the Estonian position in relation to the multi-annual programme of 2005-2007 and the annual programme of 2005. Regarding the programme for 2006, the measures foreseen in the programme are the same which were discussed among the ERF working group to elaborate Estonian position in relation to the multi-annual programme for 2005-2007. That means that all of the activities agreed during the ERF working group meetings are elaborated in the annual programme for 2006. In addition, the Ministry of Interior has contacted The Citizenship and Migration Board and the Ministry of Social Affairs about expressing their opinion regarding the actions which could be implemented under the ERF. The opinions received have been taken into account while composing the programme for 2006.

The members of the MoSA were the same as the members of the EQUAL steering committee. Before the ERF programme for 2005-2007 was approved by the Government of the Republic of Estonia, the programme was sent to different ministries, including the Ministry of Social Affairs, for approval. The labour market department of the MoSA was engaged into the ap-

proving process of the multi-annual programme mentioned above. The same department is involved in the administration of the EQUAL programme.

3.2. ACTION B): INTEGRATION OF PERSONS REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 3 OF DECISION 2004/904/EC WHOSE STAY IN THE MEMBER STATE IS OF A LASTING AND STABLE NATURE

i. Requirements justifying implementation of the action

In Estonia, the number of refugees and persons who have received subsidiary protection is very small and therefore there have not been many separate activities with respect to them. In Estonia, there are no integration programmes concentrating particularly on persons who have received international protection and taking into consideration their ethnic, cultural, religious and other differences. Integration programmes would be aimed at assisting persons who have received international protection to adapt themselves to Estonian society, find a job, etc. If necessary, integration programmes should certainly pay attention to providing psychological assistance to persons who have received protection. Since language skills are the first step that will help a person to integrate into a new society, the persons receiving international protection must also receive Estonian language instruction.

Separate integration programmes could be intended for the children of persons who have received international protection and these could, *inter alia*, be programmes for the integration of children into the education system. The fact that the number of persons who have received asylum in Estonia is presently small does not mean that this situation will not change. There must also be readiness to provide Estonian language instruction to persons who have received international protection: both to children and to adults. Until now, the main problems are constituted by the fact that Estonian schools have no experience in dealing with new immigrant children, i.e. also the minors who receive international protection, and therefore the problem is not perceived until the school suddenly receives notification that they will receive a new pupil with a foreign native language. Another shortcoming is the lack of preparation by teachers and a psychological fear of their inability to cope.

ii. Purpose of the action

The action is aimed at improving the integration of persons receiving international protection into Estonian society, including through different integration programmes. Continuously one of the priorities in this field is employment — provision of jobs to persons who have received international protection. As regards employment, it is important to note that this does not concern only persons receiving international protection but also asylum seekers. Namely, the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens stipulates that an asylum seeker may be employed in Estonia if the Citizenship and Migration Board has not adopted a decision regarding that person's application for asylum for reasons independent of the asylum seeker within one year after the submission of the asylum application or if the decision of refusal of asylum has been disputed in a court by the asylum seeker, provided that the employment will not hinder the examination of that person's application for asylum, the court proceedings or the enforcement of the decision. Given that court proceedings may last for several years, asylum seekers may quite probably be willing to exercise their right to employment. Therefore it is necessary to train officials of the Labour Market Board, address the questions of vocational and continuing education, etc. The provision of Estonian language instruction to persons who have received international protection and programmes for integration of children into Estonian education system are naturally also priorities in the field of integration.

iii. Financial plan

European Refugee Fund allocation	A	152,610,60 €	75.00 %
State allocations	B	30 522, 12 €	15.00 %
Allocations from Regions	C	0.00 €	0.00 %
Allocations from Local Authorities	D	0.00 €	0.00 %
National Allocations	E=B+C+D	30 522,12 €	15.00 %
Total Public Allocations	F=A+E	183 132,72 €	90.00 %
Private Allocations	G	20 348,08 €	10.00 %
Total Cost	H=F+G	203 480,80 €	100.00 %

The financial plan has been made up in euros. The financial plan is compiled on the basis that 75% of the projects' related cost are financed by the European Refugee Fund, 15 % is relevantly financed by the Ministry of Interior via the state budget and 10% remains to be born by the applicants/recipients' as co-financing.

iv. Timetable

(Starting dates for projects should be in the period between 1st January and 31st December of the programme year.

Start date: between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2006

End date: 31 December 2007

v. Actions to be implemented (operational outline)

Refer to the actions detailed under Article 6 of Decision 2004/904/EC.

The implemented actions that could be financed under the European Refugee Fund are provided as follows:

- provision of social, psychological and legal assistance to persons receiving international protection;
- preparation of information materials about the rights and duties of persons receiving international protection;
- activities related to the integration of children of persons receiving international protection into Estonian educational system;
- training of officials who, as a part of their occupation, come into contact with persons receiving international protection;
- assistance to persons receiving international protection in finding accommodation and employment, including vocational and other training;

- Estonian language instruction and, if necessary, other language instruction for persons receiving international protection;
- Raising awareness in Estonian society towards the persons receiving international protection through different media publications.

vi. Target groups

Persons defined under Article 3 of ERF Decision, whose stay in the Member State is of a lasting and/or stable nature (attention: no asylum seekers, nor illegal migrants or migrants should be involved)

The target group will include all persons who have received international protection in Estonia, including refugees, persons receiving subsidiary protection and persons receiving temporary protection.

vii. Grant recipients

(NGOs federal, national, regional or local authorities, other non-profit organisations)

Organisations from the public sector, the private sector as well as the third sector may participate in the call for proposals for using ERF resources. Applications may be submitted and grants may be received possibly by e.g. different ministries, sub-offices of ministries, local governments, scientific establishments; training centres non-profit organisations, different international organisations as well as private organisations. Projects financed by the European Refugee Fund must be of a non-profitable nature. Project applications may be submitted by organisations separately or with various partners.

viii. National authorities involved

Specify if other than responsible authority under Article 13 of ERF Decision 2004/904/EC is involved.

No other national authority except for the Ministry of Interior will be involved in the programme administration.

ix. Expected quantified results

The list of examples detailed below is illustrative not exhaustive:

Provision of advice and assistance in areas such as housing, means of subsistence, integration into the labour market, medical psychological and social care Materials and services provided;

Number of actions enabling recipients to adapt to the society of the Member State in socio-cultural terms and to share in the values enshrined in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union;

Provision of actions to promote durable and sustainable participation in civic and cultural life;

Monetary value of direct support (food, clothing, accommodation, etc.)

Number of health care services provided

Number of hours of education or training provided (e.g. language or vocational training)

Contact time by social counsellors with target group beneficiaries

Number of users of products produced by projects (information resources, translation of documents, etc.)

Concrete improvements in integrating refugees

Provision of actions that promote equality of access and equality of outcomes in relation to these people's dealings with public institutions;

Other (specify).

In light of the fact that since 7 July 1997, when the Refugees Act entered into force, only four persons have been granted the refugee status and only 10 persons have been granted the status of receiving subsidiary protection in Estonia, while only two persons have been granted the status of receiving subsidiary protection since the beginning of the year 2003, it is very difficult to point out any specific quantified results. Taking the fact into account that there is no way to predict whether or how many persons such protection will be granted, we still have to be ready to implement integration measures. We shall strive towards the following goals:

- to improve the Estonian and, if necessary, other language skills of persons who have received international protection – 3-months language courses for persons receiving international protection
- to increase social, psychological and legal assistance to persons receiving international protection – providing assistance to at least 1 person receiving international protection;
- to provide training for persons (Labour Market Board officials, teachers, local government officials, etc.) coming into contact with persons receiving international protection; - training of at least 50 officials
- To increase, by different articles and by radio and television programmes, awareness in Estonian society about persons receiving international protection – at least 3 articles in newspapers, 1 radio and 1 television programme.

x. Visibility of ERF co-financing

Describe mechanisms for assuring visibility of ERF funding for any activity linked to the projects financed under this measure.

All project applicants and grant recipients will be informed about ERF co-financing. Project application forms prepared by the Ministry of Interior will prescribe that upon submission of applications, the applicant must point out the method of providing information about ERF co-financing. Grant agreements will contain provisions whereby the grant recipients must print the EU logo and signs indicating the ERF co-financing to all pieces of equipment obtained, and to all buildings and rooms renovated, with support from the Fund. ERF co-financing must also be mentioned if the project is presented to the public.

xi. Complementarity with similar measures financed by other instruments and additionality to national measures

The Member State should demonstrate that the proposed measures are fully integrated and co-ordinated with similar actions financed by other national or community instruments, and also that they are complementary to and not replacing national actions.

Actions related to the integration of persons receiving international protection financed from ERF are complementary to national actions. The Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens provides that the Ministry of Social Affairs will organise the settlement of a person receiving international protection into the territory of a local government, taking into account such person's state of health, the location of the residence of their relatives by blood or marriage, and considering the housing and employment opportunities as well as the proportional allocation of persons receiving international protection among the local governments. In accordance with the law, the reception of a person receiving international protection will be organised by the local government, which will, if necessary, assist the person in finding housing, obtaining social and health services, arranging for translation and Estonian language instruction, obtaining information concerning the person's rights and duties and resolving other issues. Expenditures relating to the settlement of persons receiving international protection into the territories of local governments will be covered from the state budget. During their stay in Estonia, persons receiving international protection have the right to receive state pension, family benefits, employment services and state unemployment benefits, social benefits and other assistance on the same grounds as a permanent resident of Estonia. During their stay in Estonia, persons receiving international protection have the right to education and employment in Estonia on the grounds and in accordance with the procedure provided by law.

3.3 ACTION C): VOLUNTARY RETURN OF PERSONS REFERRED TO IN ARTICLE 3 OF DECISION 2004/904/EC PROVIDED THAT THEY HAVE NOT ACQUIRED A NEW NATIONALITY AND HAVE NOT LEFT THE TERRITORY OF THE MEMBER STATE

i. Requirements justifying implementation of the action

Until now, no person who has sought asylum in Estonia and no person who has received protection in Estonia has voluntarily repatriated to their country of origin. One of the possible reasons for that may lie in the fact that different authorities and bodies have not been able to even offer the option of return to persons who have applied for or have received international protection. The Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens does not provide any benefit from the state budget to asylum-seekers. Although on the basis of the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, a refugee who returns to his or her country of nationality or country of permanent residence, or resettles to another country may be paid a one-time benefit from the state budget in an amount which partially or totally covers his or her travel expenses, in case he/she himself/herself is unable to cover these expenses.

This has been so despite the fact that in accordance with the Refugees Act, a refugee who returns to his or her country of nationality or country of permanent residence, or resettles to another country may be paid a one-time benefit from the state budget in an amount which partially or totally covers his or her travel expenses, pursuant to the conditions and procedures established by the Government of the Republic. Moreover, no non-profit association yet has been engaged in seeking information about the countries of origin and providing assistance to persons who would like to return to their homeland. In addition to the lack of awareness regarding the repatriation option, persons who have been refused the protection may also have the problems of being without a valid travel document, insufficient awareness of their own legal status, language barrier and insufficient financial means. Therefore there is the danger that such people would rather stay in Estonia illegally than return to their country of origin. For that reason, there is a great need to inform the target group about the voluntary return option and to assist them in their return.

ii. Purpose of the action

The action is aimed at implementing a voluntary repatriation programme with maximum efficiency. Given the small number of asylum seekers and in light of the existing practice, it is possible that no member of the target group wants to return to the country of origin; however, information about the repatriation option must certainly be provided to asylum seekers and those persons who have been refused the protection. Naturally, special attention should be paid to minors. Financial assistance from the Fund may be used for offering organisational, logistical and financial support to the target group upon return to the country of origin and for assisting them in reintegration. The project applications could be directed to provision of social and legal advice, assistance with travel arrangements and for collection of information regarding the country of origin.

iii. Financial plan

European Refugee Fund allocation	A	43 603,03 €	75.00 %
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State allocations	B	8720,61 €	15.00 %
Allocations from Regions	C	0.00 €	0.00 %
Allocations from Local Authorities	D	0.00 €	0.00 %
National Allocations	E=B+C+D	8720,61 €	15.00 %
Total Public Allocations	F=A+E	52 323,64 €	90.00 %
Private Allocations	G	5813,74 €	10.00 %
Total Cost	H=F+G	58 137,38 €	100.00 %

The financial plan has been prepared in euros. The financial plan is compiled on the basis that 75% of the projects' related cost are financed by the European Refugee Fund, 15 % is relevantly financed by the Ministry of Interior via the state budget and 10% remains to be born by the applicants/recipients' as co-financing.

iv. Timetable

(Starting dates for projects should be in the period between 1st January and 31st December of the programme year. By way of exception starting dates for projects under the 2005 programme should be in the period between 1 January 2005 and 30 June 2006. For the 2005 annual programme project expenditure may be eligible as from 1 January 2005.)

Start date: between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2006

End date: 31 December 2007

v. Actions to be implemented (operational outline)

Refer to the actions detailed under Article 7 of Decision 2004/904/EC.

The implemented actions that could be financed under the European Refugee Fund are provided as follows:

- distribution of information about voluntary return and provision of social and legal advice;
- communication of information about the situation of the country or region of origin or the former country of residence, including information about employment opportunities and social welfare;
- assistance in obtaining travel documents;
- activities as an intermediary for contacts between a member of the target group and a representative of his or her country of origin;
- Assistance in reintegration in the country of origin (finding housing and employment, financial assistance, if necessary, training, etc.);
- Training of non-profit associations and other establishments for providing assistance to members of the target group in their voluntary return to the country of origin.

vi. Post-return follow-up

Describe the system set up for monitoring and follow-up after voluntary return.

If the Fund's means are used to finance voluntary return, there should also be regular supervision on how the repatriates are doing and, if necessary, incentives should be offered for the persons to stay in their country of origin. In this respect, it would be reasonable to use the help of international organisations which are active in the area of asylum (IOM, UNHCR).

vii. Target groups

Persons defined under Article 3 of ERF Decision, provided that they have not acquired a new nationality (naturalised persons) and have not left the territory of the Member State (specify)

The target group includes all persons referred to in Article 3 of Council Decision 2004/904/EC, i.e. asylum seekers, persons receiving subsidiary protection and persons receiving temporary protection who have expressed a wish to return to the country of origin, and also those persons who have been refused the protection by the Republic of Estonia and who have decided to voluntarily return to the country of origin.

viii. Grant recipients

(NGOs federal, national, regional or local authorities, other non-profit organisations)

Organisations from the public sector, the private sector as well as the third sector may participate in the call for proposals for using ERF finances. Applications may be submitted and grants may be received possibly by e.g. different ministries, sub-offices of ministries, local governments, scientific establishments; training centres non-profit organisations, different international organisations as well as private organisations. Projects financed by the European Refugee Fund must be of a non-profitable nature. Project applications may be submitted by organisations separately or with various partners.

ix. National authorities involved

Specify if other than responsible authority under Article 13 of ERF Decision 2004/904/EC is involved.

No other national authority except for the Ministry of Interior will be involved in the programme administration.

x. Expected quantified results

The list of examples detailed below is illustrative not exhaustive:

- *number of users of information and advisory services concerning voluntary return initiatives or programmes;*
- *number of individuals (professionals, heads of families, family members) that return to their home country;*

- *number of persons who stayed, but received return-related support;*
- *Additional economic benefit to the country of origin (e.g. number of jobs created, businesses set up, etc.);*
- *provision of information on aspects relevant to return, including the economic, administrative and political situation in the country of origin, employment opportunities, property rights and other legal matters;*
- *value of financial assistance to returnees;*
- *co-operation with similar projects in other Member States;*
- *Contact time by counsellors with target group beneficiaries;*
- *Number of users of products produced by the projects (information on the situation in the country or region of origin or former habitual residence);*
- *Quantified impact of action by communities of origin resident in the European Union to facilitate the voluntary return of the persons referred to in Council decision 2004/904/EC;*
- *Provision of actions which facilitate the organisation and implementation of national voluntary return initiatives or programmes;*
- *Other (specify).*

Given the small number of asylum seekers in Estonia and the present lack of experience in making arrangements for the voluntary return of asylum seekers and persons who have been refused the protection by the Republic of Estonia, it is very difficult to point out any quantified results that could be achieved by the programme. We shall strive to achieve:

- an increase in the awareness of asylum seekers and persons who have been refused the protection about the option of voluntary return to the country of origin - composing of 50 leaflets for asylum seekers;
- an increase in the motivation among members of the target group to return voluntarily by assisting them in making arrangements for the repatriation and reintegration and, if necessary, financially – providing support to at least 1 person with making arrangements for the repatriation ;
- the voluntary return of at least one person to the country of origin;
- Support for the ability of national and non-governmental organisations to explain the nature of voluntary return and the person's rights to the target group – organising at least one seminar.

xi. Visibility of ERF co-financing

Describe mechanisms for assuring visibility of ERF funding for any activity linked to the projects financed under this measure.

All project applicants and grant recipients will be informed about ERF co-financing. Project application forms prepared by the Ministry of Interior will prescribe that upon submission of applications, the applicant must point out the method of providing information about ERF co-

financing. Grant agreements will contain provisions whereby the grant recipients must print the EU logo and signs indicating the ERF co-financing to all pieces of equipment obtained, and to all buildings and rooms renovated, with support from the Fund. ERF co-financing must also be mentioned if the project is presented to the public.

xii. Complementarity with similar actions financed by other instruments and additional-ity to national actions

The Member State should demonstrate that the proposed actions are fully integrated and co-ordinated with similar actions financed by other national (including regional and local) or Community instruments and also that they are complementary to and not replacing national actions.

Actions related to voluntary repatriation financed from ERF are complementary to national actions. In accordance with the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, the persons receiving international protection who return to their country of nationality or country of permanent residence, or resettle to another country may be paid a one-time benefit from the state budget in an amount which partially or totally covers their travel expenses, in case he/she himself/herself is unable to cover these expenses.

4. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

i. Requirements justifying making use of the technical assistance

Detailed description of the resources available and of additional needs required for implementing the ERF programme

Due to structural changes in the Ministry of Interior that entered into force on 28 May 2006, the administration and the implementation of the ERF has moved from the Aliens department to the Foreign Aid Bureau of the Administrative department. The aim of this change was to convey the fulfilment of one task into one department and thus to indicate concrete responsibility. Thus, by now the Foreign Aid Bureau will administer and implement all internal security related single projects (Police, Border Guard, Rescue Board and Security Police Board) under Phare, Transition Facility and some other financial instruments including grant schemes. At the moment, most of the organisational functions of the responsible authority in Estonia are carried out by the Head of the Foreign Aid Bureau of the Administrative department of the Ministry of Interior.

At present there are three officials in the Foreign Aid Bureau. As the volume of tasks related to the Fund is increasing, as several different programmes for different years have to be dealt with, there is a need to employ extra personnel (assistants, monitoring specialist, accountant and etc) who would assist the Head of the Bureau in dealing with the ERF matters at the Ministry. The Head of the Bureau will map the actual workload as regards the ERF and if the actual workload will become high enough to efficiently cope with all other tasks, new personnel (assistants, monitoring specialist etc) will be employed based on mapping the real situation and comparing the workload during 4 months. Arrangements should be made for the extra personnel work places and means of work (computer related costs as purchasing, computers, and software). For example, a Laptop will be used for making presentations outside the Ministry as well participating in the workgroup of the ERF matters. As the successful implementation of the ERF depends on the existence of comprehensive documents (the guidelines for the applicants or procedural rules) the means of technical assistance are required for the compilation of the procedural rules and elaboration of checklists as a basis of efficient monitoring. As regards employment costs, it may also be necessary to pay the costs of auditing, checking of accounts and the expenses of the certification institution from the means of technical assistance provided by the European Commission. Organizing workshops for the potential applicants before the deadline for the call for proposal will contribute to obtaining quality applications. In order to obtain quality interim and final reports workshops will be organized to familiarize the requirements for the grant recipients and lay the main stress on the possible weaknesses based on the experience the Ministry has had. As some of the grant recipients' can be located outside Tallinn and they are situated some other places in Estonia, travel costs inside Estonia either by car or by public transport can be covered by technical assistance concerning auditors and some other members of the ERF team.

As for technical equipment, there is a need for a colour printer, a scanner and a small photocopier in order to be able to also copy coloured materials. Such office equipment will also be needed for the preparation of advertising information about the European Refugee Fund.

The use of means of technical assistance will certainly be necessary also for the translation of different documents into the Estonian language and, if necessary, from the Estonian into the English language.

Similarly important is to train the personnel of the team that administers ERF in order to master skills in project management, evaluation of the projects, monitoring and accounting.

We are also planning to use the means of technical assistance for evaluating the programme, legal services if necessary and for the recruitment of personnel.

ii. Purpose of the technical assistance (Article 18 of 2004/904/EC)

The technical assistance is aimed at simplifying the implementation of the ERF programme by providing the applicants and the project implementers sufficiently with appropriate information and support in order to ensure the quality and consistence of the programme.

iii. Financial plan (*)

European Refugee Fund allocation	A	65,077.54 €	100.00 %
State allocations	B	0.00 €	0.00 %
Allocations from Regions	C	0.00 €	0.00 %
Allocations from Local Authorities	D	0.00 €	0.00 %
National Allocations	E=B+C+D	0.00 €	0.00 %
Total Public Allocations	F=A+E	65,077,54 €	100.00 %
Private Allocations	G	0.00 €	0.00 %
Total Cost	H=F+G	65,077.54 €	100.00 %

** Max 7% of MS annual allocation, plus EUR 30,000*

() No obligation for co-financing*

The financial plan has been prepared in euros.

iv. Timetable

(Starting dates for technical assistance measures should be in the period between 1st January and 31st December of the programme year. By way of exception starting dates for projects under the 2005 programme should be in the period between 1 January 2005 and 30 June 2006. For the 2005 annual programme project expenditure may be eligible as from 1 January 2005.)

Start date: between 1 January 2006 and 31 December 2006

End date: 31 December 2007

Certain actions are already carried out in the second half of 2006, for example, compilation of the annual programme 2006, announcing call for proposals, evaluation and selection of the grant proposal, presumably the conclusion of the grant agreements. Certain activities as

related to the programme for 2006 will be carried out only in 2008, for example, auditing the projects, drafting the final report to the European Commission.

v. Actions to be implemented (operational outline)

Actions to cover technical and administrative assistance related to the preparation, monitoring and evaluation of actions of the programme, for example:

(a) Costs linked to preparation, selection, evaluation, and follow-up of the operations co-financed by the ERF. This can include leasing or purchase of computerised systems the need of which is duly justified by the responsible authority and proportional to the size of the programme. The equipment leased or purchased can be used for the implementation of the programme only. Eligibility rules on leasing apply.

(b) Information actions and costs linked to the visibility of ERF co-financing.

(c) Costs linked to audits and on-the-spot controls and checks of the projects.

(d) Expenditure related to remuneration, including social security contributions, is eligible only in the following cases:

(e) Permanent officials, temporarily seconded by formal decision of the responsible authority, entrusted with executing the tasks enumerated in points 2-4 above;

(f) Temporary agents or private sector staff employed solely for the purpose of executing the tasks enumerated in points 2-4 above.

We are planning to use the means of technical assistance for the following activities related to the European Refugee Fund:

- Expenses related to the announcement of the call for proposal (call for proposals in newspapers etc);
- expenses related to the distribution of information to potential applicants and project implementers, including the preparation and distribution of information materials, arrangements for meetings, workshops etc;
- expenses related to the translation of documents into the Estonian language and, if necessary, from the Estonian e.g. to the English language;
- Expenses related to the evaluation of the programme. A competition will be announced to find the evaluator, and the best suitable institution will be selected from the participants who have made the offer;
- expenses related to project audits, on-the-spot visits and checks of the projects, including checks on the presented reports;
- Expenses related to the fulfilment of other tasks of the management authority (*inter alia*, the salary of the ERF team (here is meant the salary of the members of the ERF team that are not the Ministry officials, but those persons employed whose task is to carry out duties only related to the administration of the ERF in the implementation

unit), expenses related to participation in the meetings of the ERF Committee in Brussels, etc.);

- If necessary, visits to other EU Member States in order to learn about the administration and management of ERF programmes in other countries.
- Expenses related to local transport in order to monitor or audit the recipients' as some of the grant recipients' are located outside Tallinn;
- Expenses related to the training of the ERF team in the domain of project implementation, evaluation and selection;
- Expenses related to purchasing means of the workplace (a laptop computer and computers, mobile phone) for the ERF team;
- Expenses related to the preparation of the procedural rules, multi-annual programme;
- Expenses related to purchasing office items.

vi. Procurement Procedure

Public authority implementing the ERF programme (and other implementing bodies involved in the implementation, if relevant). Specify in particular under which procurement procedures the technical assistance expenditure is to be managed.

In Estonia, procurement procedures are governed by the Public Procurement Act. The Public Procurement Act provides for the public procurement procedures, the rights and obligations of subjects involved in public procurement and their liability, and the procedure for the exercise of state supervision with the aim of promoting competition and ensuring the transparency of public procurements and the equal treatment of the participants in tendering procedures.

vii. National authorities involved

Specify if other than responsible authority under Article 13 of ERF Decision.

No other national authority except for the Ministry of Interior will be involved in the programme administration.

viii. Expected quantified results

e. g.:

Quantified improvement in implementation of ERF

Improvements in preparation of call for proposals and preparation of programme (specify person/days)

Evaluation of project proposals (specify number):

Selection of projects (expected number):

Follow-up of projects and management of programme (specify No. person/days)

Audit and on-the-spot checks (specify number of audits/visits):

Evaluation reports (specify No. person/days)

Publicity initiatives (specify)

Equipment leased or purchased (specify)

Other (specify)

The expected results will be as follows:

- a successful implementation of the ERF Programme 2006; implementation of the planned activities;
- regular renewal of information on the web page of the Ministry of Interior regarding the European Refugee Fund (one person, once a month);
- distribution of better and more precise information to the applicants regarding the programme, which would result in better preparation of project applications (one person, before and during the call);
- preparation of information materials about the European Refugee Fund, which will be assisted to by office equipment obtained with financing from ERF (30 information leaflets, sent to potential applicants and partners);
- announcement of a call for proposals during the second half of the year 2006 (two persons, one month);
- start of projects 01 January 2007;
- well-prepared grant agreements (at least 2 persons, one month);
- well-prepared and timely prepared reports (2 reports) to be presented to the European Commission;
- at least one on-the-spot visit to each grant recipient (at least one person);
- auditing of projects by the Internal Audit Department of the Ministry of Interior (at least one person, maximum of two months)
- fast translation of the necessary documents, which would assist to a successful implementation of the ERF Programme 2006 (within 2 weeks, with the help of a translation bureau)
- at least 2 visits to some other EU memberstates to familiarize with the administration and the management system. Preferably those member-states who are experiencing great problems with the asylum-seekers and to those those member-states that have a well-functioning administration and management system.

ix. Visibility of ERF co-financing

ERF funding shall be made clearly visible for any activity linked to the projects financed under this measure.

The EU logo will be applied to all equipment purchased with financial assistance from the European Refugee Fund. The EU logo and the sign of ERF co-financing will also be applied to all materials prepared by the Ministry of Internal Affairs (calls for proposals, instructions, application forms, advertising materials, information sheets, etc.). All grant recipients will be informed about the ERF co-financing for the project. Grant agreements to be concluded with the grant recipients will contain provisions whereby the grant recipients must print the EU logo and signs indicating the ERF co-financing to all pieces of equipment obtained, and to all buildings and rooms renovated, with support from the Fund. ERF co-financing must also be mentioned if the project is presented to the public.

x. Complementarity with similar measures financed by other instruments and additionality to national measures

Member State should demonstrate that the proposed measures are fully integrated and co-ordinated with similar measures financed by other national, community or international instruments and also those they are complementary to and not replacing national measures.

The proposed measures are completely in conformity with other Community measures, being complementary to national measures. At present, the organisational functions related to the Fund are carried out by the Head of the Foreign Aid Bureau of the Administrative Department of the Ministry of Interior. The ERF coordinator and the contact person at the Ministry uses the work equipment of the Ministry for carrying out tasks related to the European Refugee Fund and receives salary from the Ministry of Interior. In future, means of the technical assistance will be used for the remuneration of the extra personnel who are carrying out the ERF related tasks. Technical assistance will be used for their workplaces. Part of the expenses of the administration of the ERF will be covered by the Ministry of Interior (building, salary of the Head of the Bureau and etc).

6. INDICATIVE TOTAL FINANCING PLAN FOR THE YEAR

European Refugee Fund allocation	A	501,107,84 €	77.52 %
State allocations	B	87 206.06 €	13,49. %
Allocations from Regions	C	0.00 €	0.00 %
Allocations from Local Authorities	D	0.00 €	0.00 %
National Allocations	E=B+C+D	87 206,06 €	13,49 %
Total Public Allocations	F=A+E	588 313,90€	91,01 %
Private Allocations	G	58,137.38 €	8.99 %
Total Cost	H=F+G	646,451.28 €	100 %

The financial plan has been prepared in euros. The amounts indicated are provisional and based on the assumption that the total amount granted by the European Refugee Fund to Estonia will be used completely. The preparation of the financial plan was based on the assumption that 75% of the project costs and 100% of the technical assistance will be financed by the European Refugee Fund.