

## ANNEX

### **EUROPEAN REFUGEE FUND** **DRAFT ANNUAL PROGRAMME 2007**

#### **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 2007 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 2007 are in conformity with the provisions of the Multi-annual programme.

However, taking into consideration that Council Decision 2004/904/EC foresees multi-annual programmes and that the 2004 annual programme's evaluation report and the opinion of the projects' recipients (who are involved in the implementation of the projects) indicates that there was necessity for projects' with a duration longer than 12 months, and that fostering project proposals with longer duration is justified in case the project applicant would like to carry out comprehensive projects that require more time resources, we have provided the applicants with the possibility of carrying out multi-annual projects. Therefore we foresaw this possibility already in the call for proposals for the programme 2006, in such a way that the first part of the project is financed under Annual programme 2006 and the second part relevantly from the resources for the programme 2007. Two applicants used this possibility. Taking into consideration that a new multi-annual programme will have to be drawn and approved by the Commission for 2008 – 2013 (under ERF III) we will not foresee this possibility to have multi-annual projects under the annual programme 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: in 2003 14 initial (plus 1 repeated) asylum applications were submitted; in 2004 11 initial (plus 4 repeated) asylum applications were submitted; in 2005 11 asylum applications were submitted (all initial) and in 2006 only 7 asylum applications were submitted (all initial). Despite a current small number of asylum-seekers, Estonia has to be prepared for an eventual increase in the number of asylum-seekers, eventual mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving temporary protection included. It is continuously necessary to train the officials who come into contact with asylum seekers; to update the information and information materials distributed to asy-

lum seekers; to notify the public about different forms of international protection, the reasons for lodging asylum applications and etc.

#### 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 of great importance to support the procurements of technical devices used in asylum proceedings (e.g. devices that enable to organize video-conferences with interpreters), to train judges, lawyers and officials, 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 raise their understanding towards the asylum-seekers and the persons seeking international protection. Increasing Estonian readiness for an eventual mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving temporary protection will continuously be of primary importance.

#### iii. Financial plan

<b>European Refugee Fund allocation</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>240 232,36 €</b>	<b>75.00 %</b>
<b>State allocations</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>48 046,47 €</b>	<b>15.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Regions</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Local Authorities</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>National Allocations</b>	<b>E=B+C+D</b>	<b>48 046,47 €</b>	<b>15.00 %</b>
<b>Total Public Allocations</b>	<b>F=A+E</b>	<b>288 278,83 €</b>	<b>90.00 %</b>
<b>Private Allocations</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>32 030,98 €</b>	<b>10,00 %</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>H=F+G</b>	<b>320 309,81 €</b>	<b>100,00 %</b>

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 the Interior via the state budget and 10% remains to be born by the applicants/beneficiaries' as co-financing.

#### iv. Timetable

*(Starting dates for projects should be in the period between 1st January and 31<sup>st</sup> December of the programme year)*

Start date: **Between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2007**

End date: Depending on the starting dates, between 1 January 2008 and 31 December 2008

#### 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 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 officials, lawyers, judges etc who come into contact with asylum seekers;
- improvement of reception conditions for asylum seekers (for example at the reception centre and at the registration centre<sup>1</sup>);
  
- preparation of updated 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 Estonian authorities in preparing the national crisis plan for the event of mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving subsidiary protection, training the relevant officials for the event etc;
- raising awareness in the Estonian society about asylum seekers and asylum proceedings.

#### 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, to a lesser degree, refugees and persons' receiving subsidiary protection ( due to the reason that for a limited time period refugees and persons' receiving subsidiary protection also have the possibility to live at the reception centre).

#### 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 research establishments; training centres non-profit organisations, different international organisations as well as private organisations. Projects financed by the

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<sup>1</sup> According to the Act on Granting International protection to Aliens the reception centre shall arrange for the following assistance to applicants during asylum proceedings or proceedings of temporary protection: accommodation; supply of foodstuffs or provision of food, supply of essential clothing, other necessities and toiletries, and supply of money for urgent small expenses within the limits set out in subsection 36 (5) to applicants residing in the reception centre and to applicants residing outside the reception centre on the basis of clause 34 (2) 3) or clause 62 (2) 3) of this Act; emergency care and medical examinations; essential translation services and Estonian language instruction; information regarding their rights and duties; transportation necessary for the performance of acts pursuant to procedure established by law; provision of other essential services.

The registration centre means offices of the Citizenship and Migration Board, where the applicant may be accommodated temporarily if this is necessary for the performance of acts in the asylum proceedings.

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 the Interior will be involved in the programme administration. According to the decision of the Government of the Republic of Estonia from 13 April 2006, the Ministry of the Interior is the responsible Authority of the European Refugee Fund up to 2010.

#### **ix. Expected quantified results**

*The list of examples detailed below is illustrative not exhaustive:*

- 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 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 – compiling a training programme for 30 officials;
- improve the asylum seekers' knowledge about their rights and duties by means of various information materials – leaflets for asylum seekers in 3 new languages;
- greater engagement of interpreters in asylum proceedings – using at least 1 interpreter per person (if necessary);
- improve Estonian readiness in the event of mass influx of asylum seekers and persons receiving temporary protection - training 10 officials, carrying out 1 field exercise;
- Raise the awareness of Estonian society regarding asylum seekers – 1 campaign, 3 articles in newspapers, possibly 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 beneficiaries will be informed about ERF co-financing. Project application forms prepared by the Ministry of the 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 beneficiaries 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 are: the accommodation and support of the 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.

The reception centre as necessary organizes 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 administered by the Ministry of the 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 and avoid eventual overlapping of the ERF programme with the Community EQUAL initiative, a representative and a deputy representative of the Ministry of the Interior are members of the steering committee for the programme EQUAL. The steering committee convenes on regular basis; as well information in writing is forwarded regularly to the members of the committee. Given a small number of projects, the steering committee discusses matters on project level. Only one project has been selected under EQUAL initiative that focuses on the asylum seekers. This project is implemented by Jaan Tõnisson Institute, targeted at increasing the readiness of the Estonian Society for the integration of asylum seekers. Jaan Tõnisson Institute also submitted a project proposal under ERF 2006 for integrating the beneficiaries of international protection into the Estonian society (as a follow-up project of EQUAL initiative).

### **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 persons who have received international protection is very small (14) and therefore there have not been many separate activities in this respect. Nevertheless, it is likely that the number of asylum-seekers and therefore also the number of persons, who will receive international protection, will rise in the coming years. Therefore it is important to take measures to tackle this task at present, to facilitate the integration of the new beneficiaries of international protection. It is necessary to strengthen co-operation between local government officials and beneficiaries and to provide psychological assistance to persons who have received protection. Due to the fact that language skill enables a person to integrate into a new society, Estonian language instruction has to be provided to the persons receiving international protection.

Separate integration programmes could be foreseen for the children of persons who have received international protection and these could, *inter alia*, cover programmes for the integration of children into the educational system. So far, the main problems occurred have taken place due to the fact that Estonian schools have not gained experience in dealing with the children of the new immigrants, i.e. the minors receiving international protection included, therefore the problem is not perceived until the school suddenly receives notification that a new pupil with a foreign language background arrives. Another shortcoming is the lack of preparation as concerns teachers and a psychological anxiety in front of their inability to cope with the issue. The Non-Estonian Integration Foundation has submitted (*an it was also selected*) a project by using ERF resources of 2005 and 2006, targeted to integrating children of the refugees and the persons receiving international protection into the Estonian educational system. They are likely to submit a follow-up project in this field under the ERF resources of 2007.

#### **ii. Purpose of the action**

The action is aimed at improving the integration of persons who have received international protection, into Estonian society. As integration is a two-way process, it is necessary to raise the knowledge and tolerance of Estonian society as regards the refugees.

It is important to map the situation and analyse the shortcomings which have been made so far regarding integration of the refugees and the beneficiaries of subsidiary protection in order to smoothen the integration of the new beneficiaries of international protection. The co-operation with local governments needs to be intensified.

Continuously one of the priorities in this field is employment, vocational and continuing education etc. it is important to underline here that the right to employment does not concern only persons who have received 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 the fact that court proceedings may last for several years, asylum seekers quite probably might be willing to exercise their right to employment. Therefore it is necessary to initiate measures for integrating beneficiaries of international protection (and asylum-seekers whose stay is of a lasting and stable nature, i.e. more than 12 months) into the Estonian labour market.

The provision of Estonian language instruction to persons who have received international protection and programmes about the integration of children into the Estonian educational system are definitely also priorities in the field of integration.

### iii. Financial plan

<b>European Refugee Fund allocation</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>152 875,14 €</b>	<b>75.00 %</b>
<b>State allocations</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>30 575,03 €</b>	<b>15.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Regions</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Local Authorities</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>National Allocations</b>	<b>E=B+C+D</b>	<b>30 575,03 €</b>	<b>15.00 %</b>
<b>Total Public Allocations</b>	<b>F=A+E</b>	<b>183 450,17 €</b>	<b>90.00 %</b>
<b>Private Allocations</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>20 383,35 €</b>	<b>10.00 %</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>H=F+G</b>	<b>203 833,52 €</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>

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 the Interior via the state budget and 10% remains to be born by the applicants/beneficiaries' as co-financing.

### iv. Timetable

*(Starting dates for projects should be in the period between 1st January and 31<sup>st</sup> December of the programme year)*

Start date: **Between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2007**

End date: Depending on the starting dates, between 1 January 2008 and **31 December 2008**

### 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 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, about Estonian society etc;
- activities related to the integration of children of the persons receiving international protection into the Estonian educational system;
- training of the 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, campaigns, information materials about foreign cultures etc.
- Integration into the labour market for asylum seekers after the period of one year from the submission of the asylum application

#### **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 includes all persons who have received international protection in Estonia, including refugees, persons receiving subsidiary protection and persons receiving temporary protection. The target group also includes those asylum seekers, regarding who 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 the decision.

#### **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 research 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 the Interior will be involved in the programme administration.

#### **ix. Expected quantified results**

*The list of examples detailed below is illustrative not exhaustive:*

In light of the fact that since 7 July 1997, when the Refugees Act entered into force, only 4 persons have been granted 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. Therefore it is very difficult to predict whether or how many persons will receive international protection. 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 3 persons who have received international protection;
- to increase awareness in Estonian society about persons receiving international protection – at least 3 articles in newspapers, 5 information seminars; possibly 1 radio and 1 television programme.
- to strengthen co-operation between local government officials and beneficiaries of international protection (and their families) – at least 2 meetings, 1 summer camp.

#### **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 beneficiaries will be informed about ERF co-financing. Project application forms prepared by the Ministry of the 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 beneficiaries must print the EU logo and signs indicating the ERF co-financing to all items 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 the Social Affairs will organise the settlement of a per-

son receiving international protection into the territory of a local government, taking such person's state of health, the location of the residence of their relatives by blood or marriage into account, 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, neither a person who has sought asylum in Estonia and nor a 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 the 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.

Although the Estonian Migration Foundation has submitted a project proposal under ERF 2006 programme (and it was also selected), which is aimed at promoting voluntary return and helping asylum seekers and beneficiaries of the international protection to voluntarily return to their country of origin, it is necessary to continue promoting this opportunity to the persons involved. In addition to lack of awareness regarding the option of voluntary return, persons who have been refused the protection may also have been without a valid travel document, they have had insufficient awareness of their own legal status, language barrier and insufficient financial means. Therefore there is the danger that such people would rather stay illegally in Estonia than return to their country of origin. For that reason, there is vitally important to inform the target group about the option of voluntary return and to assist them in this respect.

#### **ii. Purpose of the action**

The action is aimed at implementing a voluntary return programme with maximum efficiency. Given a small number of asylum seekers and persons receiving international protection 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 voluntary return must certainly be provided to asylum seekers and those persons who have been refused the protection. Naturally, special attention should be paid to the 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 targeted to the provision of social and legal advice, assistance with travel arrangements and for collection of information regarding the country of origin, as well providing assistance in the issues of reintegration and monitoring the returnees.

#### **iii. Financial plan**

<b>European Refugee Fund allocation</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>43 678,61 €</b>	<b>75.00 %</b>
<b>State allocations</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>8735,72 €</b>	<b>15.00 %</b>

<b>Allocations from Regions</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Local Authorities</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>National Allocations</b>	<b>E=B+C+D</b>	<b>8735,72 €</b>	<b>15.00 %</b>
<b>Total Public Allocations</b>	<b>F=A+E</b>	<b>52 414,33 €</b>	<b>90.00 %</b>
<b>Private Allocations</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>5823,82 €</b>	<b>10.00 %</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>H=F+G</b>	<b>58 238,15 €</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>

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 the 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 31<sup>st</sup> December of the programme year)*

Start date: **Between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2007**

End date: Depending on the starting dates, between 1 January 2008 and 31 **December 2008**

#### **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 (for example, assistance with 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, regular supervision should be performed 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 assistance of the international organisations which are active in the field 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, refugees, 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 research 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 the Interior will be involved in the programme administration.

#### **x. Expected quantified results**

*The list of examples detailed below is illustrative not exhaustive:*

Given the small number of the target population in Estonia and the present lack of experience in making arrangements for the voluntary return, 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 an electronic database in 3 new languages;
- an increase in motivation among members of the target group to return voluntarily by assisting them in making arrangements for repatriation and reintegration and, if necessary,

- financially – providing support to at least 2 persons with making arrangements for the repatriation;
- the voluntary return of at least 1 person to the country of origin;
  - providing assistance to 1 returnee with reintegration – assisting with finding accommodation, access to work, social rehabilitation etc;
  - 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 visit to another Member State, which is successfully carrying out voluntary return actions;
  - Gathering information about 5 countries of origin, creating contacts with the authorities and organisations of these countries.

#### **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 the 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 additionality to national actions**

*The Member State should demonstrate that the proposed actions are fully integrated and coordinated 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*

The efforts have been made to promote the possibility of using ERF to potential beneficiaries, the number of project proposals has increased about 100 % and it is expected to increase even more. More attention will be paid to the local municipalities, that is how to foster the possibilities of using the assets of ERF to them. Due to the increasing number of the project proposals the volume of tasks related to the Fund is increasing, there is a need to employ extra personnel (monitoring specialist, internal auditor fulfilling the tasks of the certified authority in order to guarantee the segregation of duties at the Ministry of the Interior).

Therefore there is need to arrange work places and means of work for the extra personnel mentioned above (if computer related costs as purchasing, computers, and software incur/ *only the depreciation costs on the programme can be covered under technical assistance*). For example, a Laptop will be used for making presentations (information days) outside the Ministry as well participating in the workgroup of the ERF matters. As regards employment costs, it may also be necessary to pay the costs of auditing, checking of accounts and the expenses of the certifying authority from the means of technical assistance provided by the European Commission. It is planned to organize information days for the potential beneficiaries and to introduce the European Refugee Fund for the local authorities and some other entities who might be interested in submitting project proposal after publishing the call for proposals this year. As regards the fact that there is a tendency that many potential beneficiaries are small NGO-s who do not have a lot of experience in the implementation and reporting as regards this Fund, it is planned to organize an information day as soon as all grant agreements have been signed with the purpose of explaining in details the newly compiled procedural rules, special attention will also be paid to compiling reports (interim and final reports), as well the procurements.

The Ministry of the Interior will carry out the analysis of the quality of the reports and thus the main stress will be paid to the mistakes made so far with the purpose to highlight the most important steps while preparing the reports. As some of the grant beneficiaries' 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 the number of experts in the field of refugees and asylum –seekers is rather small in Estonia and there can be a possibility that all available experts are engaged in the project proposals as partners or the beneficiaries themselves, there is a need to cover the costs related to the recruitment of experts ad hoc basis in the evaluation of the projects outside the Ministry of the Interior. Therefore technical assistance is required for paying the personnel costs to the experts involved in the project selection.

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. (*only the depreciation costs on the programme*).

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, reporting of the irregularities.

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 (\*)

<b>European Refugee Fund allocation</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>65 134,43 €</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>State allocations</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Regions</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Local Authorities</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>National Allocations</b>	<b>E=B+C+D</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Total Public Allocations</b>	<b>F=A+E</b>	<b>65 134,43 €</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>
<b>Private Allocations</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>H=F+G</b>	<b>65 134,43 €</b>	<b>100.00 %</b>

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

*(\*) No obligation for co-financing*

The financial plan has been made up in euros.

## iv. Timetable

(Starting dates for technical assistance measures should be in the period between 1st January and 31<sup>st</sup> December of the programme year)

Start date: **Between 1 January 2007 and 31 December 2007**

End date: **31 December 2008**

Certain activities as related to the programme for 2007 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)**

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, information days 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, accommodation, per diems 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, reporting about irregularities;
- expenses related to the for paying the personnel costs to the experts involved in the project selection;
- expenses related to purchasing means of the workplace (only depreciation as it concerns a laptop computer and computers, mobile phone) for the ERF team;
- expenses related to the preparation of the multi-annual programme;
- expenses related to purchasing office items (only depreciation ).

## **vi. Procurement Procedure**

*Public authority implementing the ERF program (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 the Interior will be involved in the programme administration.

#### **viii. Expected quantified results**

The expected results will be as follows:

- a successful implementation of the ERF Programme 2007; 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 first half of the year 2007 (two persons, one month);
- start of projects 31 May 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 from the Control Authority)
- fast translation of the necessary documents, which would assist to a successful implementation of the ERF Programme 2007 (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 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 the Interior (calls for proposals, instructions, application forms, advertising materials, information sheets, etc.).

#### **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 coordinated 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

<b>European Refugee Fund allocation</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>501 920,54 €</b>	<b>77.52 % *</b>
<b>State allocations</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>87 357,22 €</b>	<b>13,49. %</b>
<b>Allocations from Regions</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>Allocations from Local Authorities</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>0.00 €</b>	<b>0.00 %</b>
<b>National Allocations</b>	<b>E=B+C+D</b>	<b>87 357,22 €</b>	<b>13,49 %</b>
<b>Total Public Allocations</b>	<b>F=A+E</b>	<b>589 277,76 €</b>	<b>91,01 %</b>
<b>Private Allocations</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>58 238,15 €</b>	<b>8.99 %</b>
<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>H=F+G</b>	<b>647 515,91 €</b>	<b>100 %</b>

\* This percentage includes the Technical Assistance.

The financial plan has been made up 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.

