



EMN FOCUSED STUDY

INTEGRATION OF BENEFICIARIES OF INTERNATIONAL/HUMANITARIAN PROTECTION INTO THE LABOUR MARKET IN ESTONIA: POLICIES AND GOOD PRACTICES

Tallinn, January 2016

1 DEFINITIONS

The following key terms are used in the Common Template. The definitions are taken from the EMN Glossary v3.0¹ unless specified otherwise in footnotes.

Support measures to access to housing: in the context of this Study, support measures for access to housing include those measures that facilitate finding accommodation for those who cannot find it themselves. This could include social housing, state funded housing in the private sector, provision of financial resources to access housing etc.

Asylum: A form of protection given by a State on its territory, based on the principle of non-refoulement and internationally or nationally recognised refugee rights and which is granted to a person who is unable to seek protection in their country of citizenship and / or residence, in particular for fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

Asylum seeker: In the global context, a person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than their own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments. In the EU context, a person who has made an application for protection under the Geneva Convention in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken.

Applicant for international protection: means a third-country national or a stateless person who has made an application for international protection in respect of which a final decision has not yet been taken

Application for asylum: An application made by a foreigner or a stateless person which can be understood as a request for protection under the Geneva Convention of 1951 or national refugee law.

Application for international protection: A request made by a third-country national or a stateless person for protection from a Member State, who can be understood to seek refugee status or subsidiary protection status, and who does not explicitly request another kind of protection, outside the scope of Directive 2011/95/EU, that can be applied for separately.

Beneficiary of international protection: means a person who has been granted refugee status or subsidiary protection status

Counselling: in the context of this Study, counselling is understood as different types of counselling in order to specifically support refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection to access employment. This could include counselling for trauma as well as other specific problems relating to the status of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection where this may present a barrier, but could also include counselling to assist in job readiness preparation and support.

Geneva Convention: means the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees done at Geneva on 28 July 1951, as amended by the New York Protocol of 31 January 1967

Guaranteed minimum resources refers to benefits provided to people with insufficient resources. It includes support for destitute and vulnerable persons to help alleviate poverty or assist in difficult situations (Source: ESSPROS Manual, 2008 Edition, Eurostat).

Durable solutions: Any means by which the situation of refugees can be satisfactorily and permanently resolved to enable them to live normal lives.

Education: education in the context of this Study refers to education that has a direct link to employment, for example, by providing support for the development of higher-level (non-vocational) skills.

Employed persons are persons aged 15 year and over (16 and over in ES, IT, UK and SE (1995-2001); 15-74 years in DK, EE, HU, LV, FI and SE (from 2001 onwards); 16-74 in IS and NO), who during the reference week performed work, even for just one hour a week, for pay, profit or family gain, or, who were not at work but had a job or business from which they were temporarily absent because of, e.g., illness, holidays, industrial dispute or education and training. (Source: Eurostat)

Humanitarian protection: a person covered by a decision granting authorisation to stay for humanitarian reasons under national law concerning international protection by administrative or judicial bodies. It includes persons who are not

¹ Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/emn-glossary-en-version.pdf

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eligible for international protection as currently defined in the Qualifications Directive ([Directive 2011/95/EU](#)) but are nonetheless protected against removal under the obligations that are imposed on all Member States by international refugee or human rights instruments or on the basis of principles flowing from such instruments. [...] persons granted a permission to stay for humanitarian reasons but who have not previously applied for international protection are not included under this concept.”

Inactive persons are those who are not in the labour force so are neither classified as employed nor as unemployed. This category therefore does not include job-seekers. ([Source](#): Eurostat)

Integration: In the EU context, a dynamic, two-way process of mutual accommodation by all immigrants and residents of Member States.

International protection: In the global context, the actions by the international community on the basis of international law, aimed at protecting the fundamental rights of a specific category of persons outside their countries of origin, who lack the national protection of their own countries. In the EU context, protection that encompasses refugee status and subsidiary protection status.

Orientation courses: Orientation courses typically provide factual information about the country of destination but may also aim to foster positive attitudes for successful adaptation in the long run. These could include opportunities for migrants to gain (and practice) the necessary skills needed to facilitate their integration and to develop helpful attitudes including pro-activity, self-sufficiency and resourcefulness (knowing how to find the information they are seeking); skills include knowing how to conduct oneself in certain situations, time management and goal-setting, as well as being able to navigate complex systems including banking, social, health and emergency services, transportation etc. ([Source](#): IOM Best Practices IOM's migrant training and pre-departure orientation programmes).

Refugee: In the global context, either a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned before, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it. In the EU context, either a third-country national who, owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group, is outside the country of nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail themselves of the protection of that country, or a stateless person, who, being outside of the country of former habitual residence for the same reasons as mentioned above, is unable or, owing to such fear, unwilling to return to it, and to whom Art. 12 (Exclusion) of Directive 2011/95/EU does not apply.

Refugee status: The recognition by a Member State of a third-country national or stateless person as a refugee.

Residence permit: means any permit or authorisation issued by the authorities of a Member State in the form provided for under that State's law, allowing a third-country national or stateless person to reside on its territory

Self-employed persons are persons who are the sole or joint owner of an unincorporated enterprise (one that has not been incorporated i.e. formed into a legal corporation) in which he/she works, **unless** they are also in paid employment which is their main activity (in that case, they are considered to be employees). Self-employed people also include unpaid family workers; outworkers (who work outside the usual workplace, such as at home); and workers engaged in production done entirely for their own final use or own capital formation, either individually or collectively. ([Source](#): Eurostat)

Subsidiary protection status: recognition by a Member State of a third-country national or a stateless person as a person eligible for subsidiary protection;

Person eligible for subsidiary protection: a third-country national or a stateless person who does not qualify as a refugee but in respect of whom substantial grounds have been shown for believing that the person concerned, if returned to his or her country of origin, or in the case of a stateless person, to his or her country of former habitual residence, would face a real risk of suffering serious harm and is unable or, owing to such risk, unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country;

Unemployed persons are persons aged 15-74 (in ES, IT, SE (1995-2000), UK, IS and NO: 16-74), who were without work during the reference week, but currently available for work, or who were either actively seeking work in the past four weeks or who had already found a job to start within the next three months. ([Source](#): Eurostat)

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United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees: The refugee agency of the United Nations (UN) mandated to lead and coordinate international action to protect refugees and resolve refugee problems worldwide, and to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees.

Vocational education and training (VET)²: Education and training which aims to equip people with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on the labour market.

² CEDEFOP Terminology of European Education and Training Policy Second Edition 2014

Top-line “Factsheet” (National Contribution)

The study 'Integration of Beneficiaries of International/humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market in Estonia' is aimed at gathering information on labour market policies implemented in Estonia for the successful integration of beneficiaries of international protection (hereinafter: the BIPs) into the national labour market. This study also provides an overview of national labour market legislation and practice as well as related authorities in the context of the integration of beneficiaries of international protection.

The study covers the period of 2010-2014. During this period Estonia granted international protection to 68 individuals, acceding thus in total 16% of all applications for international protection (the number of applications totalled 417)³. Positive decisions included 54 decisions on granting the refugee status and 14 decisions on granting the subsidiary protection status. Protection is not granted in Estonia on humanitarian grounds. Top nationalities among those who were granted international protection in Estonia in 2010-2014 include Sudanese nationals (8), Russian nationals (7), Syrian nationals (6) and Afghan nationals (6). Top nationalities among the beneficiaries of subsidiary protection include Afghan nationals (5) and Russian nationals (4).⁴

Third country nationals with established refugee status or subsidiary protection status are granted international protection in Estonia and they receive a temporary residence permit that allows them to work in Estonia on the same grounds as permanent residents. Consequently, beneficiaries of international protection do not need a separate permit for work and can have immediate access to the labour market in Estonia. During their stay in Estonia, the BIPs are entitled to receive state pensions, family support, employment services and employment subsidies, social benefits and other assistance on the same grounds as permanent residents of Estonia. In addition, local authorities may pay subsistence benefits to the BIPs on the same grounds as to other permanent residents whose financial status does not allow him or her to support himself or herself. The BIPs have to register their residence with local authorities in order to receive available social benefits.

In order to receive any available employment services and employment subsidies, each beneficiary of international protection must register himself or herself as an unemployed or a job-seeker with the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund offers all services to the BIPs on the same grounds as to permanent residents of Estonia, however, taking into account that such persons may have certain obstacles (language barrier, economic and cultural barriers, traumas, advisory needs, etc.), the Fund tries to mitigate these obstacles by supporting their employment through various services.⁵ E.g. various services are provided to the BIPs in English and Russian. The Fund draws up an individual job search plan for each client and offers all necessary services to the BIPs based on these plans. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund also provides Estonian language courses, if necessary.

Although Estonia has not developed any specific measures for the integration of beneficiaries of international protection into the national labour market, the state has established several measures that are focused specifically to the BIPs, with an aim to support their adaptation in Estonia, including their subsistence in the territory of the local government, covering their costs for up to two years as following: i) the rental and accessory expenses of the dwelling granted for use to a BIP and once the expenses related to the conclusion of the rental contract with the private owner within two years; ii) the repair costs of the social housing granted for use to a BIP; iii) the cost of furnishing of the dwelling

³ Based on the data of the PBGB (as at 8 January 2016), 821 individuals applied for asylum during the period of 1997-2015, 172 individuals thereof were granted international protection.

⁴ PBGB statistics as at 6 November 2015

⁵ Letter in reply of 23 November 2015 of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund to the EMN Estonian contact point

granted for use to a BIP; iv) the costs of the Estonian language learning offered to the BIP; v) the cost of translation services offered to a BIP. These costs are covered from the state budget.

Various authorities are involved in supporting the integration of the BIPs in Estonia, i.e. in supporting their integration into the labour market in Estonia: several ministries on the legislative level – Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Social Affairs, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education and Research. Also various authorities on the service provider level – the Police and Border Guard Board (hereinafter: the PBGB) that is engaged in international protection procedures and is responsible for the granting, renewal and revocation of residence permits (under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior), the Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers (hereinafter: the Vao Centre) that is responsible for the accommodation of applicants for international protection and the BIPs (under the auspices of the Ministry of the Social Affairs), the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund that is responsible for providing employment services (also under the auspices of the Ministry of the Social Affairs), the SA Archimedes – the Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre that is responsible for the recognition of qualifications (under the auspices of the Ministry of Education and Research), and Estonian office of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) that offers adaptation courses (adaptation courses are co-financed by the Ministry of the Interior and EU funds). Social and economic support is provided by local authorities. Adaptation support is provided by various non-profit associations, such as the Johannes Mihkelson Centre (co-financed by the Ministry of the Interior and EU funds) and the Estonian Refugee Council, offering the support person service. A centrally coordinated network⁶ consisting of about 60 support persons is operating all across the Estonia.

The Vao Centre that provides also accommodation to the applicants for international protection is the initial source of vital information for the BIPs to adapt in Estonia, including the information on housing, job searching, support person service, educational prospects, medical care, social services, etc. Since 2015, the Vao Centre assists both the applicants for international protection as well as the BIPs in finding a job (assistance is provided in various stages starting from the compiling of CVs and ending with interviews by potential employers). Applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection who live elsewhere can also receive information on applicable support services from afore-mentioned service providers, including the PBGB, during international protection procedures (especially when a person is informed about his or her respective rights and responsibilities).

Experts who were interviewed in the course of this study noted that the BIPs were highly motivated to work in Estonia and that they were also interested in learning Estonian language. The BIPs are mostly employed in production and service areas in Estonia.

Estonia does not collect separate statistical data on the access of the BIPs to employment-related measures, such as employment services and employment subsidies, or on social benefits paid to the BIPs. While both employment services and subsidies as well as social benefits offered to the BIPs are the same as those offered to permanent residents of Estonia, they are included in general statistical data.

⁶ The network consists of the support persons employed by the Johannes Mihkelson Centre and the volunteers of the Estonian Refugee Council

Section 1: Accessing the labour market: residence permits and the legal right to access the labour market

Q1 Please provide a brief overview of the legal and policy framework and practices concerning residence rights and labour market access rights granted to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection, linking the (type of) residence permit granted to labour market access rights⁷. Please distinguish and highlight any differences between the type of residence permit and accompanying labour market access rights between those granted to: a) refugees; b) beneficiaries of subsidiary protection, and; c) persons granted humanitarian protection

According to the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens⁸, foreign nationals with established refugee status or subsidiary protection status are granted international protection in Estonia and they receive a temporary residence permit. Protection is not granted in Estonia on humanitarian grounds.

*Refugees receive a residence permit for **three years** and this residence permit may be extended for additional three years each time if the circumstances due to which the residence permit was issued have not ceased to exist. Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection receive a residence permit for **a year** and this residence permit may be extended for additional two years if the circumstances due to which the residence permit was issued have not ceased to exist.⁹*

*A BIP can apply for a long-term residence permit, if he or she has permanently resided in Estonia for at least **five years** prior lodging the application for this residence permit. The period of prior permanent residence in Estonia shall include the residence as an applicant for international protection and the permanent residence as a beneficiary of international protection in Estonia.¹⁰*

Foreign nationals who have been granted international protection in Estonia may work in Estonia on the same grounds as permanent residents of Estonian and they do not need a separate permit for work.¹¹ The PBGB issues a residence permit to a BIP in a form of a residence card that includes the statement 'Lubatud töötada' (Employment allowed). In addition, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not differentiated in relation to their access to Estonian labour market. Foreign nationals who are in possession of a long-term residence permit in Estonia do not need a separate permit for employment and entrepreneurship in Estonia.¹²

However, the Civil Service Act¹³ provides a specific exception in this respect – according to the Civil Service Act only Estonian citizens and citizens of EU Member States may be employed in civil service in Estonia. Also, the Civil Service Act includes a list of occupations¹⁴ that may only be filled by a citizen of the Republic of Estonia.

All persons employed in Estonia must be entered to the employment register of the Estonian Tax and Customs Board. Employers have the obligation to register all employments of physical persons that lead to tax liability in Estonia, irrespective of the specific form or duration of the employment contract.¹⁵

⁷ Please only report on the labour market access rights linked to first residence permits and renewals – see Art. 24 recast Qualification Directive (excluding permanent residence and citizenship permits).

⁸ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26](#) (RT I 2006, 2, 3), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 37, 38, 39

⁹ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26](#) (RT I 2006, 2, 3), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 37, 38, 39

¹⁰ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 232 paragraph 1 point 1 and 2²

¹¹ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 5 - a permanent resident is an Estonian citizen residing in Estonia or an alien residing in Estonia who holds a long-term resident's residence permit in Estonia or a permanent right of residence

¹² [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 231 paragraph 3

¹³ [RT I, 06.07.2012, 1](#), the Civil Service Act, Art. 14 paragraph 1, 2

¹⁴ Certain positions, such as posts related to the directing of the authorities, the exercise of state supervision, the national defence and judicial power, the processing of state secrets or classified information of foreign states, the representing of public prosecution or diplomatic representation of the state, and the posts in which an official has the right, in order to guarantee public order and security, to restrict the fundamental rights and freedom of a person, may only be filled by Estonian citizens. The Public Service Act, Art. 14 paragraph 2

¹⁵ Estonian Tax and Customs Board: <http://www.emta.ee/?lang=en>

Q2. This question serves to collect comparative information on the national legal/policy framework on residence permits granted to refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection, indicating their duration (by law and in practice) as well as the conditions for applying for permanent residence and citizenship.

Please complete the table below, distinguishing between refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and humanitarian protection.

Table 1 Residence permits granted to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and persons granted humanitarian protection

	Refugees	Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection	Beneficiaries of humanitarian protection	Comments
Minimum duration of residence permit (by law)	<i>Beneficiaries of refugee status receive a residence permit for three years.</i>	<i>Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status receive a residence permit for a year.</i>	-	
Maximum duration (including renewals ¹⁶) residence permit in months/years (by law)	<i>The PBGB may renew a residence permit of a refugee for additional three years if the circumstances due to which the residence permit was issued have not ceased to exist and no circumstance exists which constitutes the basis for revocation thereof.</i>	<i>The PBGB may renew a residence permit of a beneficiary of subsidiary protection status for additional two years if the circumstances due to which the residence permit was issued have not ceased to exist and no circumstance exists which constitutes the basis for revocation thereof.</i>		
Mean length of residence permit ¹⁷ in months/years (in practice)	<i>Beneficiaries of refugee status receive a residence permit for three years. The number of renewals is unlimited.</i>	<i>Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection status receive a residence permit for a year. The number of renewals is unlimited.</i>		
After how many years of authorised stay can an application for permanent	<i>A person can apply for a long-term residence permit, if he or she has permanently resided in Estonia for at least five years prior lodging the application. As an exception, the period of prior permanent residence in Estonia shall include the residence as an applicant for international</i>		-	

¹⁶ Including possible renewal (but excluding permanent residence permits and permits granted after application for citizenship)

¹⁷ First residence permit including possible renewal (excluding permanent residence permits and permits granted after application for citizenship)

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residence be made?	<i>protection and the permanent residence as a beneficiary of international protection in Estonia.¹⁸</i>		
What are the conditions for permanent residence?	<p><i>Long-term residence permit is granted to foreign nationals who meet the following conditions in addition to the requirement of permanent residence in Estonia stated in the previous paragraph:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>possession of a valid residence;</i> • <i>possession of permanent legal income for subsistence in Estonia¹⁹;</i> • <i>possession of a valid health insurance cover;</i> • <i>adherence to the integration requirement²⁰;</i> • <i>registration in the population register.</i> 	-	<i>The BIPs receive a long-term residence permit on the same grounds as other foreign nationals. The only exception is related to the calculation of permanent residence period stated in the previous paragraph.</i>
After how many years of authorised stay can an application for citizenship be made?	<i>In order to apply for the Estonian citizenship, a foreign national must reside in Estonia on the basis of a residence permit for at least eight years, including last five years as a permanent resident.</i>	-	
What are the conditions for citizenship?	<p><i>Estonian citizenship is granted to an alien who, in addition to meeting the conditions of residence period in Estonia stated in the previous paragraph, meets the following conditions:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>is at least 15 years of age;</i> • <i>holds a long-term residence permit or the right of permanent residence;</i> • <i>has lawfully and on a permanent basis resided in Estonia on the ground of a long-term residence permit or by right of permanent residence for six months from the day following the date of registration of the application for Estonian citizenship;</i> • <i>has a registered place of residence in Estonia;</i> • <i>is proficient in the Estonian language in accordance with the B-1 level provided by the Language Act, i.e. adheres to the integration requirement;</i> 	-	<i>The BIPs receive the Estonian citizenship on the same grounds as other aliens.</i>

¹⁸ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 232 paragraph 2²

¹⁹ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 9

²⁰ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 234 paragraph 1 – integration requirements that a person have the Estonian language proficiency at least at the elementary level – language proficiency level B1 or a corresponding level

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>knows the Constitution of the Republic of Estonia and the Citizenship Act;</i> • <i>has a permanent legal income;</i> • <i>is loyal to the Estonian state;</i> • <i>take an oath: "Taotledes Eesti kodakondsust, tõotan olla ustav Eesti põhiseaduslikule korrale." [In applying for Estonian citizenship, I swear to be loyal to the constitutional order of Estonia.]</i> 		
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Q3. Please set out in the table below any conditions that apply to access the labour market (as laid down in national legislation or practice), highlighting any differences with regard to conditions that apply to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection.

In addition, to ensure comparability with regard to the specific conditions that apply (whether laid down in national legislation or applied in practice), please complete a more detailed table setting out the specific conditions in Annex 1.

Table 2 Conditions linked to access to the labour market for refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and humanitarian protection

	Refugees	Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection	Beneficiaries of humanitarian protection	Comments / summary of main differences amongst the categories (if any)
Conditions for labour market access laid down in national legislation ²¹	<i>The BIPs who have received a residence permit in Estonia may work in Estonian on the same grounds (provided by legislation) as permanent residents of Estonia²² (except in civil service occupations). The BIPs staying in Estonia are entitled to employment services and employment subsidies.²³</i>		-	
Conditions for labour market access that apply in practice ²⁴	<i>The BIPs do not need a separate work permit for working in Estonia, and there are no special legal provisions on the time or place of work. A BIP who has not yet received his or her personal identification code may experience obstacles in taking up the employment. In practice, residence permit cards are issued within a month after granting the protection.²⁵ Employers have to enter all new employees to the employment register of the Estonian Tax and Customs Board. If a person has no personal identification code, this entry could be made with incomplete data, i.e. without the personal identification code. As a result, the respective</i>		-	<i>Experiences of the BIPs show that it could take about six to nine months as an average to find a permanent job.²⁹</i>

²¹ This can for example include the requirement to be in possession of a residence permit/work permit, or restrictions can apply in time (duration), to a specific employer, or employment sector, preference being given to EU citizens in general or for specific jobs, other?

²² [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26](#) ([RT I 2006, 2, 3](#)), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 45

²³ [RT I 2005, 54, 430](#), Labour Market Services and Benefits Act, Art. 3 paragraph 4

²⁴ Even if no specific conditions are laid down in legislation, certain conditions may still apply in practice. These could be similar to the examples given for the conditions as laid down in legislation in footnote 14 above. If these apply in practice, but are not laid down in national legislation, please describe these in this row.

²⁵ In general up to 2 weeks in practice

²⁹ T. Raag, Postimees, 16.10.2015: <http://www.parnupostimees.ee/3364277/osa-parnu-voimuliidust-on-valmis-pagulasi-vastu-votma>

	<p><i>person can commence his or her employment but is not subject to social guarantees.²⁶</i></p> <p><i>Employers have the obligation to verify whether the employed aliens have legal grounds for working in Estonia.²⁷ Employers can do this through the electronic database of the PBGB, using the personal identification code of the foreigner.²⁸</i></p>		
<p>Main differences in conditions (as set out in legislation or in practice) concerning labour market access when compared with other third-country nationals legally residing on the territory</p>	<p><i>1) A third country national who lives in Estonia on the basis of a temporary residence permit (who is not a BIP) is generally entitled to work in Estonia, except in the following cases when the person has received the temporary residence permit:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• on the grounds of adequate legal income;</i> <i>• on the grounds of compelling state interest.</i> <p><i>An alien who has received the residence permit for educational purposes may work in Estonia without a specific work permit, provided that the employment does not hinder his or her studies.</i></p> <p><i>2) As a rule, any third country national who applies for a temporary residence permit for employment purposes must receive the respective permission from the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. The BIPs do not need the permission for work from the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund.</i></p>	<p>-</p>	<p><i>1) Contrary to the employment under a temporary residence permit, the employment of BIPs is not restricted.</i></p> <p><i>2) The BIPs do not need the permission for work from the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund.</i></p> <p><i>3) Residence permit granted to the BIPs is not dependent on their employment in Estonia.</i></p>

²⁶ If an employed foreign national has no personal identification code in Estonia and he or she cannot apply for it for objective reasons before taking up the employment, the employer can register the employment for up to 5 days by using the birth date specified in the personal identification document of the employee. If the employment is registered by using the birth date, the employee is not subject to social guarantees. The respective employee is only entitled to social guarantees provided by legislation after making the registration by using the personal identification code. Estonian Tax and Customs Board: <http://www.emta.ee/>

²⁷ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 286 paragraph 1

²⁸ Police and Border Guard Board: <https://www.politsei.ee/en/teenused/inquiries/>

	<p><i>3) A third country national who is granted a residence permit for employment purposes may simultaneously work for several employers, provided that he or she continues to work for the employer who was the reason for the application of the residence permit in the first place. If the person wants to change the employers, he or she must apply beforehand for a new residence permit for employment purposes. If the employment relationship is terminated and the respective alien does not apply for a new residence permit, he or she must leave Estonia. The employment of the BIPs has no such restrictions.</i></p>		
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Section 2: Labour market integration policy and its organisation

Section 2.1: Overview of labour market integration policies for refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection

Q4. Please give an overall summary of your relevant national policies related to labour market integration for refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and humanitarian protection indicating:

- What the main components of your labour market integration policy are (e.g. orientation/language courses, vocational education and training, recognition of qualifications, guaranteed minimum resources, counselling, access to housing etc. Any other?)
- For each component briefly describe the sub-elements, if necessary: For example, the concepts "orientation courses", "education", "counselling", "access to housing" are broad; within the delineation of the focus of the Study (please refer back to the definitions section) please describe what activities they cover. Also, in relation to guaranteed minimum resources, please list the benefits and/or programmes available in your Member State under the MISSOC category³⁰ "guaranteed minimum resources".
- Whether the policy is specific to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection or more generic to all third-country nationals legally residing on your Member State's territory. If it is specifically tailored to refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection could you briefly explain why this is the case? E.g. what are the reasons based upon which your government decided to specifically tailor policy to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection? (e.g. because their specific needs are acknowledged and it is considered important to address these by specific measures tailored to their situation?)

Estonia has not established any specific measures or policies for the integration of the BIPs into the labour market in Estonia. They can take advantage of the same employment integration measures as other permanent residents of Estonia. Nevertheless, various adaptation measures have been established (e.g. adaptation courses, support person service, covering the cost of housing and translation) for supporting the adaptation of the BIPs in general in Estonia. It is assumed that in case of successful adaptation a BIP also wants to integrate into the labour market in Estonia.

*The integration objectives of the BIPs are outlined in various blueprints, such as the **Internal Security Strategy for 2015–2020** that charges the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Social Affairs with a task to ensure the access of the BIPs to services that support their subsistence and integration into the Estonian society, and the integration policy document **Integrating Estonia 2020** that stresses the importance of supporting the integration of beneficiaries of international protection.*

*Legal status of aliens who have been granted international protection in Estonia is provided by the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens (hereinafter: the Aliens Protection Act) that specifies that an alien who has received a residence permit on the basis of this Act can work in Estonia on the same grounds as permanent residents of Estonia.³¹ **The BIPs do not need a separate work permit for working or engaging in entrepreneurship in Estonia and they have immediate access to the labour market in Estonia. There are no specific employment integration measures established for the BIPs.** Similarly to other permanent residents of Estonia, a BIP who wants to benefit from employment services and employment subsidies must register himself or herself as an unemployed or a job-seeker with the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund.*

*The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund provides the following **employment services to all permanent residents of Estonia, including the BIPs:***
1) providing information about the situation on the labour market and about employment services and employment subsidies: information regarding the nature of services and the conditions for receiving such services;

³⁰ MISSOC (2012), "Cross-cutting introduction to guaranteed minimum resources", available at: http://www.missoc.org/MISSOC/INFORMATIONBASE/COMPARATIVETABLES/CROSSCUTTINGINTRO/Introduction_Table_11.pdf

³¹ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26](#) ([RT I 2006, 2, 3](#)), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 45

- 2) job mediation service, i.e. finding a suitable job for a job-seeker. The service connects the respective person with suitable vacancies;
- 3) labour market training - supplementary training organised for a person in which he or she obtains or develops professional and other skills designed to make it easier for the person to find a job. Trainees' existing skills and knowledge and the requirements of positions available on the market are all taken into account when selecting the most appropriate form of training. The training can last for up to one year and the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund covers the cost of training within the limit of 25 euro;
- 4) careers counselling is designed to guide people in the choice of jobs and professions, finding or losing jobs (including sources for job searching) and their professional career as well as to provide information on educational prospects;
- 5) offering work practice to unemployed people so that they can gain necessary knowledge and skills in the work place. The maximum length of a work experience placement is four months;
- 6) offering public i.e. temporary (up to 10 days) paid work which does not require professional or special professional training;
- 7) coaching for working life designed to either get people used to working, so called trial days service. The service is provided for a maximum of three months;
- 8) wage subsidy paid to employers who hire an unemployed person within the amount of up to 50% of the employee's salary cost;
- 9) unemployed people who have completed business training or have higher or vocational education in economics or have business experience are eligible to apply for business start-up subsidy.

The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund provides the following **employment subsidies to all permanent residents of Estonia, including the BIPs**:

- 1) unemployment insurance benefit if the BIP has previously been employed in Estonia³²;
- 2) unemployment allowance if the BIP has previously been employed or engaged in work or an activity equal to work in Estonia (meaning: raised, as a parent or a guardian, a child of up to 18 years of age with a moderate, severe or profound disability, a child under 8 years of age or a child of 8 years of age until the child completed year one at school)³³;
- 3) scholarship, so that the person could participate in labour market training, apprenticeship, work practice, and voluntary work;
- 4) transport and accommodation allowances, so that the person could participate in labour market training, apprenticeship, work practice, career counselling, etc.

Each BIP is usually accompanied by an employee of the Vao Centre or a provider of the support person service when he or she visits the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund (the Fund also provides job mediation service) for the first time. A BIP who registers himself or herself with the Fund as an unemployed or a job-seeker is entitled to health insurance cover. The Fund employs case officials who present all available services and options to the BIP, also in Russian or English if necessary. Top employment services used by the BIPs living in the Vao Centre include trial days and work practice.³⁴

During his or her stay in Estonia, a BIP has the right to receive state pensions, family support, social benefits and other assistance **on the same grounds as other permanent residents of Estonia**. A local government may pay subsistence benefit to BIP whose financial status does not allow him or her to support himself or herself. Subsistence benefit is linked to the subsistence level³⁵ that depends on the number of family members. The subsistence level for 2015 is 90 euro per month for a person living

³² The person has paid for the unemployment insurance cover for at least 12 months during the 3-year period prior to registering himself or herself as an unemployed. www.tootukassa.ee

³³ The person has been employed or engaged in work or an activity equal to work for at least 180 days during the year prior to registering himself or herself as an unemployed. www.tootukassa.ee

Comment by the Ministry of Social Affairs: restrictions to location are not applied during the period when the person was engaged in an activity equal to work, i.e. when he or she was raising a child.

³⁴ Interview of 3 November 2015 with an employee of the Vao Centre

³⁵ Subsistence level means the monthly net income of a person or a family after subtracting the permanent cost of a dwelling. www.sm.ee

alone or the first family member, and 72 euro for the second and each subsequent family member. The subsistence level for each minor family member is also 90 euro per month in 2015. For receiving the subsistence benefit, the BIP should have registered his or her residence in the territory of the local government and apply for the benefit through the local authority. Families with children can also apply for needs-based family benefits, if necessary.

Furthermore, Estonia has established the following conditions that promote the integration of the BIPs and are only applied to the BIPs, so that they could better adapt to the life in Estonia, which in turn could lead to the wish and need to enter the Estonian labour market:

1) **a possibility to live for up to 4 months after being granted the protection in the accommodation centre designed for the applicants for international protection** and to take first preparatory steps, assisted by the staff of the Centre, towards an independent life in Estonia. E.g. employees of the Centre assist the beneficiaries of international protection in finding a housing and in finding a job. Residents of the Centre can learn Estonian and English and the Centre provides vital translation assistance to the BIPs. Each BIP compiles his or her CV and his or her educational, employment and skills profile is prepared in individual cooperation with the staff of the Vao Centre. While a BIP could live in the Centre for up to 4 months, they actually move out of the Centre to live in the territory of a local government in about 1-2 months;³⁶

2) **coverage of rental costs of a dwelling** (including once the repair costs and furnishing costs), **costs of Estonian language courses** and the **cost of translation services for up to two years**. The period of two years is deemed adequate to acquire a certain proficiency in Estonian and participate in labour market trainings, if necessary, in order to increase the competitiveness in the labour market. Consequently, it is assumed that a BIP is able to cover his or her housing costs in two years at the latest after being granted international protection;³⁷

3) **adaptation programmes**. The adaptation is also supported by various adaptation events, introduction programmes into Estonian language and adaptation programmes. The cost of adaptation training organised to the BIPs in 2012-2015 was covered by the IOM's Tallinn office under the heading of cultural orientation training (EST-CO project). One of the key issues discussed during this training was the searching and finding of a job and working in Estonia. The training provided relevant information to the BIPs and prepared them for the independent adaptation to the Estonian labour market.³⁸ Since 2015, the IOM provides one-day adaptation courses for the BIPs under the international protection module of the public adaptation programme. This on-day module lasts for up to 8 hours and under employment topic it focuses on the employment culture in Estonia. The training is provided in Russian, English, Arabic and French;

4) **operational system of the support person service**. This service is provided by non-profit organisations, such as the Estonian Refugee Council and the Johannes Mihkelson Centre that assist the beneficiaries of international protection both during their stay in the accommodation centre but especially after the BIPs leave the centre. Support person helps a BIP to solve every-day problems, such as communication with local authorities, education institutions, family physicians, employers, etc. A BIP can also receive translation assistance through the support person service.

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:

Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed:

³⁶ Interview of 18 November 2015 with T. Raag from the Ministry of Social Affairs

³⁷ Explanatory memorandum to the Draft Amendment Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens: file:///C:/Users/Kasutaja/Downloads/SK_VRKS_04.04.2012.pdf

³⁸ Letter in reply of 12 November 2015 of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund to the EMN Estonian contact point

Have you set out the main components/support measures of labour market integration policy for refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Have you described the sub-elements of each component/support measure where necessary (at a minimum in relation to orientation courses, education, vocational education and training, counselling, and guaranteed minimum resources)?	
Have you indicated whether the policy is specific to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection, or to TCNs in general?	
If the policy is/is not specific, have you explained why this is the case?	

Section 2.2: Organisation of employment-related support measures

Q5a. Please describe your Member State's overall organisational approach with regard to labour market integration policy³⁹ to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection: who are the main state actors responsible for the provision of support measures? At what level is it implemented (national, regional, local) and does your Member State involve any third parties (international organisations/NGOs/other) and if so for what actions and based on what agreement? *E.g. has your Member States concluded any contract/(cooperation) agreement with aforementioned partners (if so which) to implement employment-related support measures and to facilitate access to the labour market?*

Various administrations are responsible for the integration of the BIPs into the Estonian labour market.

Ministry of the Interior shapes the Estonian asylum policy and is responsible for the promotion and carrying out of adaptation programmes. The **Police and Border Guard Board** (the PBGB) that operates under the auspices of the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for performing international protection procedures (application for and granting of international protection).

Ministry of Culture is responsible for carrying out the Estonian integration policy and for providing further support to the integration into the society of permanent residents with different native languages and cultures. In addition, the Ministry of Culture coordinates various integration measures and is also responsible for drafting the integration programme. The integration programme is carried out by the Integration and Migration Foundation Our People (MISA). The programme is addressed to adult third country nationals who have recently arrived to Estonia.⁴⁰

Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for organising the reception of the applicants for international protection and planning various services that are offered in cooperation with public, private and non-governmental partners.⁴¹ Ministry of Social Affairs has mandated the **Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers** (the Vao Centre) under the public law contract to assist the BIPs who are living in the Centre in finding suitable housing, to organise them the possibility to participate in Estonian language courses and provide them access to translation services when communicating with the authorities.⁴² Since 2015, the Vao Centre assists both the applicants for international protection as well as the beneficiaries of international protection in contacting the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund and in finding a job (assistance is provided in various stages starting from the compiling of CVs and ending with interviews by potential employers).

*The BIPs are similarly to other permanent residents of Estonia assisted in finding a job and receiving employment services and employment subsidies by the **Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund***

³⁹ I.e. the support measures as included in the scope of this Study, namely: language courses, orientation courses, education, vocational education and training, recognition of qualifications, guaranteed minimum resources, counselling and access to housing.

⁴⁰ Additional information: http://kohanemisprogramm.tlu.ee/?page_id=2

⁴¹ Additional information:

https://www.siseministerium.ee/sites/default/files/dokumendid/VVO/amif_national_programme.pdf

⁴² Service contract under public law No. 9.6-4/5650 of the Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/116042013017>

that operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs.⁴³ Services and subsidies provided by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund to the BIPs are the same as those provided to all other permanent residents of Estonia.

*The SA Archimedes – the **Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre** that operates under the auspices of the **Ministry of Education and Research** is responsible for the evaluation and recognition of foreign educational and professional qualifications.*

⁴³ Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund is a quasi-governmental organisation, and a legal person in public law. The mission of Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund is to administer the social insurance provisions related to unemployment, and to organise labour market services that help unemployed persons find new employment. <https://www.tootukassa.ee/eng/content/about-tootukassa>

*In order to find a suitable job, the beneficiaries of international protection can also receive assistance from **support persons** of the **Johannes Mihkelson Centre**⁴⁴ and the **voluntary support persons from Estonian Refugee Council**⁴⁵. These support persons provide assistance mainly on occasions when a BIP is starting his or her independent life in the territory of the local government.*

⁴⁴ www.jmk.ee. The support person service is co-financed by the Ministry of the Interior and EU funds.

⁴⁵ <http://www.pagulasabi.ee/en>

*The role of **local authorities** is to organise the provision of social welfare, i.e. to organise, assign and pay social services and benefits. Local authorities provide the social counselling service⁴⁶ to the BIPs, explaining them e.g. the possibilities to apply for state benefits and services from the Estonian Social Insurance Board or employment services and employment subsidies from the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Board. For receiving the subsistence benefit, the BIP should have registered his or her residence in the territory of the local government. Subsistence benefit is paid from the state budget. Families with children can also apply for needs-based family benefits, if necessary.*

*The cost of adaptation training organised to the BIPs in 2012-2015 was covered by the **IOM's Tallinn office** under the heading of **cultural orientation training**. One of the key issues discussed during this training was the searching and finding of a job and working in Estonia. The training provided relevant information to the BIPs and prepared them for the independent adaptation to the Estonian*

⁴⁶ According to paragraph 1 of Art. 11 of the Social Welfare Act, social counselling is the provision to a person of necessary information about social rights and opportunities for protecting legal interests, and assistance in solving specific social problems in order to contribute towards future coping.

labour market.⁴⁷ Since 2015, the IOM provides adaptation courses for the BIPs under the international protection module of the public adaptation programme that is addressed to all immigrants. The BIPs are also entitled to participate in other modules of the adaptation programme in addition to the international protection module.

Q5b. Please indicate whether the provision of the different support measures⁴⁸ to recipients is in any way centrally coordinated? (i.e. is there one body that coordinates access to the different measures or alternatively do the different authorities structurally exchange information between each other etc.?)

If yes, please provide more information on how the support measures are coordinated? Please elaborate on:

★ The coordination mechanisms (e.g. agreements/contracts/cooperation agreements/conventions/coordinating / intermediary bodies); and

★ Please indicate at what level coordination takes place: at national, regional, or local level?

No, the integration of the BIPs into the Estonian labour market is not centrally coordinated. Each ministry is responsible for centrally coordinating its own area of responsibility.

Ministry of Social Affairs coordinates through its authorities – the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, AS Hoolekandeteenused⁴⁹ and the Estonian Social Insurance Board – the provision of employment services, housing services and social benefits.

Ministry of the Interior is responsible for centrally coordinating the adaptation programme. This service is provided by contractual partners. Ministry of the Interior coordinates the performance of the adaptation programme through the PBGB who is responsible for referring the BIPs to the adaptation programme. The international protection module of the adaptation programme is financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund⁵⁰ (AMIF) and other modules by the European Social Fund through the Ministry of the Interior. Ministry announced a public tender in late 2015 in order to find a partner for organising the provision of Estonian language courses and translation services.

The support person service provided by the Johannes Mihkelson Centre is financed by the AMIF⁵¹ through the Ministry of the Interior.

Social benefits provided by local authorities are financed through the state budget.

The Vao Centre and the Johannes Mihkelson Centre have signed a cooperation agreement in order to improve the support provided to the BIPs by the support person service.⁵²

⁴⁷ www.iom.ee/estco/

⁴⁸ The support measures as included in the scope of this Study, namely: language courses, orientation courses, education, vocational education and training, recognition of qualifications, guaranteed minimum resources, counselling and access to housing.

⁴⁹ Ministry of Social Affairs has signed a contract under public law with AS Hoolekandeteenused, and the latter is pursuant to this contract obligated to organise the provision of the accommodation centre service for the BIPs until they move out of the accommodation centre, to assist the BIPs in finding a housing, to find them a possibility to participate in Estonian language courses, and to ensure them access to translation services when communicating with public authorities.⁴⁹

⁵⁰ Formerly from the European Refugee Fund

⁵¹ Formerly from the European Refugee Fund

⁵² This cooperation agreement regulates the housing arrangement of the BIPs in the territory of local governments. The Vao Centre is engaged in finding the initial housing for a beneficiary of international protection. After finding the suitable dwelling, a support person employed by the Johannes Mihkelson Centre organises, if necessary, the registration of the BIC with a family physician, provides assistance in communicating with the Estonian

Section 3: Support measures to access the labour market

This section explores in more detail employment-related support measures that aim to advance labour market integration for refugees, and beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection. The support measures include: language courses, orientation courses, education, vocational training, recognition of qualifications, guaranteed minimum resources, counselling, and access to housing. It will explore how your Member State applies various support measures to enhance access to employment for the target groups identified, the organisational approach for the support measure, the implementation of the support measure as well as good practices in the provision of support measures. More specifically, for each of the main components of your labour market integration policy, you are requested to briefly indicate:

- How does your government organise the provision of the specific support measure; i.e. who is financially and executively responsible?

- How and by whom is the support measure implemented in practice; which authorities are involved on a daily basis? If implemented by third parties (international organisation/NGOs and other) please indicate the contractual basis for their involvement and the rationale)

- Do the actors who are involved on a daily basis receive support or training to focus the services to meet the needs of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection? If yes, by whom (state authorities or third parties? And if it's the latter is it based on an agreement with the state?)

- Are the services under the support measure in any way specifically tailored to meeting the employment access needs of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection? If so, how? And how do they differ from support measures available to other third-country nationals legally present on your Member State territory?

- What are the obstacles (if any) to access the support measure in practice? Please also explain whether these apply equally to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection as well as to all third-country nationals legally residing on your Member States' territory

- Describe any good practices for the provision of the support measure and if possible support this with evidence (e.g. studies/evaluations, other publicly available information etc.). This can include a good practice in general, i.e. when the measure works well in facilitating access to the labour market, also if the support measure is not specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection.

NB: Please note that we would like you to complete additional tables in Section 6 in relation to employment-related support measures. These tables complement the information provided in this section and will ensure comparability between Member States.

Language courses

Q6. In relation to language courses, please explain the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question posed

Unemployment Insurance Fund, local school and nursery school, finds adequate language courses for the client, etc. The support person drafts the initial action plan for six months, outlining the activities that require support from the support person or are the responsibility of the Vao Centre (e.g. signing the initial rental contract, payment of rental, etc.).

One of the key issues related to the adaptation of the BIPs in the labour market is the access to Estonian language courses. Proficiency in local official language increases the possibilities of aliens to find a proper and stable job that corresponds to qualifications, supporting thus the successful integration of aliens into Estonian society.

The majority of workplaces require the proficiency in Estonian language for working in Estonia. The required level of language in workplaces is regulated by the Government Regulation 'Requirements for proficiency in Estonian language to officials, employees and self-employed persons'. Language level requirement is determined by the nature of workplace and the use of language in the specific workplace or occupation, including language requirements provided by professional standards.⁵³ This Regulation also regulates the occupations that require the proficiency in Estonian language on levels A2-C1.⁵⁴

Possibility to learn Estonian language is provided by the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens (the Aliens Protection Act). According to the Aliens Protection Act, a BIP receives first lessons on Estonian language in the Vao Centre already during his or her stay as an applicant of international protection.⁵⁵ Language lessons are provided by a language teacher hired by the Centre. In 2014, the Centre provided language lessons twice a week 1.5 hours per lesson. Participation in these courses is free and voluntary for both the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection. Estonian language is taught on the basis of Russian and English.

The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund is the only institution that provides to the BIPs (and also to all other permanent residents of Estonia) courses on work-related Estonian language. The BIPs can participate in language courses free of charge, if necessary. In order to do that, a BIP must register himself or herself as an unemployed or a job-seeker with the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. The Fund offers language courses on different levels and in various volumes. An individual job search plan prepared for the person is the key element and adherence to this plan is supported by language studies. In addition, also an employer may inform the Fund of the language profile that the applicant should have – whether the potential employees would have a special need for occupational language, written language or oral language, etc. If a BIP is successful in his or her job search, the language support offered by the Fund is terminated, because a BIP is entitled to this support only as an unemployed or a job-seeker. The provision of these employment services of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund are financed through the state budget.

In addition to the services provided by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, the BIPs are **entitled to Estonian language studies**⁵⁶ by participating in **language courses (this service is designed specifically for the BIPs)**. Assistance for finding adequate language courses is provided by the staff of the Vao Centre and by the providers of the support person service. **The cost of participation in such language courses is covered through the state budget for up to two years** at a rate of up to 12 of the subsistence level⁵⁷ per person – this amounted to 1,841 euro for two years in 2013 and 2,160 euro for two years in 2014 and 2015. Important elements considered in offering language courses to the BIPs are the following: the source language during the language study (Russian, English, Arabic) and the location of the BIP (in order to ensure that the participation in language courses would be as convenient as possible). **The cost of Estonian language courses is covered for both the BIPs who have already found a job in Estonia as well as job-seekers and unemployed persons.**

As the number of BIPs is quite moderate in Estonia, the teachers of Estonian language may not have sufficient experiences for dealing with the BIPs.

⁵³ [RT I, 28.06.2014, 82](#) Art. 2 paragraph 1

⁵⁴ [RT I, 28.06.2014, 82](#) Art. 6-9

⁵⁵ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26](#), ([RT I 2006, 2, 3](#)) the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 32 paragraph 1 point 4

⁵⁶ [RT I 2006, 2, 3](#), ([RT I 2006, 2, 3](#)) the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art.73 paragraph 4 point 3

⁵⁷ According to the State Budget Act of 2015, the subsistence level is 90 euro per month for a single person or for the first member of a family in 2015. The subsistence level for each minor member of a family is also 90 euro in 2015. The subsistence level for the second and each subsequent adult member of a family is 72 euro per month in 2015. www.sm.ee/et/muud-toetused-ja-teenused

According to the new draft of Aliens Protection Act (should be entered into force in the first half of 2016), the BIPs have an obligation to participate in Estonian language courses (however, language courses provided in the Vao Centre remain voluntary for both the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection). This amendment was triggered by various factors: analyses have shown that the proficiency in Estonian language improves the position of alien population in the labour market and the proficiency of aliens in Estonian language decides in which occupations they work. Also, the proficiency in Estonian language decreases the unemployment risk of the alien population. Therefore, according to the draft Act, participation in Estonian language courses should increase the possibilities of the BIPs to participate in the labour market, improving thus their economic situation.⁵⁸

In addition to these language study possibilities, the **non-profit organisation Estonian Refugee Council** offers the assistance of **voluntary language teachers** to the BIPs. At present, they offer the services of 2-3 voluntary language teachers.⁵⁹

Various involved organisations (the Vao Centre, organisations providing the support person service, feedback provided by the verification visit of the Chancellor of Justice, the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund) have pointed out the following best practices and challenges:

- The Chancellor of Justice acknowledged during his verification visit to the Vao Centre in 2014 that the Centre offered also English language courses in addition to Estonian language. However, the Chancellor of Justice recommended that in order to increase the efficiency of Estonian language studies provided in the Centre, the Centre should divide the students in different groups according to their performance levels. Previous experience shows that the Centre restarted the language study from the beginning each time when new arrivals reached the Centre, thus slowing down the progress of its residents.⁶⁰ At present, the Centre is capable of dividing its students in two groups, based on their performance in language studies.
- Participation in language courses is difficult for the employed BIPs. One of the solutions would be to participate in intensive language courses, which are, however, rather expensive (funds would be depleted in 2-3 months in case of intensive study). Still, these 2-3 months intensive courses would not be sufficient for learning to communicate in Estonian. Also, an employed BIP may need a flexible schedule, but this flexibility requirement is a challenge for language schools.⁶¹
- The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund would prefer that all applicants for international protection living in the Vao Centre learn Estonian language (the study is voluntary at present) and when a person contacts the Fund (either as an applicant for or a beneficiary of international protection), he or she would already have some basic proficiency in Estonian language. The Fund could then offer the next level of language courses.⁶²

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	
Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	

⁵⁸ The Draft Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens:
file:///C:/Users/Kasutaja/Downloads/VRKS%20_seletuskiri.pdf

⁵⁹ Letter in reply of 5 November 2015 of E. Janson (Estonian Refugee Council) to the EMN Estonian contact point

⁶⁰ Verification visit of the Chancellor of Justice in 2014: <http://oiguskantsler.ee/et/seisukohad/seisukoht/opcat-kontrollkaik-varjupaigataotlejate-majutuskeskus>

⁶¹ Letter in reply of 5 November 2015 of E. Janson (Estonian Refugee Council) to the EMN Estonian contact point

⁶² Letter in reply of 23 November 2015 of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund to the EMN Estonian contact point

Are any of the services are specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

Orientation courses

Q7. In relation to orientation courses⁶³, please explain the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question pose.

Estonia does not offer any adaptation programmes focused specifically on work-related integration, but the BIPs have a right and also a possibility to participate in a module of the general adaptation programme, which focuses on work and entrepreneurship issues. Other modules of the adaptation programme provide a less detailed overview of these issues.

In order to promote the adaptation of new immigrants in Estonia, including their Estonian language studies, the Ministry of the Interior as an institution responsible for the Estonian migration policy developed an adaptation programme in 2014. The adaptation programme was established by the Aliens Act, the Citizen of the European Union Act and the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens and the Regulation of the Ministry of the Interior on the Adaptation Programme. Thus, the adaptation programme is addressed both to the citizens of the European Union and to third country nationals, including the BIPs, who have legally lived in Estonia for less than 5 years. The adaptation programme includes a special module for the BIPs. However, the BIPs may also participate in other modules of the adaptation programmes, excluding the A1 language level study provided by the Regulation on the Adaptation Programme. The latter was based on the idea that the Ministry of Social Affairs has already ensured through its funds an intensive language training for the BIPs. The adaptation programme was introduced in August 2015. According to the programme, the PBGB officials refer all new immigrants, including the BIPs, to the adaptation programme as of 1 August 2015. First one-day modules (in total 8 hours) for the BIPs of the adaptation programme commenced in the end of 2015.

The international protection module of the adaptation programme provides the BIPs with the basic information about Estonia: legal information related to international protection, including the granting and renewal conditions of residence permits; social welfare, including services and benefits offered by the state and by local authorities; residence rules e.g. in an apartment building; financial literacy; access to education and further educational opportunities; work ethic in Estonia. Participation in the programme is voluntary and free of charge for all participants. The module designed for the BIPs is provided in English, Russian, Arabic and French. The international protection module of the adaptation programme is financed from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund as well as from the state budget through the Ministry of the Interior. The international protection module of the adaptation programme is provided by the IOM’s Estonian office that has long-term experiences in providing adaptation support to the BIPs.

Before commencing with the provision of the international protection module of the adaptation programme in 2015, the IOM’s Estonian office offered cultural orientation trainings for the BIPs and

⁶³ Orientation courses typically provide factual information about the country of destination but may also aim to foster positive attitudes for successful adaptation in the long run. These could include opportunities for migrants to gain (and practice) the necessary skills needed to facilitate their integration and to develop helpful attitudes including pro-activity, self-sufficiency and resourcefulness (knowing how to find the information they are seeking); skills include knowing how to conduct oneself in certain situations, time management and goal-setting, as well as being able to navigate complex systems including banking, social, health and emergency services, transportation etc. (Source: IOM Best Practices IOM’s migrant training and pre-departure orientation programmes).

the applicants for international protection. The respective training project was carried through during the period from 2012 until 30 June 2015 and included the publication of various materials and the performance of several activities addressed to the BIPs:

- *various cultural orientation trainings for the BIPs and the applicants for international protection (courses were provided in French, Russian, Pashto and English);*
- *cultural orientation trainings for the representatives of local authorities;*
- *publication of the cultural orientation handbook "Welcome Guide for Asylum Seekers and Refugees" that includes basic knowledge (including remit-related information) and main facts on vital issues and areas in Estonia. The handbook has been translated into English, Russian, French and Arabic;*
- *publication of a practical video material that is aimed at providing a general understanding of various stages that are necessary for starting a new life in Estonia. E.g. the material includes separate video clips on finding a dwelling, **taking up a job (interview at the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund)**, going to school and visiting a physician. This video material was published in English with English, Russian, French and Arabic subtitles.⁶⁴*

In addition, the BIPs receive assistance in the adaptation in Estonia from the staff of the Vao Centre, through the support person service provided by the Johannes Mihkelson Centre and from the volunteers of the Estonian Refugee Council.

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	
Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Are any of the services specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

Education

*NB: For education, please only provide information on support provided to the target groups that has a **specific focus on access to education that has a direct link to employment**, for example, by providing support for the development of higher level (non-vocational) skills. Please do not report on access to education more generally for these groups. **The focus is on education for those of employment age that might lead towards employment.***

Q8. In relation to access to education, please describe the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question posed

⁶⁴ <http://www.iom.ee/estco/kultuurilise-kohanemise-materjalid>

Prospects of vocational education and possibilities to continue previously interrupted education can also play an important role in the adaptation of the BIPs.

*Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for the area of education in Estonia. **Estonia lacks a specific institution that deals with the educational integration of adult BIPs.** However, the Vao Centre, local authorities and non-profit organisations that offer the support person service have been assisting the beneficiaries of protection in finding information on interesting educational prospects.*

Estonia had already transposed the Article 27 of the Directive 2011/95/EU⁶⁵ on the access to education into national law, but due to its declarative wording the Aliens Protection Act was complemented pursuant to the Directive in order to distinguish the right of adult and minors to education. The amendment provided the access of adult BIPs, when staying in Estonia, to the general education system, continuing vocational training and retraining on the same grounds as third country nationals residing in Estonia on the basis of residence permits or right of residence.⁶⁶ The amendment of the Aliens Protection Act became effective at the end of 2013.

If a BIP is interested in studying in one of Estonian higher education institutions, he or she must pass the general entrance examinations. Studying in a public vocational education institution or a public higher education institution is free of charge for permanent residents of Estonia. Private education institutions where the tutoring is provided in English are not free of charge. Aliens residing in Estonia on the basis of temporary residence permits are not subject to public health insurance, thus the adult BIPs who want to acquire higher education in Estonia have to purchase a private health insurance cover for the period of studies. This requirement is not applied for vocational studies⁶⁷ or students in Doctoral studies who receive Doctoral allowance and for whom the social tax is paid by the state⁶⁸ – they are entitled to public health insurance⁶⁹. This exception is also applied to the BIPs.

Only a marginal number of beneficiaries of protection have pursued educational objectives in Estonia, as studying is a time-consuming activity and may hinder the employment and earning of income. Therefore, the staff of educational institutions has very few experiences in teaching the BIPs who would want to acquire higher education. Furthermore, the potential studies are hindered by the lack of supporting documents that demonstrate any previous education acquired in the country of origin. The presentation of such documentation would facilitate continuing education.

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	
Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Are any of the services specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

⁶⁵ Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted (recast)

⁶⁶ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26](#) ([RT I 2006, 2, 3](#)), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 75 paragraph 6¹

⁶⁷ [RT I 2002, 62, 377](#), the Health Insurance Act, Art. 5 paragraph 4 point 5

⁶⁸ [RT I 2000, 102, 675](#), the Social Tax Act, Art. 6 paragraph 1 point 14

⁶⁹ [RT I 2002, 62, 377](#), the Health Insurance Act, Art. 5 paragraph 4 point 5

Vocational education and training

Q9. In relation to vocational education and training⁷⁰, please describe the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question posed

*Ministry of Education and Research is also responsible for the area of vocational education in Estonia. **Estonia lacks a specific institution that deals with the vocational educational integration of adult BIPs.** However, the Vao Centre, local authorities and non-profit organisations that offer the support person service have been assisting the beneficiaries of protection in finding information on interesting prospects in vocational education system. **Specific vocational education possibilities and conditions are not applicable for the BIPs.***

As mentioned under the previous sub-heading, the Aliens Protection Act provides the access of adult BIPs, when staying in Estonia, to the general education system, continuing vocational training and retraining on the same grounds as third country nationals residing in Estonia on the basis of residence permits or right of residence.⁷¹

Vocational education system in Estonia includes the levels of 2-5.⁷² Interested BIPs who have no previous education but who have adequate proficiency in Estonian (or Russian) language could pass the second or the third level of vocational education because these levels do not require the prior existence of education. Further studies are also possible if the BIPs are interested in the area and have sufficient motivation to study.

If a BIP is interested in studying in one of Estonian vocational education institutions, he or she must pass the entrance examinations on the same grounds as all other applicants. Only a marginal number of BIPs have pursued vocational education objectives. Therefore, the staff of educational institutions has very few experiences in teaching the BIPs who would want to acquire vocational education.

If a BIP has acquired either vocational or general education before arriving to Estonia and can present the relevant supporting documentation in Estonia, he or she could contact the Estonian ENIC/NARIC that is responsible for the recognition of educational and vocational qualifications and certificates.

In addition to vocational education prospects, the BIPs have a possibility to participate in continuing vocational training organised for unemployed persons and job-seekers by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. In order to benefit from the training service of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, the BIP must be registered as an unemployed or a job-seeker with the Fund. So far, the BIPs have mostly used this trainings provided by the Fund in order to find a suitable job. Case officers of the Fund are experienced in dealing with the BIPs. The website of the Fund includes a special employment mediation portal – individuals can use this portal to find a suitable job and contact the potential employer.

⁷⁰ Vocational education and training aims to equip people with knowledge, know-how, skills and/or competences required in particular occupations or more broadly on the labour market.

⁷¹ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26 \(RT I 2006, 2, 3\)](#), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 75 paragraph 6¹

⁷² The 2nd and the 3rd level require no previous education; the 4th level requires previous basic education; the 5th level requires previous secondary education. Jobs available in the labour market for persons on education levels 2 and 3 include unskilled jobs and elementary jobs in the following professions: plant and machine operators, skilled workers and artisans, service and sales workers. The 4th level provides more complex jobs in the following professions: plant and machine operators, skilled workers and artisans, agricultural and fishery workers, service and sales workers and clerks. The 5th level includes mostly mid-level professionals, technicians and officials.⁷² The share of practical work in the vocational training is 70% on the 2nd level and 50% on the 3rd level, providing the students with the possibility to implement in practice the lessons learned.

Consulting sessions organised for the individuals by the Fund usually take place once a month: case officer of the Fund examines whether the person in front of him/her requires additional continuing vocational training in order to find a suitable job. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund provides information to the BIPs in English, German or Russian.

Ministry of Education and Research is developing a new option for formal study – apprenticeship – that is focused on illiterate adolescents and young adults. During the apprenticeship, they would have the possibility to acquire either basic education that allows them to continue their studies in the upper secondary school for adults or upper secondary education in the vocational education institution, working at the same time for the employer in the relevant area. Students in the apprenticeship programme would be entitled to public health insurance. At present, the apprenticeship programme has not yet been introduced in Estonia.⁷³

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	
Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Are any of the services are specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

Procedures for the recognition of qualifications

Q10. In relation to procedures for the identification and recognition of qualifications, please describe the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question posed

Ministry of Education and Research is responsible for coordinating the recognition of foreign academic and professional qualifications. One of the structural units of the SA Archimedes, subordinated to the Ministry of Education and Research, is the **Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre**⁷⁴ that is responsible for the recognition of academic and professional certificates. **The Centre applies no exceptions compared to other applicants when recognising the documents of the BIPs.**

Estonia transposed the Article 28 of the Directive 2011/95/EU⁷⁵ on the access to the recognition of qualifications into national law at the end of 2013, complementing the Recognition of Foreign

⁷³ Ministry of Education and Research, K. Kivirüüt: https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/umberasustamine_paigutamine_haridus_.pdf

⁷⁴ Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre operates pursuant to the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region (the Lisbon Recognition Convention, 1997), the principles established by the Council of Europe, the UNESCO cooperation network ENIC and the European Commission's cooperation network NARIC, and the laws and regulations of the Republic of Estonia.

⁷⁵ Directive 2011/95/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 13 December 2011 on standards for the qualification of third-country nationals or stateless persons as beneficiaries of international protection, for

Professional Qualifications Act. The amendment provided the possibility for the beneficiaries of international protection in Estonia to apply for the recognition of their diplomas and professional qualifications. Through the recognition process of professional qualifications the beneficiaries of international protection gained also access to regulated occupations and professions in the Estonian labour market. The general recognition system of professions is regulated by the Recognition of Foreign Professional Qualifications Act and sector-specific acts on the recognition of professions (the Health Services Organisation Act, the Medicinal Products Act, the Veterinary Activities Organisation Act, the Building Act, the Planning Act).

Recognition process of academic documents may take up to 30 days of the submission of an application to the Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre. The applicant will receive a written response from the Centre within this deadline.

In case of professional certificates, the recognition decision is adopted in four months from the submission of an application and all required documents. This procedure is lengthy, but each person arriving to Estonia in order to work in a regulated profession has to contact the competent authority that is responsible for recognising professional activities in the relevant area. The competent authority has to compare the professional qualification of the applicant with the professional qualification required for working in the regulated occupation in Estonia, and determine whether the applicant is entitled to work in that occupation in Estonia.⁷⁶

The Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre has no statistical data on the professional recognition of the beneficiaries of international protection because a person who applies for the recognition of his or her qualifications is not obligated to present information on the legality of his or her stay in Estonia. If a beneficiary of protection has got original documents showing his or her education, he or she can apply for their recognition by the Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre. However, in most cases the BIPs have no personal identification documents during the application stage (including documents showing the educational level) and therefore the recognition of their qualifications poses a challenge.⁷⁷

The staff of the Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre does not need any special experiences for dealing with the BIPs.

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	
Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Are any of the services are specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

Counselling services

a uniform status for refugees or for persons eligible for subsidiary protection, and for the content of the protection granted

⁷⁶ Estonian ENIC/NARIC Centre: <http://archimedes.ee/enic/en/>

⁷⁷ <http://aastaraamat.pagulasabi.ee/>

NB: please provide information on the types of counselling that the target groups are entitled to in order to specifically support them to access employment. This could include counselling for trauma as well as other specific problems relating to their status as refugees / beneficiaries of international / humanitarian protection where this may present a barrier, but could also include counselling to assist in job readiness preparation and support.

Q11. In relation to counselling services, please describe the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question posed.

Operational and efficient counselling and support person service is one of the key factors for guaranteeing the initial adaptation of the BIPs.

Providing general counselling on the adaptation in Estonia is divided between various areas of responsibility.

Direct work-related counselling and consultations are provided by the offices of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund all across Estonia. *The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund offers all services to the BIPs on the same grounds as to permanent residents of Estonia, however, taking into account that such persons may have certain obstacles (language barrier, economic and cultural barriers, traumas, advisory needs, etc.) the Fund tries to mitigate these obstacles by supporting their employment through various services.⁷⁸ Various services are provided to the BIPs in English and Russian.*

*General counselling services for leading an independent life, including for the adaptation in the labour market, are offered **specifically** to the BIPs by the providers of support person service – **non-profit organisations the Johannes Mihkelson Centre and the Estonian Refugee Council.** If a BIP stays in the Vao Centre during his or her international protection procedure, he or she can receive initial counselling in this Centre.*

Local authorities that provide counselling on social services **offer this service to all permanent residents of Estonia.**

*The content of support person service is not regulated by the Aliens Protection Act or the Social Welfare Act in Estonia, but the Ministry of Social Affairs has adopted a special guidance on social services '**Support person service for adults**'. This service is also provided to the BIPs. Support persons provide counselling to the beneficiaries of international protection mainly on the following issues: social welfare (housing, social benefits, communication with necessary authorities); education (school, nursery school, vocational education, language courses); work (work ethic in Estonia, communication with the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, work-related additional training, prevention of problems in the workplace); migration (family reunification, visa-related issues); psychological situation (isolation, solitude, subsistence); health care and health insurance (general health condition, personal insurance covers); cultural and religion-related issues. This guidance on counselling is followed by both support persons and local authorities.*

The non-profit organisation Johannes Mihkelson Centre has organised the training of support persons for the BIPs already for several years and it has trained over 30 support persons who operate all across Estonia. Participants in the training of support persons should preferably have previous experience in social work. Proficiency in foreign languages (Russian, English, French, Arabic, Spanish) is also very important. The provision to the BIPs of the support person service by the Johannes Mihkelson Centre is financed from the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (formerly the European Refugee Fund). Support persons of the Johannes Mihkelson Centre get paid

⁷⁸ Letter in reply of 23 November 2015 of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund to the EMN Estonian contact point

for their work. The Centre signs a six-month contract for the provision of the service with the beneficiary. This contract is renewed, if necessary, but the experience shows that the BIPs need active support during the first six months. After that the communication becomes less frequent and is more needs-based. The contract mentioned above regulates the cooperation between the parties, as well as the frequency of cooperation. Depending on the needs of the specific BIP, assistance of a support person can be used on a daily basis or once a week, and families usually need more support than single persons.⁷⁹ At present, support persons provide assistance to almost 60 clients all across Estonia.⁸⁰

Support person service is provided to the BIPs also by the non-profit organisation Estonian Refugee Council that employs 7 volunteers at present (volunteers get not pay for their work, only the costs arising from their work are compensated). The Estonian Refugee Council provides also the mentoring service to the beneficiaries of international protection.

As Estonia receives next year its first refugees under the EU relocation programme, both the Johannes Mihkelson Centre and the Estonian Refugee Council are going to increase the number of support persons (additional 30 support persons and 40 volunteers, respectively).

Assistance and counselling for the integration of the BIPs into the Estonian society are also provided by the Vao Centre. The Vao Centre has 5 employees (primarily assisting the applicants for international protection) who provide assistance also to the BIPs living in the Centre in finding a housing (including the conclusion of rental agreement), communicating with local authorities, organising the participation in Estonian language courses, and ensuring the availability of translation services, if necessary. In addition, the Centre can officially represent a person in the communication with public authorities. Since September 2015, the Centre employs a person who assists the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection in finding a job in Estonia. A job-seeker receives assistance in mapping his or her professional skills and in compiling the CV. The official of the Centre communicates with companies who are interested in providing employment to the residents of the Centre.

Local authorities provide counselling to the BIPs under the social counselling service that is discussed in detail in the section on minimum social guarantees.

Making preparations for the reception of first refugees arriving under the EU relocation programme has initiated several new projects: e.g. the non-profit organisation Pagula started a blog on its website in order to make preparations for the support persons working with the refugees who will arrive to the Läänemaa county – they created a fictional refugee family and they try to work through various potential situations that these future refugees, the respective support persons and relevant authorities might face.⁸¹

Also several Christian congregations in Estonia have expressed their interest in providing assistance and counselling to the BIPs (especially psychological counselling).

Examples of good practice in Estonia include the broad network of this support person service and the role of support persons in the integration of the BIPs. Support persons have succeeded in making contact with virtually all beneficiaries of international protection, as the number of BIPs has been relatively small in Estonia. All potential challenges are treated individually and solved case-by-case.⁸²

⁷⁹ Interview of 2 November 2015 with J. Saharov, the head of support person service from the Johannes Mihkelson Centre

⁸⁰Johannes Mihkelson Centre: <http://www.jmk.ee/integratsioon/tugiisikuteenus-pagulastele-ja-varjupaigataotlejatele/>

⁸¹ <https://virtuaalnetugiisik.wordpress.com/>

⁸² Interview of 2 November 2015 with J. Saharov, the head of support person service from the Johannes Mihkelson Centre

Integration of Beneficiaries of International/humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market in Estonia: Policies and Good Practices

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	
Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Are any of the services specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

[Access to housing](#)

Q12. In relation to access to housing⁸³, please describe whether refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection are entitled to receive help from the government with regard to access to housing, and how it is implemented in practice. Please describe the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question posed

The existence of employment opportunities is a key factor in housing the BIPs in the territory of local governments. In choosing potential locations the following elements are taken into account: health condition of the BIP, location of direct relatives and relatives by affinity, and other important aspects in respect of living and employment opportunities, including the proportional division of the BIPs between various municipalities.⁸⁴

The Aliens Protection Act provides⁸⁵ that the **Ministry of Social Affairs** shall organise the settlement of a BIP in the territory of a local government within four months as of the date of the issue of a residence permit to the alien. Ministry of Social Affairs has mandated the **OÜ Hoolekandeteenused (i.e. the Accommodation Centre for Asylum Seekers or the Vao Centre)** under the public law contract to provide assistance to the BIPs after they have been granted a residence permit, including the assistance in finding suitable housing. The Vao Centre assists the BIPs (through the state budget) in finding a housing, concluding a rental contract and paying initial expenses related to the conclusion of the rental contract. The host municipality should preferably accommodate the BIP into a municipal dwelling. If the local government has no free municipal dwellings, an apartment for the BIP and his or her family will be rented from the commercial real estate market, taking into account the respective prices. Costs are covered at variable rate, depending on the subsistence level provided each year by the State Budget Act (90 euro per month for 2014 and 2015). All rates are established as maximum expenditure rates for individuals, proceeding from average market prices in Estonia.

The Aliens Protection Act regulates the housing-related costs of the BIPs. These costs are covered through the state budget and **only for the BIPs**⁸⁶:

1) the rental and accessory expenses of the dwelling granted for use to a BIP and once the expenses related to the conclusion of the rental contract with the private owner within two years. Rental expenses of a dwelling shall be covered (within the socially justified standards for dwellings provided by the Dwelling Act⁸⁷, i.e. 18 m² per person) at a rate of up to 0.3 of the subsistence level per m², i.e. 27 euro/m² and in total 9,112 euro per year; so far, the average expenses have been 300-400 euro/month;

2) the repair costs (single lump-sum) of the municipal housing granted for use to a BIP (within the socially justified standards for dwellings provided by the Dwelling Act⁸⁸) at a rate of up to 1.5 of the subsistence level per m², i.e. in total 3,797 euro per year ;

3) the cost of furnishing of the municipal dwelling granted for use to a BIP at a rate of up to 13 of the subsistence level per person, i.e. in total 1,170 euro per person in a year; the cost of furnishing a

⁸³ Support measures for access to housing include those measures that facilitate finding accommodation for those who cannot find it themselves. This could include social housing, state funded housing in the private sector, provision of financial resources to access housing etc.

⁸⁴ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26 \(RT I 2006, 2, 3\)](#), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 73 paragraph 2

⁸⁵ [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26 \(RT I 2006, 2, 3\)](#), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 73 paragraph 3

⁸⁶ Costs are covered at variable rates depending on the subsistence level established for each year by the State Budget Act (90 euro per month in 2014 and 2015).

⁸⁷ [RT 1992, 17, 254](#), the Dwelling Act, Art. 7 paragraph 1 point 2

⁸⁸ [RT 1992, 17, 254](#), the Dwelling Act, Art. 7 paragraph 1 point 2

Integration of Beneficiaries of International/humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market in Estonia: Policies and Good Practices

dwelling includes the acquisition cost of essential furniture, household appliances and consumer goods (furniture for sleeping and eating, closet, bedding and lingerie, a refrigerator and a stove, cooking utensils, etc.). This is a single allowance – if the BIP moves into another dwelling, he or she must cover his or her own cost of furnishing.

However, a BIP may also himself or herself or with the assistance by the community find a place of residence. The BIPs have sometimes also been assisted in finding a housing by the employer or the provider of the support person service.

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	
Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Are any of the services are specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

[Guaranteed minimum resources](#)

Q13. In relation to guaranteed minimum resources⁸⁹, please describe the organisation and implementation of the support measure, including the procedure to access the support measure, specifying any obstacles experienced. Please also identify any good practices in relation to this support measure.

When answering this question, please closely follow the specifications as indicated above, making sure that an answer is provided to each element/question posed

During their stay in Estonia, the BIPs are entitled to receive state pensions⁹⁰, family support, employment services and employment subsidies, social benefits and other assistance on the same grounds as permanent residents of Estonia. Employment subsidies are paid by the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, if a person has registered himself or herself with the Fund as an unemployed or a job-seeker. The BIPs have to register their residence with local authorities in order to receive available social benefits.

Local government may pay⁹¹ to a BIP (on the same grounds as to other permanent residents of Estonia), whose financial status does not allow him or her to support himself or herself, **subsistence benefits⁹²** for covering the housing costs and providing income.⁹³ In granting the subsistence benefit the local government takes into account the following factors: size of the dwelling, number of residents and rooms. Standard allotted living space (the cost of which can be subtracted from income) shall be 18m² per family member plus 15m² per family/household. Subsistence benefit is paid for purchasing food, clothing and other essential goods and services.

In addition, families with children residing in Estonia (including the BIPs) can also apply **for needs-based family benefits⁹⁴** that are paid to families with children living below the prescribed income level and also to families with children receiving subsistence benefits. Needs-based family benefits are granted and paid by local governments through the state budget.

Families with children are entitled to all family benefits available in Estonia – child allowance, child care allowance and other benefits that the child or the family may be qualified to receive. Child allowance for 2015 is 45 euro per month for the first and second child and 100 euro for the third and each subsequent child.

The BIPs are highly motivated in finding a job as quickly as possible because these social benefits available in Estonia are quite moderate (subsistence benefit is 90 euro per month).

Please double-check whether you have addressed all of the following:	Please insert the following sign, if satisfactorily addressed: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Organisational approach of your government	
Description of the implementation in practice and authorities/actors involved	

⁸⁹ Refers to benefits provided to people with insufficient resources. It includes support for destitute and vulnerable persons to help alleviate poverty or assist in difficult situations (Source: ESSPROS Manual, 2008 Edition, Eurostat).

⁹⁰ [RT I 2001, 100, 648](#). According to the State Pension Insurance Act, the state pension is granted to persons who have attained 63 years of age and whose pension qualifying period earned in Estonia is 15 years (Art. 7 paragraph 1 points 1, 2). National pension is granted to persons who have attained 63 years of age and who have resided in Estonia for at least five years immediately before making a pension claim (Art. 22 paragraph 1 point 1)

⁹¹ Subsistence benefits are paid by local authorities through the state budget.

⁹² [RT I, 23.03.2015, 26](#) ([RT I 2006, 2, 3](#)), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, Art. 75 paragraph 2

⁹³ Explanatory memorandum 354 to the Draft Amendment Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens

⁹⁴ Needs-based family benefit is 45 euro per month for a family with one child receiving child allowance and 90 euro per month for a family with two or more children receiving child allowance. www.sm.ee

Integration of Beneficiaries of International/humanitarian Protection into the Labour Market in Estonia: Policies and Good Practices

Are authorities/actors specifically trained to interact with refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Are any of the services are specifically tailored to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection?	
Description of obstacles (if any)	
Identification of good practices (if any)	

Section 4: Labour market participation

This section will provide an overview as to what extent refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection are able to successfully secure employment in the different Member States. It will map the sector/industries and the type of work mostly secured by beneficiaries.

Q35. Please complete the table below concerning the number of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection that are employed/unemployed/inactive. Please provide the stock: i.e. the total number on 31 December of every year. If the exact data are not available, an indicative percentage or number can be provided in *Italic*.

Table 3 Statistics on labour market participation⁹⁵

	Refugees					Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection					Beneficiaries of humanitarian protection				
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total number granted protection	11	8	8	7	20	6	3	5	0	0	-	-	-	-	-
Total number employed (including self-employment)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Total number overqualified in their position	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	-	-
Total number unemployed ⁹⁶	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A					
Total number of inactive persons ⁹⁷	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	-	-	-	-	-

Q36. Drawing on available research on employment/unemployment (or if not available, indications from relevant stakeholders) please indicate the sector/industry and the type of work which beneficiaries mainly successfully secure jobs in in your Member State. Please provide several examples and make sure to indicate in your answer whether refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection are often overqualified in their position and provide, if possible, evidence

Statistics

In general, the unemployment rate of non-Estonians has constantly been higher (2014: 10,3%) that that of Estonians (2014: 6%).⁹⁸ The unemployment rate of non-Estonians was especially high during the years of economic crisis (2009-2011): the unemployment rate of non-Estonians reached to 23% (in case of Estonians 13-14%). This difference between Estonians and non-Estonians has decreased in recent years.⁹⁹ In addition, Estonians receive higher salaries than non-Estonians and their share in managerial and senior specialist positions is higher than the share of non-Estonians.¹⁰⁰

Estonia lacks a precise overview and statistics on the employment level and unemployment rate of the BIPs in 2010-2014.

According to the data of the PBGB, 119 BIPs held a valid residence permit in 2015, including 64 beneficiaries of refugee status, 22 beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and 33 individuals with a family member residence permit. Persons with a valid residence permit included 92 adults and 27 minors. From adults 46 individuals reside in Estonia and social benefits are their main source of livelihood; 32 individuals have a regular job or income (e.g. maternity benefit) in Estonia; 8 individuals have left Estonia; and the location of 6 individuals is unknown to the PBGB.¹⁰¹

Occupations of the BIPs

The BIPs residing in the accommodation centre for the applicants for international protection receive assistance in finding their first job from the staff of the accommodation centre who help them to contact various employers. Several employers contact the accommodation centre themselves and offer various jobs, mostly unskilled jobs. Employers arrive to the accommodation centre, in order to introduce their companies or specify the profiles of employees they are looking for. Employers who were interested in providing employment for refugees have also provided an opportunity to visit the company. As the Vao Centre is located far from major centres (35 km to the major city Rakvere and 9 km to the small town Väike-Maarja), some of the employers who have hired the residents of the Centre have also provided transport assistance from the Vao Centre to work and back. The employment pattern of the BIPs has shown so far that the BIPs find a permanent job in about 9 months after being granted a residence permit and that they are very stable employees.¹⁰²

The BIPs are mostly employed in production and service areas in Estonia, in such companies as AS E-Betoonement (concrete products manufacturer), OÜ Tallinna Pesumaja (laundry service provider), OÜ Baltic Log Cabins (construction of wooden houses), AS Hagar and OÜ Pandivere Pansion (cleaner and caretaker (with medical education)).¹⁰³ Estonia performed a study on the adaptation of refugees in 2011 that showed that many refugees have found employment in restaurants and bars, mostly in kitchen duties.¹⁰⁴

Motivation for work

Experiences of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund have shown that refugee job-seekers are highly motivated in finding a job and taking up the employment. Obstacles and challenges related to employment are different for each person (similarly to other job-seekers) – the lack of suitable transport connection, limited professional skills, the lack of requisite language skills or work experience, etc. The lack of personal housing has been one of the challenges for the residents of the Vao Centre that has hindered their employment.¹⁰⁵

Problems in finding a job

⁹⁵ PBGB statistics as at 9 December 2015

⁹⁶ Also referred to as job-seekers in certain Member States.

⁹⁷ "Inactive persons" are those who are not in the labour force so are neither classified as employed nor as unemployed. This category therefore does not include job-seekers. (Source: Eurostat)

⁹⁸ file:///C:/Users/Kasutaja/Downloads/Eesti_statistika_aastaraamat._2015.pdf

⁹⁹ https://riigikantselei.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/uuringud/eesti_tooturg_tana_ja_homme_2014.pdf

¹⁰⁰ file:///C:/Users/Kasutaja/Downloads/Eesti_statistika_aastaraamat._2015.pdf

¹⁰¹ PBGB statistics as at 2 November 2015 (as of September 2015)

¹⁰² Interview of 3 December 2015 with the Vao Centre

¹⁰³ <http://www.aripaev.ee/uudised/2015/07/24/pagulased-paisatakse-tooturule>

¹⁰⁴ K. Kallas, <http://www.aripaev.ee/arvamused/2015/06/08/pagulasabi-kristina-kallas-ettevotja-otsib-pagulast>

¹⁰⁵ <http://www.aripaev.ee/uudised/2015/07/24/pagulased-paisatakse-tooturule>

Non-profit organisations – the Estonian Refugee Council and the Johannes Mihkelson Centre – that provide daily support to the BIPs have noted that the BIPs face similar problems in finding a job as other aliens, i.e. mostly third country nationals, in Estonia. The main reason for their disadvantaged position in the labour market is the lack of proficiency in English, Russian and Estonian languages. In addition, the competitiveness of the beneficiaries of international protection is jeopardised by their low level of education, as well as the lack of documentation proving any formal education. Employers' attitude to aliens could also be an obstacle. Many beneficiaries of international protection have to take up unskilled job, using the network of their peers for finding such job.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁶ <http://aastaraamat.pagulasabi.ee/rahvusvahelise-kaitse-saajate-oigused-ja-kohanemine>

Section 5: Conclusions

Q37. Please summarise your Member State's policy on access to employment, indicating any practical obstacles for the target group of this Study (refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection)

According to the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, foreign nationals with established refugee status or subsidiary protection status are granted international protection in Estonia and they receive a temporary residence permit. Protection is not granted in Estonia on humanitarian grounds. Refugees receive a residence permit for three years and this residence permit may be extended for additional three years. Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection receive a residence permit for a year and this residence permit may be extended for additional two years.

Foreign nationals who have been granted international protection in Estonia may work in Estonia on the same grounds as permanent residents of Estonian and they do not need a separate permit for work.¹⁰⁷ In addition, refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not differentiated in relation to their access to Estonian labour market. Foreign nationals who are in possession of a long-term residence permit in Estonia do not need a separate permit for employment and entrepreneurship in Estonia.¹⁰⁸

Interviews with relevant experts have expressed the following major obstacles regarding the integration of the BIPs into the labour market: problems in finding efficient language learning opportunities, problems in finding a job that corresponds to the qualification and problems in finding employment as such (many BIPs lack any documentation demonstrating the qualification), problems in finding learning opportunities (the BIPs have to pay for private health insurance cover during their studies).

Q38. Please summarise your Member State's policy on facilitating labour market integration, reviewing to what extent employment-related support measures can and are being accessed by refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection and to what extent they facilitate their access to the labour market.

Estonia has not developed any specific measures for the integration of beneficiaries of international protection (hereinafter: the BIPs) into the national labour market. However, it implements a set of measures (e.g. adaptation courses, support person service, covering the cost of housing, translation and Estonian language course in first two years) for supporting their adaptation in general in Estonia. It is assumed that successful adaptation may lead to successful integration into the labour market in Estonia.

During their stay in Estonia, the BIPs are entitled to receive state pensions, family support, employment services and employment subsidies, social benefits and other assistance on the same grounds as permanent residents of Estonia. In addition, local authorities may pay subsistence benefits to the BIPs on the same grounds as to other permanent residents whose financial status does not allow him or her to support himself or herself. The BIPs have to register their residence with local authorities in order to receive available social benefits.

In order to receive any available employment services and employment subsidies, each beneficiary of international protection must register himself or herself as an unemployed or a job-seeker with the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund offers all services to the BIPs on the same grounds as to permanent residents of Estonia, however, taking into account that such persons may have certain obstacles (language barrier, economic and cultural barriers, traumas, advisory needs, etc.) the Fund tries to mitigate these obstacles by supporting their

¹⁰⁷ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 5 - a permanent resident is an Estonian citizen residing in Estonia or an alien residing in Estonia who holds a long-term resident's residence permit in Estonia or a permanent right of residence

¹⁰⁸ [RT I 2010, 3, 4](#), the Aliens Act, Art. 231 paragraph 3

employment through various services. E.g. various services are provided to the BIPs in English and Russian. The Fund draws up an individual job search plan for each client and offers all necessary services to the BIPs based on these plans. The Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund also provides Estonian language courses, if necessary. Registering with the Fund entitles a person to health insurance protection in Estonia.

Q39. Please summarise your Member State's policy on the availability of *tailored* support measures to access the labour market that are available to refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection as opposed to legally residing third-country nationals in general

Estonia has established several measures that are focused specifically to the BIPs, so that they could better adapt to the life in Estonia, which in turn could lead to the wish and need to enter the Estonian labour market:

1) a possibility to live for up to 4 months after being granted the protection in the accommodation centre designed for the applicants for international protection and to take first preparatory steps, assisted by the staff of the Centre, towards an independent life in Estonia. E.g. employees of the Centre assist the beneficiaries of international protection in finding a housing and in finding a job. Residents of the Centre can learn Estonian and English and the Centre provides vital translation assistance to the BIPs;

2) coverage of rental costs of a dwelling (including once the repair costs and furnishing costs), costs of Estonian language courses and the cost of translation services for up to two years after being granted a residence permit;

3) adaptation programmes. The adaptation is also supported by various adaptation events, introduction programmes into Estonian language and adaptation programmes;

4) operational system of the support person service. This service is provided by non-profit organisations, such as the Estonian Refugee Council and the Johannes Mihkelson Centre that assist the beneficiaries of international protection both during their stay in the accommodation centre but especially after the BIPs leave the centre. Support person helps a BIP to solve every-day problems, such as communication with local authorities, organize a visits to Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund, education institutions, family physicians, employers, etc. A BIP can also receive translation assistance through the support person service.

Q40. Please summarise if and to what extent differences exist with regard to labour market access between:

- Refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection on the one hand and third-country nationals legally residing in your Member State territory on the other hand
- Refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and beneficiaries of humanitarian protection

- In general, there are no exceptions in Estonia besides the following: 1) third country nationals (including the BIPs) are not allowed to work in the civil service area in Estonia;

2) employment of third country nationals (including the BIPs) is restricted in certain areas:

- *they are not allowed to work permanently as advocates in Estonia. A foreign advocate may only represent or defend a client in a court in Estonia together with a sworn advocate;*
- *they cannot receive a business license in areas related to weapons and ammunition;*
- *restrictions in operating a security firm.*

- Refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary protection are not differentiated in relation to their access to Estonian labour market.

Q41. Please summarise what you consider to be good practices (if any) in the provision of labour market integration support measures in your national context.

Considering that the number of the BIPs is relatively small¹⁰⁹ in Estonia (only 68 individuals were granted international protection in 2010-2014), Estonia's advantage has been its ability to provide individual counselling to the BIPs, both for the adaptation in the Estonian society and for the integration into the labour market in Estonia. Another example of good practice would be: the BIPs are not differentiated in Estonia, i.e. they are subject to the same social and labour market benefits as other permanent residents of Estonia.

¹⁰⁹ In total 172 individuals have been granted international protection in Estonia in 1997-2015, of whom 88 persons received refugee status and 84 subsidiary protection. PBGB statistics as at 8 January 2016

Section 6: Additional information to ensure comparability

This section aims to collect additional detailed information that complements your answers as provided in previous sections, in order to ensure comparability. It includes tables on:

- ★ conditions to access the labour market
- ★ Eligibility for employment-related support measures for different categories of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection
- ★ Authorities responsible for the provision of employment-related support measures
- ★ Conditions to access employment-related support measures
- ★ Statistics on access to employment-related support measures

Q42. With reference to Section 1 (Q3), please complete the following table on conditions to access the labour market by indicating yes/no to clarify if the condition applies, and, where appropriate, please briefly describe

Table 4 Conditions to access the labour market

Conditions/restrictions	Applies to all TCNs in: 1) legislation? 2) practice?	Applies to Refugees in: 1) legislation? 2) practice?	Applies to beneficiaries of subsidiary protection in: 1) legislation? 2) practice?	Applies to persons granted humanitarian protection in: 1) legislation? 2) practice?	Comments
Possession of a residence permit	1) Yes 2) Yes	1) Yes 2) Yes	1) Yes 2) Yes	-	-
Possession of a work permit	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No	-	<i>An alien residing in Estonia on the basis of a temporary residence permit is entitled to work in Estonia, except in the following cases when he or she has received the temporary residence permit: 1) on the grounds of compelling state interest; 2) on the grounds of legal income.</i>

					<i>A separate work permit is not issued in Estonia.</i>
Do restrictions in time apply? (Duration)	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No		
Do restrictions to a specific employer apply?	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No		<p><i>Exception: A third country national who is granted a residence permit for employment purposes may simultaneously work for several employers, provided that he or she continues to work for the employer who was the reason for the application of the residence permit in the first place. If the person wants to change the employers, he or she must apply beforehand for a new residence permit for employment purposes. If the employment relationship is terminated and the respective alien does not apply for a new residence permit, he or she must leave Estonia. The employment of the BIPs and persons employment on other residence grounds has no such restrictions.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, the employment of third country nationals is restricted in the following areas:</i></p> <p><i>1) they are not allowed to work permanently as advocates in Estonia. A foreign advocate may only represent or defend a client in a court in Estonia together with a sworn advocate;¹¹⁰</i></p>

¹¹⁰ [RT I 2001, 36, 201](#), the Bar Association Act, Art. 74 paragraph 3, 4

					<p>2) they cannot receive a business license in areas related to weapons and ammunition;¹¹¹</p> <p>3) restrictions in operating a security firm.¹¹²</p>
Do restrictions to a specific employment sector apply?	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No		As an exception, third country nationals work is limited in civil service area.
Is preference to be given to nationals and EU citizens (in general or in relation to specific jobs, if so which?)	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No	1) No 2) No	-	Exception: only in case of employment on the basis of a temporary residence permit, employers should generally following the rule of the Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund that preference should be given to the citizens of the European Union and the citizens of Estonia.
Other? (add rows if applicable)					

Q43. With reference to Section 3, please complete the following table on the eligibility of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection to employment-related support measures. Indicate if they are eligible to access the support measure with yes/no

Table 5 Eligibility for employment-related support measures for the categories of refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection¹¹³

	Refugee	Beneficiaries of subsidiary protection	Persons granted humanitarian status	Comments

¹¹¹ [RT I 2001, 65, 377](#), the Weapons Act, Art. 66, 67

¹¹² [RT I 2003, 68, 461](#), the Security Act, Art. 16 paragraph 2 - The Government of the Republic may establish restrictions on the amount of capital belonging to citizens or legal persons of states which are not members of the European Economic Area in the composition of the assets of security firms.

¹¹³ This means access to all beneficiaries under the protection status.

Education ¹¹⁴	Yes	Yes	-	<i>A document demonstrating the education must be submitted.</i>
Language courses	Yes	Yes	-	
Orientation courses	Yes	Yes	-	
Vocational education and training	Yes	Yes	-	
Counselling	Yes	Yes	-	
Recognition of qualifications	Yes	Yes	-	<i>The BIPs have to present the respective documents to competent authorities.</i>
Guaranteed minimum resources	Yes	Yes	-	
Housing support/access to social housing	Yes	Yes	-	
Other (add rows if necessary)			-	

¹¹⁴ Education as described under Q8: education with a specific focus on access to education that has a **direct link to employment**, for example, by providing support for the development of higher level (non-vocational) skills. Please do not report on education more generally. The focus is on education for those of employment age that might lead towards employment.

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Q 44. With reference to Section 3, please complete the table below setting out the authorities responsible for the provision of employment-related support measures to refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection

Table 6 Authorities responsible (executive and financial) for the provision of employment-related support measures¹¹⁵

¹¹⁵ Please specify the authorities/organisations/institutions responsible. This can also include NGO's. Note however that the table and the Study in general focus on government-related support measures, i.e. how the government organises itself to provide the support. NGO's/third parties can be involved if outsourced by the government.

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Employment-related support measure	Authority that carries executive responsibility	Authority that carries financial responsibility	Comments
Education	<i>Educational institutions</i>	<i>Ministry of Education and Research</i>	
Language courses	<p>1) <i>Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund</i></p> <p>2) <i>Language schools</i></p> <p>3) <i>The Vao Accommodation Centre and local authorities</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Ministry of Social Affairs</i></p> <p>2) 3) <i>Ministry of Social Affairs through the state budget</i></p>	
Orientation courses	<p>1) <i>IOM Estonia (until the first half of 2015)</i></p> <p>2) <i>IOM Estonia (since the second half of 2015)</i></p> <p>3) <i>SA Archimedes, SA ETAg, Expat Relocation Estonia (since the second half of 2015)</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Ministry of the Interior (through the European Refugee Fund)</i></p> <p>2) <i>Ministry of the Interior (through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund)</i></p> <p>3) <i>Ministry of the Interior (through the European Social Fund)</i></p>	
Vocational education and training	<p>1) <i>Educational institutions</i></p> <p>2) <i>Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Ministry of Education and Research</i></p> <p>2) <i>Ministry of Social Affairs</i></p>	
Counselling	<p>1) <i>Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund</i></p> <p>2) <i>Johannes Mihkelson Centre</i></p> <p>3) <i>Estonian Refugee Council</i></p> <p>4) <i>Local authorities</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Ministry of Social Affairs</i></p> <p>2) <i>Ministry of the Interior (through the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (previously European Refugee Fund))</i></p> <p>3) <i>Other support</i></p> <p>4) <i>State budget</i></p>	
Recognition of qualifications	<i>SA Archimedes ENIC/NARIC Centre</i>	<i>Ministry of Education and Research</i>	
Guaranteed minimum resources	<p>1) <i>Local authorities</i></p> <p>2) <i>Estonian Social Insurance Board</i></p>	<p>1) <i>State budget</i></p> <p>2) <i>Ministry of Social Affairs</i></p>	
Housing	<p>1) <i>Local authorities</i></p> <p>2) <i>The Vao Centre</i></p>	<p>1) <i>Ministry of Social Affairs (from the state budget)</i></p> <p>2) <i>Ministry of Social Affairs (from the state budget)</i></p>	

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Other/Translation	<i>Provider of translation service</i>	<i>Ministry of Social Affairs (from the state budget)</i>	
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Q45. With reference to Section 3, please complete the table below on conditions to access employment-related support measures for refugees and beneficiaries of subsidiary and humanitarian protection. Please indicate if the conditions apply by answering with yes/no. Please also clarify if the conditions apply to: i) all TCNs legally residing on your Member State’s territory (“all TCNs”); ii) all beneficiaries of international/humanitarian protection (“all ben”); or iii) specifically to refugees (“Ref”), beneficiaries of subsidiary protection (“SP”), beneficiaries of humanitarian protection (“HP”)

Table 7 Conditions to access employment-related support measures

	Education	Language courses	Orientation courses	Vocational education and training	Counselling	Recognition of qualifications	Guaranteed minimum resources	Housing	Comments*
Having a residence permit	i) Yes ii) No	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) No	i) No/Yes ii) No/Yes	i) No ii) No	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) Yes	
Having a work permit	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	
Having identity documents	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) No ii) No	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) Yes ii) Yes	
Having a domicile	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii)No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	
Language competency	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	
Specific qualifications/diplomas required	i)Yes ii)Yes	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) Yes ii) Yes	i) No ii) No	i) No ii) No	
Sufficient financial resources	i) Yes ii) No	i) No ii) No	i) No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)Yes ii)No	
Eligibility for loans	i) No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)No ii)No	i)Yes ii)Yes	i)No ii)No	

Etc. (add rows if applicable)									
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* Please also indicate if conditions equally apply to all beneficiaries of international/humanitarian protection, all third-country nationals, nationals of the MS.

Q46. With reference to Section 3, please complete the table below concerning statistics on access to employment-related support measures

Table 8 Statistics in relation to accessing employment-related support measures

	Refugees, beneficiaries of subsidiary protection and humanitarian protection					Please specify to which groups the figures refer to
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Total number of beneficiaries accessing education	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total number accessing language courses	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	1 ¹¹⁶	All groups
Total number accessing orientation courses	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total number accessing vocational education and training	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total number making use of procedures for the recognition of qualifications	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total number provided minimum guaranteed resources	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	

¹¹⁶ Statistics (for 2013-2014) consists only the number of BIPs participating in Estonian language courses supported by the Vao Centre. The Vao Centre data of 5 January 2016

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Total number accessing counselling services	35	40	50	50	60 ¹¹⁷	All groups
Total number accessing housing	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	14 ¹¹⁸	All groups

¹¹⁷ Statistics (for 2010-2014) consists only the number of BIPs participating in counselling services organized by the Johannes Mihkelson Centre data of 14 January 2016

¹¹⁸ Statistics (for 2013-2014) consists only the number of BIPs whom the Vao Centre has assisted in moving to live in the territory of local governments. The Vao Centre data of 5 January 2016

