

NATIONAL PROGRAMME AMIF

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DESIGNATED AUTHORITIES

Competent authorities responsible for the management and control systems

Authority	Name of the authority	Name of the person responsible for the authority	Address	E-mail address	Date of designation	Activities delegated
Responsible authority	Estonian Ministry of the Interior	Secretary General	Pikk 61 15065 Tallinn Estonia	info@siseministeerium.ee		
Audit authority	Estonian Ministry of the Interior	Minister	Pikk 61 15065 Tallinn Estonia	info@siseministeerium.ee		

Management and control system

The aim is to continue with the similar management and control system as implemented for the Solid funds in 2007-2013. The responsible authority is responsible for fulfilling tasks stipulated in basic acts. When needed, some tasks will be outsourced (e.g. evaluation). Delegated authority is not foreseen. Detailed procedures concerning the implementation of the AMIF will be described in manuals (e.g. procedural rules, audit plans etc.).

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The founding principle of Estonian migration policy is to facilitate immigration of those persons whose activity brings added value to Estonian society in general, is in accordance with Estonian public interest, and to prevent the immigration or suspend the residence of those persons who might be a threat to Estonian public order and security. The objectives set in the national programme are in accordance with the national strategies.

Since the number of asylum seekers has increased over time and considering the recent movements in the world, it is important that Estonia is prepared for a growing number of asylum applications and for ensuring necessary reception conditions of beneficiaries of international protection. Such conditions should establish prerequisites for adaptation as the first step of integration and further integration of beneficiaries of international protection in Estonia.

Estonia has set 2 overall objectives for asylum: (1) ensure and further develop good reception conditions and support services, and (2) ensure and further develop uniform and high-quality asylum procedures.

Relevant actions are planned based on the Internal Security Strategy 2015-2020 and the Development plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs for 2014-2017. Planned actions can be divided into 2 groups: capacity building and providing sustainable high-quality reception and support services. Actions will be performed in cooperation with the state, accommodation centre service providers, civil society and international organisations and local municipalities.

As a result, the asylum application procedure is enhanced and easily accessible. Decisions are made quickly by trained professionals based on high-quality controlled data; asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection have easy access to support services and accommodation conditions are good.

On 9 June 2015 the Estonian Government approved participation in the relocation and resettlement programmes and adopted a preliminary action plan on 8 August 2015.

The „Estonia 2020” competitiveness strategy aims to achieve strong growth in productivity, amongst other things, via attracting TCN (third-country national) talent. “Action programme of the Government of the Republic 2011-2015” outlines the need for smart immigration. The strategy of Integration and Social Cohesion “Integrating Estonia 2020”, planned to be passed at the beginning of 2015, aims to facilitate both adaptation and further integration into Estonian society. Under the AMIF Estonia has set the following overall goals: (1) newly arrived TCN are adapted and participate in the Estonian society actively; (2) knowledge-based approach to the development of migration and adaptation policies has been strengthened; (3) involvement of TCN and persons with undetermined citizenship in the society has increased; (4) awareness and tolerance of the society with regard to TCN has increased and there is a positive overall background that facilitates adaptation as a first step of integration and further integration.

Main guidelines of Estonia's security policy 2015 which is approved by the Parliament outline common principles of security policy and long-term goals which the public, NGOs and private sectors must consider (as well as their role in helping to reach these goals). Important role among these goals is played by the activities aimed at prevention, fighting and discovering illegal immigration. In order to facilitate the return procedure, Estonia has concluded bilateral implementation protocols with almost every country that has readmission agreements on the EU level. Taking into account growth of illegal immigration, the Action Plan of the Government of the Republic for 2011-2015 provides for creation of the joint detention centre for asylum seekers and persons subject to forced return. In accordance with the main priorities of the security policy during the next years it is planned to increase the participation of NGOs in return process and also facilitate cooperation with private companies in the field of provision of return-related services (e.g. accommodation services, translation services, medical care). Under the AMIF the main goal is to promote voluntary return and also facilitate forced return operations. It is planned to provide returnees with necessary pre- and post-return services. In addition, the goal is to increase the capacity of authorities and organisations engaged in return related matters.

2. BASELINE SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATE

Summary of the current state of play as of December 2013 in the Member State for the fields relevant to the Fund

Common European Asylum System

In Estonia, the Ministry of the Interior (MoI) develops migration and asylum policy and implements it via the Police and Border Guard Board (PBGB). The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for organisation of the reception of asylum seekers, and for designing various services offered in cooperation with partners from the public, private and non-governmental sector.

Until now, Estonia has received the smallest number of asylum applications compared to other EU Member States. At the same time, there has been a stable increase in the number of asylum applications submitted in Estonia since joining the Schengen Area. In 2001 Estonia received 12 and in 2013 already 97 asylum applications. In 2013 Estonia granted international protection to 7 TCNs.

An asylum application may be lodged either at the border guard bureau (initial border crossing point or by the migration surveillance official) or at the service bureau of the citizenship and migration bureau. The quality of the infrastructure is currently high since a common service standard is applied to every service point of the PBGB and there is a separate unit which performs checks on the correspondence with the standard, the privacy and confidentiality of the applicant is highly respected. These places serve foremost as initial points of accepting the applications; longer procedures such as interviews and initial processing of cases are being conducted by asylum case workers at the headquarters of the PBGB.

Average processing speed of an asylum application at first stage in 2013 was 2,4 months. Despite of the low number of asylum seekers Estonia has always aimed to offer the high-quality reception services and to be prepared for sudden massive influx. In 2013 nearly 600 000 euros from the state budget was invested in area pf reception.

The MoI has prepared draft legislation to implement CEAS and consultations with partners are about to start.

Under the European Refugee Fund (ERF) more than 40 projects have been implemented in 2004-2013 to increase the quality of asylum procedures, improve reception conditions, and raise public awareness.

To ensure and further develop an uniform and high-quality asylum procedures it is essential that the state continues to (*the list is non-exhaustive*):

- update existing databases and develop new IT-solutions;
- renew or purchase additional equipment (fingerprint scanners, cameras, computers, etc.) and licenses to provide high-quality data;

- train staff (including NGOs, lawyers providing state legal aid upon counselling of asylum seekers and representation in court, local authorities etc.) involved in asylum procedures in different topics (e.g. how to recognise potential asylum seekers, victims of human trafficking; IT related trainings; language courses, etc.);
- provide currently project based services (e.g. interpretation, legal counselling and representation, etc.) will be continuously provided.

Asylum applicants are accommodated at the Accommodation Centre in Vao managed by AS Hoolekandeteenused which is 100% state-owned enterprise. The centre was opened in February 2014 and accommodates 35 persons. The centre is well-equipped and living conditions are good. Hoolekandeteenused AS has established 23 care homes throughout Estonia and in exceptional situations the state is able to provide services and accommodate up to 100 asylum applicants in care homes.

Special reception conditions for vulnerable persons are offered by the state based on needs assessment (children's homes, shelters). Also there are temporary accommodation rooms in PBGB premises for asylum applicants in case they are unable to travel directly to the accommodation centre. These rooms include special conditions for applicants with small children (e.g. family room, toys).

There is one detention centre in Estonia located in Harku. Decision to detain is made by the Administrative Court only. An asylum seeker may be detained if the efficient application of the surveillance measures are impossible. The detention shall be in accordance with the principle of proportionality and upon detention the essential circumstances related to the asylum seeker shall be taken into account of in every single case.

Surveillance measures may be applied as an alternative to detention for the purposeful and efficient, simple and expedient conduct of asylum procedures.

Currently NGOs, international organisations and the state are providing asylum seekers and the beneficiaries of international protection a wide range of support services: health and psychological care, material aid, interpretation, language training, recreation activities, etc.

To ensure and further develop good reception conditions and social support it is essential (the list is non-exhaustive) to:

- set-up and improve administrative structures, systems, networks providing different services for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection;
- support services such as translation and interpretation, education, training, psychological and health care and other initiatives that contribute to humane reception conditions;
- provide material aid (financial support, medicines, clothing);
- support initiatives which ensure the current level of the accommodation infrastructure and improve it.

Adaptation as the first step and further integration

In Estonia, the MoI is responsible for facilitation of adaptation and the Ministry of Culture is responsible for integration of foreigners. The adaptation process is considered to be part of migration (first five years after arrival when the immigrant receives basic knowledge and skills to function in the country) policy and is the first step in further integrating in society, that is a process of being involved in society on a more profound and deeper level. Although, successful adaptation after arrival is key to further successful integration, these processes are not the same as adaptation does not mean instant integration.

In the year 2013 Estonia directed 4 501 894 euros towards integration from the state budget. Towards educational and cultural integration 1 855 514 euros, towards social and economic integration 1 596 411 euros, towards legal and political integration 312 506 euros and for administration of integration process 737 463 euros. 247 118 euros was directed towards providing adaptation services over the years 2013 and 2014.

The strategy “Integrating Estonia 2020” sets three aims: (1) shaping attitudes and values in society that facilitate integration, (2) enhancing the active participation of persons with undetermined citizenship in society via more citizenship acquisition and (3) supporting the adaptation and further integration of newly arrived migrants. State budgetary means in the period 2014-2017 towards persons with undetermined citizenship are planned to be in the sum of 1 271 895 euros and towards shaping attitudes and values in society, in the sum of 9 938 769 euros.

Adaptation as a first-step integration

According to the data of the PBGB, Estonia issued average of 2 340 temporary residence permits per year in 2010-2012. This enables to forecast that with the current migration flows, on average, 2 930 persons in one year will arrive to Estonia from third countries in 2015-2020. International protection was granted to an average of 14 persons a year in 2010-2012.

The adaptation services currently offered to newly arrived immigrants are a support person service and an adaptation programme, which are targeted at TCN who legally reside in Estonia, excluding EU citizens and the beneficiaries of international protection.

Different researches suggest that there is a need to offer more target group specific services to facilitate adaptation. Attention also should be given to communication aimed at target groups and strengthening the knowledge-based approach to policy development, implementation, monitoring and assessment in the field. It has been highlighted in various studies that newly arrived persons (both EU citizens and TCN) in Estonia encounter following problems:

1. lack of adaptation courses;
2. deficiency of practical information and (free of charge) language courses;
3. scarcity of opportunities to engage in social networks with Estonians;
4. limited possibilities for family members to acquire education, obtain qualification and find employment.

Under the AMIF, it is planned to change the current situation by providing adaptation services to newly arrived TCN, including beneficiaries of international protection (including persons that arrive through relocation and resettlement schemes). Still, larger part of the adaptation programme will be financed under the ESF.

Further integration

As migration flows to Estonia from third countries show, many newly arriving TCN are of similar cultural and language background as persons with undetermined citizenship who are poorly or little integrated. This brings upon the need to also engage the latter via AMIF. In the area of integration there are three main problems:

1. societal differences in values and attitudes;
2. differences in societal and labour market participation of Estonians, TCN-s and people with undetermined citizenship;
3. impeded naturalisation.

Although the main focus of the AMIF will be on newly arrived TCN, it is planned to carry out some activities which also aim to promote overall openness in society. Measures targeted at permanent residents under AMIF benefit also newly arrived TCN and are a prerequisite for the latter to effectively adapt and further integrate as the two processes are not feasible unless the host society is open and permissive. Taking into account the historical background, ethnic composition of persons with undetermined citizenship and newly arriving TCN of Estonia, the attention to long-term residents and society is vital.

Return

The migration pressure on the Estonia's external borders has remained stable over the last years. Through the years the number of irregular TCN detained in Estonia has been affected by the closeness of the Russian Federation which remains the main country of origin on the transit route via Estonia from east to west. However, in 2012 and 2013 there was noticeable increase in the number of irregular TCN from Asia (Vietnam) and Africa.

Irregular migration flows are expected to intensify in the coming years due to the political and economic situation in the EU neighbourhood countries. As the countries of origin of irregular TCN may vary, the return process is expected to become more expensive and time consuming.

Estonia transposed directive 2008/115/EC (Return Directive) to its national legislation in due time and the amendments to the Obligation to Leave and Prohibition on Entry Act (hereinafter referred to as OLPEA) entered into force on 24.12.2010. In order to achieve full conformity with the Return Directive requirements the draft law specifying the OLPEA was adopted on 12.02.2014. The draft law will become effective on 01.10.2014.

In 2013, Estonia ordered 614 perceptions to leave the country and carried out 248 removals. 17 TCN participated in the assisted voluntary and reintegration programme.

Harku detention centre was established in 2003 and it has accommodation capacity for 80 persons. In 2013, 88 TCN were detained in the detention centre. With the legislative amendment entering into force on 28.04.2013, unaccompanied minors will be not detained in the detention centre. They will be provided with substitute home service by the Social Insurance Board during their stay in Estonia.

The number of irregular TCN placed in the detention centre has increased within last two years remarkably. Therefore, it is important to improve and develop the detention conditions and services provided for irregular TCN. In order to ensure that decisions concerning return meet relevant international criteria, regular trainings and instructions to officials and other service providers should be continued. The future plans foresee partial provision of additional services, e.g. healthcare services and psychological counselling and accommodation services.

Since 2011, the Estonian Red Cross (ERC) has been contracted by the MoI to monitor forced returns of TCN. This includes being present when the authorities transfer persons from the Harku detention centre to the airport or the border of the target country as well as visiting the detainees in the detention centre on regular basis. The cooperation with international organisations has been very successful and ensured the transparency and humanity of the return process. The activities implemented by the IOM and ERC shall be continued.

Fair and effective return policy, contributing to countering irregular migration and with an emphasis on voluntary return and sustainability of return will be pursued. Efficient return policy also includes forced return. So far, removals and voluntary return have been partially funded under the European Return Fund. Expenses of detaining TCN have been covered from the state budget, including the maintenance of detention centre and services to detainees. From the state budget also the costs are covered for development and maintenance of IT systems, procurement of travel documents, determination of the age of TCN, translation expenses, costs of appeals against precept to leave, other surveillance measures and removals in a partil extent. Costs connected with the detention of irregular TCN reached over 500 000 euros in 2013.

The activities planned to be supported from the AMIF are in accordance with the 2014-2017 development plan of the governing area of the MoI and the draft of Internal Security Strategy 2015-2020.

3. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Specific objective	1 - Asylum
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The sub-objective of the Internal Security Strategy for 2015-2020 connected with migration policy sets two goals: (1) ensure necessary support and services for applicants of international protection and (2) provide services for beneficiaries of international protection that would establish prerequisites for adaptation and integration in Estonia. Additionally the development plan of the Ministry of Social Affairs for 2014-2017 foresees a measure to increase the capacity of reception centre to better cope with growing number of asylum seekers, increase flexibility in provision of services and inform local municipalities about the options available in connection with provision of assistance to beneficiaries of international protection.

The goals that are foreseen by EU regulations to strengthen and develop CEAS (e.g. directive 2013/32/EU, directive 2013/33/EU) will be met.

The main national objectives are:

- asylum application procedure is enhanced and easily accessible. Decisions are made quickly by trained professionals based on high-quality controlled data;
- asylum seekers have easy access to support services (e.g. interpretation, legal counselling and representation, recreation activities, etc.);
- beneficiaries of international protection have easy access to support services (e.g. personal advisors, recreation activities, language courses, etc.);
- asylum seekers have good reception conditions. Alternatives to detention are always considered;
- public's awareness about asylum matters has increased.

National objective	1 - Reception/asylum
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Goal: Asylum application procedure is enhanced and easily accessible. Decisions are made quickly by trained professionals based on high-quality controlled data.

Possible actions:

- existing databases updated and new IT-solutions to support information exchange developed (used only for purposes related to asylum procedure, by the relevant asylum authorities);
- equipment and licenses renewed or purchased to speed up the decision processes and provide high-quality data (used only for purposes related to asylum procedure, by the relevant asylum authorities);
- training for PGBG officials, NGOs, lawyers, judges, representatives of unaccompanied minors, etc. involved in asylum procedures in different topics (e.g. how to recognise potential asylum seekers, vulnerable groups; IT related trainings;

language courses, etc.). EASO training curriculum will be considered and some of the modules translated into Estonian;

- an instrument to identify vulnerable groups of asylum seekers will be developed, necessary help and support offered to such groups.

Goal: Asylum seekers have easy access to support services

Possible actions:

- high-quality interpretation, legal counselling and representation, health care and psychological counselling, recreation activities, etc. provided by the state, NGOs or international organisations;
- officials of local governments, teachers, NGOs, etc. trained on topics related to provision of support services.

Goal: Beneficiaries of international protection have easy access to support services

Possible actions:

- personal advisor network, recreation activities, language courses, etc. provided by the state, NGOs or international organisations;
- officials of local governments, teachers, NGOs, etc. trained on topics related to provision of support services;
- etc.

Goal: Asylum seekers have good reception conditions (accommodation, material aid, etc.).

Possible actions:

- initiatives which ensure the current level of the accommodation infrastructure and improve it will be supported.

Goal: public's knowledge about asylum matters has increased.

Possible actions:

- information campaigns;
- workshops for journalists, teachers, students, etc.

Additionally the state will continue financing following actions: ensuring temporary accommodation for asylum seekers in the PBGB facilities and in the accommodation centre (maintenance cost of the facilities, DA and transportation), issuing travel and identification documents, language and age expertise, services for victims of human trafficking, services for unaccompanied minors and sexually abused minors, maintenance costs of ICT.

Lists for possible actions both financed by AMIF and the state are non-exhaustive.

National objective	2 - Evaluation
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Under AMIF it is planned to finance:

- Studies that would support evaluation of the subject of asylum-seeking or contribute to the assessment of the current policy/practice in the field. EASO tool will be used;
- impact assessments (e.g. after information campaigns);
- Country of Origin Information related activities.

Additionally the **state will continue financing** empowerment of the development of asylum policy (e.g. trainings for officials, participation in asylum policy related meetings, etc.), implementation of the policy and surveillance measures.

The lists for possible actions both financed by AMIF and the state are non-exhaustive.

National objective	3 - Resettlement
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Costs related to resettlement will be covered under the state budget.

Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration
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The competitiveness strategy "Estonia 2020" aims at increasing the productivity and employment in Estonia. One of the measures to achieve this is to bring upon a coordinated talent policy in cooperation with different organisations in Estonia, aimed at international talent to come to Estonia to study or work. "The Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020" highlights the need to develop a supportive system and environment to ease adaptation. Priorities of the strategy of integration and social cohesion "Integrating Estonia 2020" are supporting the adaptation as first step if integration and further integration of newly arrived persons (national strategy includes both EU citizens and TCN), enhancing the active participation of persons with undetermined citizenship in society via more citizenship acquisition and new knowledge on society, and shaping attitudes and values in society that

facilitate integration. State funds are directed at providing a segment of public broadcasting services in English and Russian, raising awareness of minority cultures and providing funding for organisations in the field, language tuition, practical culture submersion, varieties cooperative initiatives, information provision, including obtaining citizenship etc.

In addition to the documents above, the Action Programme of the Government of the Republic 2014-2015 outlines the need to provide for a smart and knowledge-based immigration policy, which includes attention to highly qualified labour and students in order to increase the competitiveness of Estonia.

Also, the importance of supporting and creating a favourable environment for adaptation and further integration of persons of key importance for the development of Estonia through development of supporting services that provide practical information, knowledge of the Estonian society and state in general, language training and other support has been highlighted in other national strategies: “Guidelines for Development of Criminal Policy until 2018”, “Estonian Enterprise Policy 2007-2013”, "The Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020", and “Main guidelines of Estonia’s security policy until 2015”.

The funding priorities are connected with the services that facilitate the adaption as first step of integration processes of newly arrived TCN, and persons with undetermined citizenship, activities that are connected to analysing and gathering data for more knowledge-based policymaking, including evaluating services that will be offered to facilitate adaptation processes. Priorities also include activities that aim at enhancing the active involvement of TCN and persons with undetermined citizenship in society and the enhancement of overall openness and awareness to support the adaptation and further integration of new arrivals but also other members of society. Activities under the AMIF include both newly arrived TCN, including beneficiaries of international protection, and persons with undetermined citizenship.

National objective	1 - Legal migration
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Estonia does not plan to use AMIF for this objective.

Actions under national budget will be aimed at developing a coherent overview of roles of different actors and activities that are connected to migration policies. This includes developing national development plans (Talent Attraction and Retention, Internal Security). Also, an analysis is planned under the Ministry of the Interior working plan from state budgetary means to analyse and plan needed actions and measures in the field of legal migration.

National objective	2 - Integration
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal: Newly arrived immigrants are adapting to the Estonian society and are |
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active in the labour market and within society in general.

Possible action: Services that support the adaptation processes of newly arrived TCN-s are offered (welcome programme and basic (up to A1) level language training).

- **Goal: Participation of TCN and persons with undetermined citizenship in society has increased through individual and organisational joint activities.**

Possible action: Facilitation of participation of TCN in society (facilitation of cooperation between local municipalities and NGO-s, support of citizen education projects).

- **Goal: Awareness and tolerance in society with regard to TCN has increased.**

Possible action: Increasing awareness in society about TCN, increasing knowledge of TCN about Estonian society and support in creating a favourable environment for adaptation and integration (support for the development of common social values, audio-visual and printed media as well as online media projects).

The plan is to offer services that facilitate the adaptation process of TCN (e.g. welcome programme, information services). Active participation of people in society is also facilitated and society's awareness of TCN is increased, which among other things supports the creation of an environment that enables adaptation and integration.

National objective

3 - Capacity

Goal: Knowledge-based approach to development of migration and adaptation policies with regard to TCN is strengthened.

In order to strengthen the knowledge-based approach of migration and adaptation policies expert knowledge, monitoring and/or research will be used (that form the basis for well-defined migration strategies). When relevant, policy makers and other actors in the field will be engaged, training of officials, educators and consultants competent in intercultural communication will be supported. Since 2011 one of the subjects regularly monitored (once every three years) in the Integration Monitoring has been newly arrived TCN. Integration Monitoring is financed under the state budget. Under AMIF, the ability for deeper analysis of the newly arrived TCN will be developed, including collection of information about migration flows and tools for managing migration, development of respective strategies and analysis. As a result of these activities it is easier to understand migration flows, analyse migration management strategies, policies and measures as well as increase capacity in managing migration flows. Such management is becoming increasingly more effective resulting in more benefits for the Estonian state and economics. Migration policy efficiency and intercultural communication are facilitated by increasing competence of policy-makers, officials,

educators, etc. Actions aimed at TCNs will be covered under AMIF.

Under the AMIF, following activities are financed:

- Migration flows consisting of newly arrived TCN are analysed, studies of applicable strategies and actions are performed and (where necessary) new measures are developed (aimed at migration management, facilitation of adaptation and integration of newly arrived TCN);
- experts are involved in discussions, planning and evaluation of the effects and distribution of professional knowledge among policy-makers, general public, etc.

State budgetary means will be allocated to provide an overall view of migration flows and building more coherence between different policies, their evaluation and planning. These actions are included into the action plan of Talent Attraction and Retention (not yet finalized). Also, some activities will be covered by the development plan of Internal Security (not yet finalized).

Specific objective

3 - Return

The “Main guidelines of Estonia’s security policy until 2015” approved by the Parliament outline the common principles of security policy and long-term goals which the public, NGOs and private sectors must consider (as well as their role in helping to reach these goals). The important role among these goals is played by the activities aimed at prevention, fighting and discovering illegal immigration. The "Internal Security Strategy for 2015-2020" aims at decreasing of number of irregularly staying persons.

Efficient migration surveillance in Estonia is based on the integrated model of border control: internal and international cooperation provides for discovery and quick return of TCN with no legal grounds for stay in Estonia. In order to facilitate the return procedure Estonia has bilateral implementation protocols with almost every country that has concluded readmission agreements at the EU level. In addition, on 17 May 2013 the readmission agreement between Estonia and Kosovo* came into force along with the accompanying implementation protocol. Strengthening cooperation with third countries and the Schengen area, including participation in cooperation agreements and practical projects (training, joint projects), will remain the priority of Estonia in fighting illegal immigration for the years to come.

As illegal immigration is growing, the Action Plan of the Government of the Republic for 2011-2015 provides for creation of a joint detention centre for asylum seekers and persons subject to forced return. The completion date for the detention centre is set for 2018. According to the current plans, the detention centre will have 120 places. Until then, it is necessary to provide services to the target group in the current detention centre in Harku.

In accordance with the main priorities of the security policy during the next years it is planned to increase the participation of NGOs in return process. NGOs and an international organisation are already involved in implementation of assisted voluntary return and reintegration programme and monitoring of forced return operations. The amendments to the Victim Support Act and other related legal acts that came into force on 28 April 2013, allow the PBGB to find another partner to represent unaccompanied minors in return proceedings. The PBGB also plans to facilitate cooperation with private companies in the field of provision of return-related services (e.g. accommodation before and after return, translation services, medical care).

* this designation is without prejudice to positions on status, and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence

National objective	1 - Accompanying measures
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Under AMIF, the goal is to offer returnees broad range services and advice, including special assistance to vulnerable persons.

Possible actions:

- Providing accommodation for persons waiting for return outside the detention and who do not have means to cover the accommodation expenses themselves;
- providing medical and psychological assistance to persons in detention and returnees outside the detention;
- providing translation service to ensure timely availability of translators from less frequent languages into Estonian. (The number of persons who are not proficient in either English or Russian languages is continuously growing.) Estonia participates in the pilot project on remote interpretation services which is funded under the Union actions. The service under the pilot project is effective for the first procedures or for the identification of a person. For longer interviews with the target group there is a need to use local translation services or services available in the region;
- improvement of conditions in the detention centre along with the provision of services (including development of leisure activities) thus ensuring proper treatment of persons in the centre. If necessary, detention infrastructure will be maintained and improved;
- implementation of a monitoring system of forced return and involvement an independent organisation for monitoring activities.

Under the state budget following activities are covered: investments in the detention of irregular migrants (incl. maintenance of detention centre, costs for migrants in the detention centre (e.g. medical care etc.), salaries for staff engaged in the return process, development of IT-systems, preparation of return (incl. procurement of travel documents), translation costs partly, implementing the requirements of the Return Directive (except for monitoring of the forced return operations) etc.

The lists for possible actions both financed by AMIF and the state are non-exhaustive.

National objective

2 - Return measures

A prerequisite for smooth return is the performance of necessary procedures, e.g. identification of TCN, searching for family members, where necessary, and preparation of travel documents.

The goal **under the AMIF** is to support voluntary return and reintegration of TCN in the country of origin. Since 2009, voluntary assisted return and reintegration programme has been financed from the European Return Fund. It is necessary to develop the existing programme and broaden the range of services offered. It is of primary importance to be able to offer relevant and high-quality services to returnees, including counselling on voluntary return and reintegration opportunities, medical care, special support for vulnerable persons, assistance in preparation of travel and obtaining necessary documents, limited financial assistance (cash incentives), accommodation before and after return etc. In order to provide for sustainability of return it is necessary to help people to reintegrate in the country of origin. Where necessary, returnees are provided with family tracing and other required services. Another important subject is providing information on voluntary return to the potential target groups and to staff of competent authorities.

Forced return is a part of effective return policy. **Under the AMIF**, forced return operations will be financed in part. In addition to the organisation of travel for forced return operations, it is important to offer necessary assistance to the target group, including limited financial assistance to cover primary expenses after the return as well as to provide special support to vulnerable persons. Support for forced return and provision of limited financial support to removed persons. Where necessary, target group is provided with other services (e.g. medical aid etc.). Additional assistance is offered to vulnerable persons. Actions under the AMIF are additional to those financed under the state budget.

Following activities are covered **under the state budget** (the list is not entire): preparation of return operations (identification of TCN, procurement of travel documents, family tracing, partly removal operations, assistance for TCN who return voluntarily beyond of the assisted voluntary return programme etc.

National objective

3 - Cooperation

Among the prerequisites of efficient return policy is a swift cooperation with the EU Member States and third countries. Return process can be accelerated and its success can be ensured through efficient cooperation with countries of origin. In order to achieve the goal it is

necessary to create new and strengthen the existing contacts in both the EU Member States and third countries.

Under the AMIF the goal here is to share experience and best practices, simplify information exchange between competent authorities, assist in obtaining travel documents and ensure proper reception of the removed person in the country of origin. Possible actions are: joint seminars, visits, etc. Necessary studies are performed in order to ensure further development of return policies, if needed.

Under the state budget following actions are covered: cooperation activities between the Estonian and Russian border representatives to carry out return procedures under the accelerated procedure, and bilateral cooperation with third countries to facilitate the implementation of the readmission agreements and implementing protocols.

Specific action

5 - Joint return

1. EURINT Network

Goal: Increase the commitment of third countries towards return and improve the operational cooperation among EU MS and EU agencies, as well as the sharing of best practices in the area of identification of migrants and implementation of joint return operations

Estonia will participate in the activities of the EURINT-Network in the following ways:

- Designating one NCP that participates in the SGC's and operates as communication-hub towards the competent national services that need to be included in the events organized by the network;
- chairing or participating in the third country oriented Third Country Working Groups, by delegating the right experts to this working groups, holding decisive power to agree on common actions and strategies;
- chairing or participating in the defined actions (incoming/outgoing missions/task forces);
- chairing or participating in the workshops for field-practitioners;
- actively contributing to the operational information exchange via the FOSS;
- co-financing the EURINT-Network.

2. EURLO - European Return Liaison Officers.

Goal: Increase the number of joint return operations on identification and return and improve the country of origin focused, comprehensive operational cooperation on return

amongst EU/EFTA MS, EU Commission, partner authorities in Third countries, Frontex, International Organizations and NGO's

Estonia will participate in the EU-RLO Specific Action by:

- Participating in the EU-RLO Steering Group;
- designating/deploying staff that will act as EU-RLO, and take up the necessary national procedures for these deployments. Narrative reporting of the deployed activities will be ensured via standardized formats;
- ensuring the correct administrative and financial follow-up towards the EU-RLO secretariat;
- co-financing the action (by financial contributions or by providing nationally paid capacity as EU-RLO).

Specific objective

4 - Solidarity

On 9th of June 2015 the Estonian Government approved the voluntary contribution to the relocation and resettlement that would be in accordance with capacity, population and GDP proportion in the EU and adopted the preliminary action plan on 8th of August 2015. The aim of the action plan is to ensure Estonia's readiness to relocate and resettle persons in clear need of international protection by mapping relocation and resettlement capabilities, describing and planning necessary actions and resources.

On 2nd of October 2015 Estonia signed a declaration with Italy and will send Liaison Officers and if necessary interpreters to Italy to prepare the relocation.

National objective

1 - Relocation

Relocated persons are entitled to all activities that are foreseen for beneficiaries of international protection and that is why language training, integration programme, support person service etc will be reported either under asylum or integration part. All pre-departure costs will be covered from the state budget.

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Specific Objective	NO/SA	Main action	Name of action	Start of planning phase	Start of implementation phase	Start of closing phase
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	1	High quality reception services for asylum seekers	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	2	High quality support services for asylum seekers and beneficiaries of international protection	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	3	Capacity building	2014	2015	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	1	Studies	2016	2016	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	2	Impact assessment	2017	2017	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO2 - Evaluation	3	Evaluations	2017	2017	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO3 - Resettlement	1	Resettlement	2015	2016	2018
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	1	Implementation of the adaptation programme	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	2	Facilitation of participation of TCN and persons with undetermined citizenship in the Estonian socie	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	3	Increasing awareness in the society about TCN	2014	2015	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	1	Analysis and studies on migration flows	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	2	Analysis and studies on newly arrived immigrants	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	3	Capacity enhancing activities aimed at officials, policy makers, experts, etc.	2015	2016	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	1	Services to the returnees (incl. improvement of conditions in detention centre)	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	2	Trainings for staff of competent authorities	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	3	Monitoring of forced return operations	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	1	Implementation of assisted voluntary return	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	2	Implementation of reintegration	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	3	Implementation of forced return operations	2014	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO3 - Cooperation	1	Implementation of cooperation with EU member states	2015	2016	2022
SO3 - Return	NO3 - Cooperation	2	Implementation of cooperation with third-countries	2015	2016	2022
SO3 - Return	NO3 - Cooperation	3	Studies/analyses in the field of return	2015	2016	2022
SO4 - Solidarity	NO1 - Relocation	1	Relocation form Italy	2015	2016	2018
SO4 - Solidarity	NO1 - Relocation	2	Relocation from Greece	2015	2016	2018

4. SPECIAL CASES

4.1 Resettlement

Justification of the number of persons to be resettled

On 9 June 2015 the Estonian Government approved the participation in resettlement and relocation programmes. Estonia is taking action based on the Conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the Representatives of the Governments of the MSs meeting within the Council on resettling through multilateral or national schemes 20.000 persons in clearer need of international protection and COM Recommendation of 8 June 2015 on a European resettlement scheme, the Council Decision (EU) 1015/1523 of 14 Sept 2015 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of IT and GR and the Council Decision (EU) 2015/1601 of 22 Sept 2015 establishing provisional measures in the area of international protection for the benefit of IT and GR.

On 7 Nov 2016 the additional pledge to resettle 160 persons was submitted ((EU) 2016/1754).

The new pledge received the Government Decision on 14 Dec 2017 and the Parliament's European Union Affairs Committee confirmed it on 19 Jan 2018.

Pledging plan

Vulnerable groups and Common Union resettlement priorities (Lump Sum 10 000€ per person resettled)	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Women and children at risk		15	
Unaccompanied minors		5	
Syrian refugees in the region			80
Total union priorities		20	80
Grand total		20	80

4.2 Transfer & relocation

	From	To	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Transfer		Estonia	0		
Relocation (2015/1523)	Greece	Estonia	0	52	
Relocation (2015/1523)	Italy	Estonia	0	78	
Relocation (2015/1601)	Greece	Estonia	0	152	
Relocation (2015/1601)	Italy	Estonia	0	47	

4.3 Admission from Turkey (2016/1754)

Pledging plan: Number of persons to be admitted from Turkey per pledging period

	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Admission		160	

5. COMMON INDICATORS AND PROGRAMME SPECIFIC INDICATORS

Specific objective		1 - Asylum			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	
C1 - Number of target group persons provided with assistance through projects in the field of reception and asylum systems supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	650.00	Project reporting	
C2.1 - Capacity (i.e. number of places) of new reception accommodation infrastructure set up in line with the minimum requirements for reception conditions set out in the EU acquis and of existing reception accommodation infrastructure improved in line with the same requirements as a result of the projects supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	20.00	Project reporting	
C2.2 - The percentage in the total reception accommodation capacity	%	0.00	25.00	Project reporting	
C3.1 - Number of persons trained in asylum-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	500.00	Project reporting	
C3.2 - That number as a percentage of the total number of staff trained in those topics	%	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C4 - Number of country of origin information products and fact-finding missions conducted with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate asylum policies in Member States	Number	0.00	3.00	Project reporting	
C6 - Number of persons resettled with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	260.00	Authority in charge of transferring the persons	

Specific objective		2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	
C1 - Number of target group persons who participated in pre-departure measures supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C2 - Number of target group persons assisted by this Fund through integration measures in the framework of national, local and regional strategies	Number	0.00	3,000.00	Project reporting	
C3 - Number of local, regional and national policy frameworks/measures/tools in place for the integration of third country nationals and involving civil society, migrant communities as well as all other relevant stakeholders, as a result of the measures supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	2.00	Project reporting	
C4 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on integration of third-country nationals supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate integration policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting	

Specific objective		3 - Return			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	
C1 - Number of persons trained on return-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	120.00	Project reporting	
C2 - Number of returnees who received pre or post return reintegration assistance co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	105.00	Project reporting	
C3 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who returned voluntarily	Number	0.00	210.00	Project reporting	
C4 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who were removed	Number	0.00	310.00	Project reporting	
C5 - Number of monitored removal operations co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	250.00	Project reporting	
C6 - Number of projects supported under the Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate return policies in Member States	Number	0.00	1.00	Project reporting	

Specific objective		4 - Solidarity			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	
C1 - Number of applicants transferred from one Member State to another with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Authority in charge of relocation	
C2 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on enhancing solidarity and responsibility sharing between the Member States supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	

6. FRAMEWORK FOR PREPARATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME BY THE MEMBER STATE

6.1 Partnership involvement in the preparation of the programme

The MoI is responsible for involving several partners into the preparation of the multiannual programme. The partners are, primarily, the ministries leading or acting in the particular field or other state authorities. Non-governmental and international organisations are also involved in the preparation of the programme. The above organisations mostly receive support from the fund, this is why it is important to avoid conflict of interests and ensure equal opportunity for all.

The MoI has convened a working group composed of representatives of the ministries acting in the area (the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Education and Research) and the PBGB. The aim of the working group has been to identify national needs and objectives with regard to the fund's objectives and eligible activities. On the basis of submitted proposals the MoI has drafted the multiannual programme. The draft was published on the website of the MoI in June 2013 and all organisations active in the field have been able to submit their opinions and proposals. The draft was also sent by email to the major non-governmental and international organisations. Proposals were submitted to the MoI and answers of the ministry were published on the website. The partners are also involved in the implementation of the programme.

6.2 Monitoring Committee

A monitoring committee will be established in order to implement the multiannual programme. The tasks may involve participation in the selection of the beneficiaries and projects for co-financing and – where necessary – support of responsible authority in preparation for the implementation of the programme measures and evaluation of the results. The tasks of the committees participating in the implementation of the programme are described in the procedural rules of the fund. The committee consists of partners (e.g. other ministries etc.).

6.3 Common monitoring and evaluation framework

The system of the fund's monitoring and evaluation is similar to that from the previous period. The responsible authority will monitor co-financed projects ensuring that expenditure declared for projects has actually been incurred and complies with Union and national rules. In addition, on-the-spot visits to the final beneficiaries will be carried out. Responsible authority regularly collects monitoring information and data on indicators from projects.

The goal of the evaluation is to provide expert assessment on the results, influence and efficiency of the implementation both in Estonia and on the EU level in general. Where necessary, the MoI performs procurement in order to find an independent external evaluator.

Project implementers are obliged to submit activity and financial reports on projects to the responsible authority regularly. The system of the fund's monitoring and evaluation will be described in the procedural rules of the fund.

6.4 Partnership involvement in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national programme

Involvement of partners in the process of the implementation of the program takes place as needed; any possibility of conflict of interest is avoided. The respective ministries are involved in the preparation of measures planned for the program, their implementation and evaluation of results. Non-governmental and international organisations are involved as needed. The responsible authority ensures that while various organisations are involved conflicts of interest are avoided and transparency and equal treatment of the parties are ensured.

6.5 Information and Publicity

The responsible authority provides information on fund and ensures transparency of co-funding. The website of the MoI (www.siseministeerium.ee) informs applicants, beneficiaries and the general public about co-funding possibilities, including the multiannual program, calls for project proposals, co-funded projects, etc. In case of open calls for project proposals special information events are arranged for applicants. Precise informing requirements for beneficiaries are indicated in grant agreements.

6.6 Coordination and complementarity with other instruments

The responsible authority ensures consistency and complementarity of co-funding obtained from the fund and other internal and European funding sources. For this purpose the authority coordinates cooperation and information exchange with other funds that are expected to finance similar activities. Primarily cooperation is performed with authorities responsible for the measures supported by the European Social Fund, such as the Ministry of Culture that is responsible for integration matters in Estonia. Coordination is needed especially in respect of the adaptation program aimed at newly arrived TCN as it will be financed both under the AMIF and ESF. The MoI is responsible for developing, implementation and evaluation of the adaption programme. Where necessary, sectorial working groups for the exchange of information between various authorities.

Regarding the actions in the third countries, only reintegration assistance for returning TCN are planned under the AMIF. Cooperation with other EU member states and EU delegations will be developed in this area, if necessary.

6.7 Beneficiaries

6.7.1 List of five main types of beneficiaries of the programme

State authorities

Local public bodies

Non-Governmental organisations

International public organisations

Education/research organisations

6.7.2 Direct award (if applicable)

The responsible authority does not launch open call for project proposals for the implementation of activities, where certain institutions de jure possess monopoly for particular activities. Direct support is also provided for projects that last for several years as well as for projects selected during earlier competitions or procurements.

Under the national specific objective on integration partly the grants will be allocated directly to the project implementers. Several partner organisations have been involved in developing of the adaption programme for newly arrived TCN. Since there is limited number of service providers with previous experience and necessary capacity, the grant will be given to the final beneficiary for implementation of the programme directly. The process of selection of projects that are entitled to receive direct support is described in the procedural rules of the fund.

7. THE FINANCING PLAN OF THE PROGRAMME

Table 1: AMIF Financial plan

Specific objective / national objective / specific action	Total
SO1.NO1 Reception/asylum	2,512,087.00
SO1.NO2 Evaluation	52,000.00
SO1.NO3 Resettlement	0.00
TOTAL SO1 Asylum	2,564,087.00
SO2.NO1 Legal migration	0.00
SO2.NO2 Integration	3,146,482.60
SO2.NO3 Capacity	289,873.27
TOTAL SO2 Integration/legal migration	3,436,355.87
SO3.NO1 Accompanying measures	910,000.00
SO3.NO2 Return measures	2,918,601.65
SO3.NO3 Cooperation	30,000.00
TOTAL NO SO3 Return	3,858,601.65
SO3.SA5 Joint return	0.00
TOTAL SA SO3 Return	0.00
TOTAL SO3 Return	3,858,601.65
SO4.NO1 Relocation	0.00
TOTAL SO4 Solidarity	0.00
Technical assistance	1,613,810.48
TOTAL Special Cases	4,014,000.00
TOTAL	15,486,855.00

Table 2: Special case pledges

Special case pledges	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Resettlement total			100,000.00	100,000.00	266,667.00	266,667.00	266,666.00	1,000,000.00
Relocation (2015/1523) total	0.00	0.00	390,000.00	390,000.00				780,000.00
Relocation (2015/1601) total	0.00	0.00	597,000.00	597,000.00				1,194,000.00
MS Relocation total								0.00
Transfer total	0.00	0.00						0.00
Admission from Turkey(2016/1754) total			520,000.00	520,000.00				1,040,000.00
TOTAL	0.00	0.00	1,607,000.00	1,607,000.00	266,667.00	266,667.00	266,666.00	4,014,000.00

Table 3: Total Annual EU commitments (in €)

The annual EU commitments are not yet available for this national programme version. They will be set during acceptance of the national programme version.

Justification for any deviation from the minimum shares set in the Specific Regulations

Documents

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
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Latest validation results

Severity	Code	Message
Info		Programme version has been validated.
Warning	2.15	New EC decision is required for versions > 1. New EC decision is required when fields belonging to the EC decision are modified/added/removed. These fields are all fields except those used in the Authorities section and the Management and Control System field. For the Financial Plan, amounts within a Specific Objective can be modified without the need for a new EC Decision, as long as the total per Specific Objective stays the same.