



# **EMN FOCUSSED STUDY 2016**

## **Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Programmes in Europe – what works?**

### **Estonian national report**

Tallinn 2016



*Disclaimer: The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of completing a Synthesis Report for the EMN Focussed Study on Resettlement and Humanitarian Admission Programmes in Europe – what works?. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided information that is, to the best of their knowledge, up-to-date, objective and reliable within the context and confines of this study. The information may thus not provide a complete description and may not represent the entirety of the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.*

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## Contents

1	STUDY AIMS AND RATIONALE.....	4
1.1	Study aims .....	4
1.2	Rationale.....	4
2	EU LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT.....	5
3	DEFINITIONS.....	6
	Top-line “Factsheet” .....	9
	Section 1: Overview of national context.....	11
	Section 2: Overview of the national resettlement and/or humanitarian admission programme .	14
	Section 3: National legislation and policies on private sponsorship programmes.....	40
	Section 4: Evaluations and identified challenges, good practices and lessons learnt.....	44

## 1 STUDY AIMS AND RATIONALE

### 1.1 STUDY AIMS

This EMN study aims to offer a comprehensive overview of challenges and current solutions regarding the functioning of resettlement schemes and humanitarian admission programmes for refugees in the EU Member States and Norway. The outcomes of the study will make it possible for the target audience to learn about and identify difficulties and success factors for resettlement and humanitarian admission programmes, and to discuss the added value of having joint EU resettlement programmes. Thus it aims to further elaborate and develop both national programmes and joint European initiatives, also with a view to contribute to the handling of possible future refugee crises and humanitarian emergencies.

### 1.2 RATIONALE

According to the UNHCR, in 2015, the number of refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced people worldwide has, for the first time in the post-World War II era, exceeded 50 million people. This development was driven mainly by the war in Syria, which at the end of 2015 had displaced millions of people. Major new displacement were taking place in Africa – due to continued wars and failure to resolve or prevent conflict.

While most refugees have fled to neighbouring or other countries in their regions of origin, migration and refugee flows to Europe have also increased massively, with hundreds of thousands of refugees arriving in the EU Member States and Norway to apply for international protection, especially since the summer of 2015. Most of them entered the EU without registering, often via Greece or Italy, and then transited through a number of countries, both EU-Member States and non-members, hoping to reach Western and Central Europe or the Nordic countries. Under this exceptional migratory pressure, the border and mobility rules of the Schengen area and the Dublin regulation came under significant pressures, and for many refugees, the journey to Europe meant extreme uncertainty, risks and dangers. It also became obvious that many EU Member States were reluctant to accept significant numbers.

While the EU Member States and Norway are searching for adequate responses to the challenges of strongly increasing migratory pressures, several ideas and concepts to resolve, or at least alleviate, the resulting problems have been discussed, such as better controls at the external borders of the Schengen area, a tougher approach against traffickers and smugglers of human beings, the implementation of a relocation scheme to distribute asylum seekers within the EU, assisting neighbouring states of conflict countries, as well as addressing the root causes of irregular migration by contributing to development and peace in affected countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Last but not least, the need for opening up, or expanding existing, “legal routes” or pathways to protection in the EU has also been discussed. Resettlement is one of the key elements of such legal routes and one (of three) main long-term solutions for refugees alongside return (the preferred solution) and local integration in the country of first refuge. Resettlement refers to the transfer of refugees from the country of first refuge to a country willing to admit them (see below under “Definitions”).

The goal of resettlement is to offer a long-term solution for those fleeing conflict and to support first countries of asylum in their efforts to deal with displacement and the pressure this places on their country’s infrastructure, resources and citizens. The European Commission confirmed the relevance of resettlement activities in its “European Agenda for Migration” of May 2015, and in July 2015, the EU Member States committed to welcome over 20,000 refugees in the next two years in this way. Also, at the EU-Africa summit on Migration that took place in November 2015 in Valletta, the participating states declared that “access to regular mechanisms for protection, such as resettlement, should be reinforced”.

While the momentum is growing for resettlement programmes, there is a need for increased knowledge-sharing and support between “old”, “new” and “emerging” resettlement countries. Some (Member) States have had resettlement schemes for many years, others have recently started them, and some are considering the possibility to do so. While there are already projects aiming to develop the practical cooperation between (Member) States, and while a certain amount of information on national resettlement or humanitarian admission programmes is available and is being described and analysed (see “Literature” below), there is still a need to improve knowledge and awareness of practical problems and key success factors for resettlement schemes that are well designed, successfully implemented and are able to expand the quota of persons to be resettled..

In particular, there is a need for more clearly-stated and shared views on the added value of joint resettlement activities in the EU, as compared to national approaches. By looking into challenges faced by (Member) States that have resettlement or humanitarian admission programmes, while also aiming to understand the reasons of other Member States for not (yet) implementing such programmes, this study shall identify relevant common measures that may serve to increase the capacities for resettlement in Europe and improve the sustainability of the concept in times of high migratory pressure.

## 2 EU LEGAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

The 1999 Tampere Summit laid down the general direction for the Justice & Home Affairs Area and produced agreement on the Common European Asylum System (CEAS). In 2003 a Commission communication highlighted resettlement as a way for ensuring 'orderly and managed arrival'<sup>1</sup> and this culminated in the Council asking the Commission in January 2005 to put in place a resettlement programme. The Commission responded to this in September 2005 with an action plan for regional protection programmes, highlighting voluntary resettlement commitments.<sup>2</sup> A proposal for an EU-wide Resettlement programme was tabled in September 2009 and the Commission set out the aims for setting up such as a programme.<sup>3</sup> After long negotiations the Commission proposal was adopted by the European Parliament on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2013, and established common resettlement priorities for 2013 and allocated funding for resettlement by amending the Decision on the European Refugee Fund.<sup>4</sup> This provided the basis for furthering the allocation of resources and designating specific priorities under the AMIF Regulation for the 2014-2020 period. Currently, Member States mostly set their priorities in resettlement at national level. EU action aimed at maximising the strategic impact of resettlement through a better targeting of those persons in greatest need of resettlement, formulating common priorities, and providing financial EU support for persons resettled, and for Member States resettling for the first time.<sup>5</sup>

On 25<sup>th</sup> November 2014 a Resettlement and Relocation Forum took place with the aim to "work towards Solidarity in Practice through a specific use of solidarity measures, such as resettlement of refugees to the EU and other legal avenues for allowing persons in need to seek protection in the EU without having to resort to illegal practices".<sup>6</sup> It highlighted the Union Resettlement Programme, based on common EU priorities considered to be instrumental for providing financial incentives.

In the May 2015 European Agenda on Migration, the European Commission reiterated the EU's duty to contribute its share in helping displaced persons in clear need of international protection through safe and legal ways for them to reach the EU.<sup>7</sup> This was followed by the Commission Recommendation for a European Resettlement Scheme of 8 June 2015 in order to resettle 20,000 people in need of protection over two years. As a result, on 20 July 2015 Member State representatives meeting within the Council adopted conclusions to resettle, together with Dublin associated States (including Norway), 20,504 persons in need of protection.

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<sup>1</sup> COM(2003) 315 final, 3/6/2003 Towards more accessible, equitable and manageable asylum systems

<sup>2</sup> COM (2005) 0388 final, 1/9/2005 Communication from the Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on regional protection programmes

<sup>3</sup> COM (2009), 447 final, 2/9/2009 Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council of 2 September 2009 on the establishment of a joint EU resettlement programme

<sup>4</sup> Decision No 281/2012/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 29 March 2012 amending Decision No 573/2007/EC establishing the European Refugee Fund for the period 2008 to

2013 as part of the General programme 'Solidarity and Management of Migration Flows': <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:092:0001:0003:EN:PDF>

<sup>5</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:L:2012:092:0001:0003:EN:PDF>

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014\\_2019/documents/libe/dv/18\\_paper\\_solidarityinpractice\\_/18\\_paper\\_solidarityinpractice\\_en.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/documents/libe/dv/18_paper_solidarityinpractice_/18_paper_solidarityinpractice_en.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication\\_on\\_the\\_european\\_agenda\\_on\\_migration\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/communication_on_the_european_agenda_on_migration_en.pdf)

The AMIF fund was amended in May 2015 for the financial year 2015 in order to respond to migratory pressures and foresees an additional amount of EUR 25 million for the implementation of the European Resettlement Scheme.<sup>8</sup> For the implementation of the scheme, the Conclusions of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2015 highlighted the important role of EASO in Member State and third country support in this regard, and should monitor the implementation of the scheme and report regularly on the implementation. The European Agenda on Migration reiterated cooperation with partners such as UNHCR and IOM.

In EASO will take on a coordinating role (“clearing house”) in exchanging information and other actions on resettlement taken by EU Member States in cooperation with UNHCR and IOM. In cooperation with UNHCR and IOM, EASO will promote coordination between EU Member States in achieving agreed targets of resettlement. Further supporting this process, EASO is developing new tools and methodologies.

As part of the 2015 Conclusions, all EU and EFTA Member States– with the exception of Hungary – have agreed to resettle through multilateral and national schemes the following number of persons by 2017:

AT	BE	BG	HR	CY	CZ	DK	EE	FI	FR	DE	EL	HU	IE	IT	LV
1,900	1,100	50	150	69	400	1,000	20	293	2,375	1,600	354	-	520	1,989	50
LT	LU	MT	NL	PL	PT	RO	SK	SI	ES	SE	UK	NO	IS	LI	CH
70	30	14	1,000	900	191	80	100	20	1,449	491	2,200	3,500	50	20	519

On 15 December 2015, the European Commission presented a recommendation for a voluntary humanitarian admission scheme with Turkey for persons displaced by the conflict in Syria who are in need of international protection and have been registered by the Turkish authorities prior to 29 November 2015.<sup>9</sup> The European Commission has further announced it would follow up on these initiatives with a proposal for a more coordinated EU-wide approach to resettlement.

At the moment no EU policy and legal developments have been formulated specifically for private sponsorship as a potential attractive alternative to irregular movements.

### 3 DEFINITIONS

The following key terms are used in the Common Template. The definitions are taken from the EMN Glossary v3.0<sup>10</sup> unless specified otherwise in footnotes.

**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*

<sup>8</sup> Regulation (EU) No 516/2014, of 16 April 2014, of the European Parliament and of the Council establishing the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund, amending Council Decision 2008/381/EC and repealing Decisions No 573/2007/EC and No 575/2007/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council and Council Decision 2007/435/EC, O.J. L 150 of 20.05.14.

<sup>9</sup> [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-6330\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-6330_en.htm)

<sup>10</sup> Available at: [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european\\_migration\\_network/docs/emn-glossary-en-version.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/networks/european_migration_network/docs/emn-glossary-en-version.pdf)

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:** 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

**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

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

**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 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.”

**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:** Any authorisation issued by the authorities of an EU Member State allowing a non-EU national to stay legally in its territory

**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;

**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;

**Third-country national:** means any person who is not a citizen of the Union (including stateless persons) within the meaning of Article 17 (1) of the Treaty and who is not a person enjoying the Community right of free movement, as defined in Article 2(5) of the Schengen Borders Code.

In addition, the study uses on the following concepts and definitions:

**Resettlement:** *In the global context, the selection and transfer of refugees from a state in which they have sought protection to a third state which has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status. The status provided ensures protection against refoulement and provides a resettled refugee and his/her family or dependants with access to rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. Resettlement also carries with it the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the resettlement country.*<sup>11</sup>

In the EU context and specifically for the purposes of this Study, *the transfer, on a request from UNHCR and based on the need for international protection of a third-country national or stateless person, from a third country to a Member State, where they are permitted to reside with one of the following statuses:*

*(i) refugee status within the meaning of Art. 2(d) of Directive 2011/95/EU; or*

*(ii) a status which offers the same rights and benefits under national and EU law as refugee status.”*

**Humanitarian admission:** The term “admission” is defined as “the lawful entry of an alien onto the territory of a State after inspection and authorisation by an immigration officer”. The term “humanitarian admission” is however not defined. In the context of this study, humanitarian admission refers to schemes which are similar to resettlement but for varying reasons do not fully match the definition of resettlement. For example, resettlement may be a permanent solution for the people benefiting from it, while humanitarian admission may be temporary. A refugee status determination (by the UNHCR) could be a precondition for resettlement while humanitarian admission could be available to a wider range of potential beneficiaries.

**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, international protection means protection that encompasses refugee status and subsidiary protection status.

**Private sponsorship:**

There is no common and agreed definition of private sponsorship. A key element of private sponsorship are that a person, group or organisation assumes responsibility for providing financial, social and emotion support to a resettled person or family, for a predetermined period of time (usually one year or even) or until the person or family becomes self-sufficient. Additionally, sponsors have the option of naming the person or family they are willing to support in resettlement, though some sponsors do not have specific persons in mind but rather seek to match a certain profile.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> UNHCR Resettlement Handbook: <http://www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.pdf>

<sup>12</sup> MPI Europe, “Welcoming engagement: How private sponsorship can strengthen refugee resettlement in the European Union”.



## Top-line “Factsheet”

### National contribution (one page only)

Overview of the National Contribution – introducing the study and drawing out key facts and figures from across all sections of the Focussed Study, with a particular emphasis on elements that will be of relevance to (national) policymakers.

Estonia started **preparations for joining the first resettlement programme** in spring 2015. The main reason for this was migration crisis in Europe, as the number of migrants increased dramatically.

Estonia’s initial **capacity** was to receive 20 persons under the resettlement programme, however, at present the resettlement of persons is based on the conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the EU’s Justice and Home Affairs Council and on the 1:1 scheme of the EU-Turkey agreement, under which Estonia would be prepared to receive 168 persons. These persons would be resettled into Estonia from the refugee camps in Turkey.

To prepare for the arrival of resettled persons several changes took place at national level –

- amendments were made to **national asylum legislation** (e.g. according to which the application for international protection (within the framework of resettlement or relocation) may be accepted in the territory of a foreign state);
- relevant ministries and authorities drafted a **detailed action plan** for launching and implementation of the resettlement and relocation schemes at national level;
- in order to ensure the implementation of the action plan, the analysis and the exchange of information on international protection, the Minister of the Interior established in autumn 2015, **high-level Coordination Council for Refugee Policy**, which consists of the representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the Police and Border Guard Board, the Estonian Internal Security Service, the Government Office and the Office of the President of the Republic.
- for the enhancement of cooperation between the various related ministries and national authorities the Ministry of the Interior established **a social partners’ working group** in autumn 2015;
- in order to better organize the governmental communication to the public, **the communication working group** were launched in June 2015 under the leadership of the Government Communication Unit;
- the Government Communication Unit initiated the opening of a **special website on the national refugee policy** on the homepage of the Government of the Republic, that is available both in Estonian and English languages;
- **Information Days** were organised in all counties since the end of October till the beginning of November 2015, whose aim was to present the national action plan regarding the resettlement and relocation of persons, as well as to give an overview of the services that will be provided to beneficiaries of international protection in Estonia. Target group for this events were the managerial personnel of regional and local governments and officials responsible for and organising activities in this area.

- various activities are made or planned in the area of social and health services, education and integration.

The Police and Border Guard Board sent its **Liaison Officer to Turkey** in April 2016. The task of this Liaison Officer is to make preparations for the resettlement of persons. Estonia has received 20 application files from Turkey since May until the middle of June 2016.

At the end of May 2016, Estonia sent its **processing team to Turkey** to start on-site interviews with preselected applicants. Estonian team consists of the officials of the Police and Border Guard Board, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Estonian Internal Security Service. Interpreters are involved, if necessary. The first resettled persons are expected to arrive in Estonia in mid-summer 2016<sup>13</sup>.

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<sup>13</sup> As of May 2016, no refugees have arrived to Estonia under the resettlement programme.

## Section 1: Overview of national context

*This section of the Synthesis Report will briefly outline the Member State legal framework and policies on resettlement and/or humanitarian admission.*

i. General overview of the legal framework on resettlement or humanitarian admission in your Member States. Please also include any recent changes in the legal framework (such as a result of the refugee crisis)

Since Estonia did not participate in any resettlement programmes before 2015, it was not necessary to regulate this activity in national legislation.

The Amendment Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens<sup>14</sup> entered into force as of 1 May 2016, introducing for the first time<sup>15</sup> such terms as ‘resettlement’ and ‘relocation’. The same Act provides that the Government of the Republic shall decide on the participation of Estonia in resettlement and relocation, coordinating it with the European Union Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu. The decision of the Government of the Republic shall determine at least the quota and country of origin of the persons to be resettled or relocated and the year of resettlement or relocation. As an exception, an application for international protection of an alien to be received within the framework of resettlement or relocation may be accepted by the Police and Border Guard Board in the territory of a foreign state. Also, the procedural acts relating to the resettlement or relocation in Estonia or relating to the proceedings of application for international protection may be conducted in the state where the alien is staying during the proceedings of the application. An applicant for and beneficiary of international protection or an alien received within the framework of resettlement or relocation shall be introduced his or her rights and obligations in writing against signature. An alien who has submitted an application for international protection may be relocated or resettled in Estonia after the recognition of the person as a beneficiary of international protection and the grant of residence permit by Estonia<sup>16</sup>.

Estonia commenced with preparations for cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in order to relocate the persons in need of protection from the refugee camps in Turkey to Estonia in 2016. The cooperation agreement is not a premise for such cooperation and resettlement activities and therefore Estonia refrains from concluding an agreement at the moment<sup>17</sup>.

ii. General overview of specific policies in resettlement or humanitarian admission in your Member States. Please also include any recent changes in the policy framework (for instance, as a result of the refugee crisis)

Estonia started preparations for resettlement in spring 2015. While Estonia has formerly not resettled any refugees, is still has processed the applications for asylum that have been lodged either at the border or when the person has already staying in the country.

Estonia’s positions in respect of resettlement and relocation were substantially affected by the migration crisis faced by Europe in spring 2015. On 13 May, the European Commission announced its refugee quota

<sup>14</sup> [RT I, 6.4.2016, 2](#) The Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, § 5<sup>1</sup>

<sup>15</sup> Before these legislative amendments, the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens (AGIPA) regulated the relocation only in the context of the *Council Directive 2001/55/EC on minimum standards for giving temporary protection in the event of a mass influx of displaced persons and on measures promoting a balance of efforts between Member States in receiving such persons and bearing the consequences thereof*.

<sup>16</sup> [RT I, 6.4.2016, 2](#), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens.

plan, according to which Estonia had to receive 326 refugees under the mandatory resettlement programme and 738 refugees under the relocation programme – i.e. in total 1,064 refugees. Following to the decision of the European Commission, the Government of the Republic developed its initial position on 9 June 2015, emphasizing that these mandatory quotas were not acceptable for Estonia at that moment and that Estonia had no capacity to cope with such large numbers of refugees. Furthermore, it would have been the very first time for Estonia to participate in resettlement and relocation programmes. Instead of accepting the quota system proposed by the European Commission, the Government of Estonia suggested to take into consideration the following factors: the share of Estonia's population (0.26 percent of the EU's population) and economy in the European Union (0.14 percent of the EU's economy) as well as the refugees' desire to relocate into Estonia. The allocation of refugees should continue to be based on voluntary efforts. On 12 June 2015, the European Union Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu approved these positions of the Government of the Republic regarding temporary relocation measures for Italy and Greece and in respect of the mandatory relocation plan.

As the migration crisis in Europe showed no signs of stopping, but continued to intensify, the Government of the Republic adopted a decision on its session of 30 June 2015 that the Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Social Affairs in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Research and other involved authorities should develop an action plan for the reception of resettled and relocated persons. According to the initial plan, Estonia aimed at receiving 130 refugees under relocation programme and 20 refugees under resettlement programme in two years (2016-2017). The Government of Estonia on its cabinet meeting of 6 August 2015 approved the action plan.

In connection with the increasing migration crisis the European Commission announced its new plan to alleviate the migratory pressure on 9 September 2015. Following to this new plan, the Government of the Republic developed its positions on 10 September 2015, recognising that Europe is in crisis, with no hope for a quick solution. It also stressed that European unity is of critical importance in such a situation in order to carry out a complex and long-term plan. On 11 September 2015, the European Union Affairs Committee of the Riigikogu approved the positions of the Government of the Republic, confirming the Estonia's willingness to relocate 329 persons in need of protection from Italy and Greece and to resettle 20 persons from the refugee camp in Turkey. Still, at present the resettlement of persons is based on the conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the EU's Justice and Home Affairs Council and on the 1:1 scheme of the EU-Turkey agreement, under which Estonia would be prepared to receive 168 persons. The number of relocated persons would however be equally reduced.<sup>18</sup>

Due to the need of Estonia to be ready to receive an increased number of persons in need of international protection (considering the reception of approximately 550 persons), the relevant ministries and national authorities drafted a new detailed action plan for launching and implementation of the resettlement and relocation schemes of the European Union.

In order to ensure the implementation of the action plan, the analysis and the exchange of information on international protection, the Minister of the Interior established a special Coordination Council for Refugee Policy with its order of 16 September 2015, headed by Deputy Secretary General of the Ministry of the Interior, and coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior. The Coordination Council consists of the representatives of the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Education and

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<sup>18</sup> Postimees, 7.4.2016, available at: <http://www.postimees.ee/3647111/eesti-votab-otse-turgist-vastu-200-sojapogenikku>.

Research, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Communications, the Police and Border Guard Board, the Estonian Internal Security Service, the Government Office and the Office of the President of the Republic.

For the enhancement of cooperation between the various related ministries and national authorities, the Ministry of the Interior established a social partners' working group in autumn 2015<sup>19</sup>. This working group meets once a month and it is aimed at distributing and sharing operational information between all relevant parties regarding the reception of beneficiaries of international protection in Estonia.

In January 2016, the National Audit Office published its audit report<sup>20</sup> that assessed the preparedness of the state and local governments to receive applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection. Audit report identified the areas where preparedness was sufficient as well as areas that still have some room for development and that need to be further enhanced. Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with other ministries and social partners mapped various shortcomings emphasised by the National Audit Office, and these shortcomings are in process to eliminate.

iii. Brief overview of national debate on resettlement in the Member State. Please indicate key points of discussion and players involved in this debate. It is suggested the debate also covers the discussion on resettlement following the refugee crisis.

Migration crisis initiated an active debate on the subject of refugees both in the public and at the level of government parties.

In order to better organize the governmental communication to the public, the communication working group re-launched its activities in June 2015 under the leadership of the Government Communication Unit. This working group consists of the communication experts from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Police and Border Guard Board. The objective of the working group is the synchronization and coordination of communication activities (e.g. media inquiries, initiatives) of various national authorities, as well as the initiation of communication activities in cooperation with the social partners and other interested parties. Furthermore, it supports balanced migration-related public discussions in Estonia and the presentation of implementation of the action plan on the reception of refugees.

The Government Communication Unit initiated the opening of a special website on the national refugee policy on the homepage of the Government of the Republic: *Pagulasküsimus*<sup>21</sup> (Refugee Issues) that is available both in Estonian and English languages.

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<sup>19</sup> Various social partners participate in the meetings of partner networks, such as NGO Estonian Refugee Council, the NGO Johannes Mihkelson Centre, IOM, NGO Pagula, NGO Friendly Estonia, NGO Mondo, NGO Civil Training Centre, NGO Jaan Tõnisson Institute, NGO The Salvation Army in Estonia, the Human Rights Institute, the Estonian Human Rights Centre, the Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Roman Catholic Church, the representatives of the Estonian Council of Churches, and the AS Hoolekandeteenused (welfare services), the Association of Estonian Cities, the Association of Municipalities of Estonia, Salvation Army in Estonia, the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences, the Estonian Assembly of Assistant Police Officers, the Government Office, the EMN national contact point in Estonia, etc.

<sup>20</sup> Document is available at: <http://www.riigikontroll.ee/tabid/206/Audit/2379/Area/1/language/en-US/Default.aspx>.

<sup>21</sup> The website is available at: <https://valitsus.ee/et/pagulased>.

In June 2015, the Government Office commissioned the performance of a survey research by TNS Emor<sup>22</sup> on residents' attitudes to refugees. Based on the results of the research, 32% of the population agreed with the reception of refugees, 42% were against the reception and 26% were on neutral position or did not know.

In December 2015, the public opinion research<sup>23</sup> commissioned by the Government Office and performed by TNS Emor was published on attitudes of Estonian residents to the refugee crises. The objective of the research was to map the attitudes and opinions of Estonian residents to migration and the refugee crisis. The research included information on the importance of reception conditions of refugees for the population, residents' views on the impact of the reception of refugees on the Estonian society, and the public awareness of Estonia's public positions and of public needs for additional information. Based on public opinion, 63% of Estonia's population supported the right to mobility, but 30% of the population considered that the residence of aliens in Estonia might jeopardize the existence of the Estonian state and nation. In general, people's attitudes towards refugees were somewhat cautious: 53% of the population thought that the refugees should not be admitted because it could jeopardize the security in Estonia.

Information Days<sup>24</sup> were organised in all counties since the end of October till the beginning of November 2015, focusing on the managerial personnel of regional and local governments and to officials responsible for and organising activities in this area, and to local council members, school managements as well as other community leaders, village elders, cultural figures and providers of social services. The aim of Information Days was to present the national action plan regarding the resettlement and relocation of persons, as well as to give an overview of the services that will be provided to beneficiaries of international protection in Estonia.

## Section 2: Overview of the national resettlement and/or humanitarian admission programme

### 2.1 National resettlement and/or humanitarian admission programme

#### **Q1a. Does your Member State have a resettlement programme, humanitarian admission programme or other similar programme in place, or did your Member State have one in the past?**

**Note:** in case of more than one programme, please it make clear in the textbox and then refer to 'Programme 1', 'Programme 2' and so on when answering the next questions. If your Member State had a programme in the past please fill out the sections below, but make it clear in the answers that it concerns a previous programme.

Yes, currently<sup>25</sup>

Yes, previously, from \_\_\_ to \_\_\_

No

#### **Q1b. Is it a resettlement programme, humanitarian admission programme or another programme?**

*The definitions and differences are described above under "7. Definitions".*

<sup>22</sup> The summary of the research is available at: [https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/pagulastega\\_seotud\\_hoiakud\\_omnibus.pdf](https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/pagulastega_seotud_hoiakud_omnibus.pdf).

<sup>23</sup> The report on the research is available at: [https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/arvamusuuring\\_eesti\\_elanike\\_suhtumisest\\_pogenikekriisi\\_dets2015.pdf](https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/arvamusuuring_eesti_elanike_suhtumisest_pogenikekriisi_dets2015.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> Representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Research participated in the Information Days. Information Days were organised by the Civil Service Development and Training Centre of the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences.

<sup>25</sup> Currently Estonia is setting up the resettlement programme

(Resettlement programme / Humanitarian admission programme / Other programme)

If other, please specify:

Resettlement programme

**Q1c. Is it a permanent (programme-based) or temporary (ad-hoc) programme?**

Please substantiate your answer below.

Temporary programme

**Member States that do not currently have an operational resettlement or humanitarian admission programme, please fill out the sections below (where applicable) and, if not applicable, please go directly to Section 2.4 (question 21)**

**Q2. Please fill out the table below by indicating what the main objectives of the resettlement or humanitarian admission programme are (i.e. stemming irregular migration flows, contributing to humanitarian relief in third countries, provide legal avenues for migration, etc.)**

Estonia has joined the resettlement programme, mainly because of the 2015 migration crisis in Europe. Estonia participates voluntarily in resolving the crisis, and this participation is proportional to its size in the European Union. Estonia's initial capacity was to receive 20 persons under the resettlement programme, however, at present the resettlement of persons is based on the conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the EU's Justice and Home Affairs Council and on the 1:1 scheme of the EU-Turkey agreement, under which Estonia would be prepared to receive 168 persons<sup>26</sup>. These persons would be resettled into Estonia from the refugee camps in Turkey.

**Q3. How has your Member State set up the resettlement or humanitarian admission programme?**

Please describe briefly the process followed by your Member States in setting up such a programme and the steps taken from its inception until the current status (working with NGOs, UNHCR, IOM, through bilateral agreements, study visits to third countries).

Estonia is currently developing its resettlement system that encompasses the activities prior to the arrival of persons as well as their initial adaptation in the country. At present, Estonia is not planning to sign a separate cooperation agreement with the UNHCR<sup>27</sup>.

Also, Estonia is considering the signing of a letter of guarantee with the IOM for organising the transport of persons to the host country.

In April 2016, Estonia sent its Liaison Officer to Turkey. The duties of the Liaison Officer include: selection of persons to be potentially resettled; preparation of interviews; and cooperation with relevant EU and UN agencies<sup>28</sup>. Estonia's Liaison Officer collects individual fingerprints (enters the data into the EURODAC system), photographs the refugees, identifies the specific needs of these persons, and gathers data for the identification of family ties, if necessary<sup>29</sup>.

<sup>26</sup> Postimees, 7.4.2016, available at: <http://www.postimees.ee/3647111/eesti-votab-otse-turgist-vastu-200-sojapogenikku>.

<sup>27</sup> Reasons provided in Section 1.

<sup>28</sup> Postimees, 7.4.2016, available at: <http://www.postimees.ee/3647111/eesti-votab-otse-turgist-vastu-200-sojapogenikku>.

<sup>29</sup> Interview with an official of the Police and Border Guard Board in 5<sup>th</sup> May 2016.



First application files from Turkey arrived to Estonia for processing in the middle of May 2016. The security background check of relevant persons is performed in Estonia. At the end of May, the proceedings team was sent to Turkey consisting of the officials of the Police and Border Guard Board, the Estonian Internal Security Service and the Ministry of Social Affairs, and an interpreter.

The Police and Border Guard Board adopts an individual decision in respect of each person participating in the process. A negative decision can be made only on the basis that the respective person would pose a threat to public order and national security.

The Police and Border Guard Board organises for resettled persons the necessary travel documents for travelling to Estonia.

**Q4. Please provide the main characteristics of the resettlement or humanitarian admission programme by completing the table below.**

Question	Answer					
<b>When did your Member State start the resettlement programme and/or humanitarian admission programme?</b>	Estonia started preparations for the resettlement programme in spring 2015. As of May 2016, so far no refugees have arrived to Estonia under the resettlement programme.					
<b>Does your Member State set geographical priorities in resettlement or humanitarian admission during the 2011-2016 period? (such as regions, nationalities)</b>	Yes/No Under the resettlement programme, Estonia accepts persons from the refugee camps in Turkey.					
<i>Have nationals of countries in the following regions been included in resettlement or humanitarian admission for the years 2011-2016?</i>  Yes/No	North Africa	Sub-Saharan Africa	Middle East	Other parts of Asia	Americas	Other, please specify
<b>Does the resettled person need to have been recognised as refugee by UNHCR or a third country?</b>	N/A					
<b>Does your Member State reassess the recognition of persons for resettlement by UNHCR?</b>	Yes/No	If yes, when is this done?	If yes, where is the reassessment carried out?	If yes, how is the reassessment carried out?		
<b>Does your Member State set an annual or multi-annual quota for resettlement?</b>	Yes/No					
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016



Question	Answer
<i>If applicable, please indicate the <u>regular quota</u> per year</i>	
<i>If applicable, please indicate the <u>emergency quota</u> per year</i>	
<b>How are the above quota determined and applied? (please indicate who determines the quota, how they are set and what are the quota for both regular and emergency resettlement)</b>	N/A
<b>In the period 2011-2015, have quota differed significantly from the actual number of persons resettled? If so, how (much) and why?</b>	N/A

## 2.2 Pre-departure and departure phase

**Q5a. Please indicate who are the key players/actors and their responsibilities in the selection, pre-departure and departure phase?** This concerns national and/or regional state actors, international organisations, NGOs, private sector entities, etc.

The list of relevant authorities may not be definitive, since Estonia is still creating its resettlement system and no refugees have arrived to Estonia under this programme.

Various administrations are responsible for the selection, pre-departure and departure phase of resettled persons.

**Ministry of the Interior** shapes the Estonian asylum policy and is responsible for the promotion and carrying out of adaptation programmes. The area of responsibility of the Ministry of the Interior also includes the management of the Coordination Council for Refugee Policy in the context of the resettlement programme.

**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. In the context of the resettlement programme, the PBGB is responsible for the following tasks: sending a Liaison Officer to Turkey, completing of individual files and gathering of necessary data, processing of applications for international protection in Turkey (deployment of immigration Liaison Officers), finding of interpreters necessary for the performance of procedural acts, processing of applications for international protection in Estonia, participation in the decision-making process in respect of individual persons, organisation of transport and necessary documents for refugees.

**The Estonian Internal Security Service (KAPO)** is subordinated to the Ministry of the Interior and its main task is to guarantee the internal security in the country. In the context of the resettlement programme, the KAPO shall perform the following tasks: performance of security background checks, processing of

applications for international protections in Turkey (deployment of immigration Liaison Officers), and participation in the decision-making process in respect of individual persons.

**Ministry of Social Affairs** is responsible for organising the reception of the resettled persons and planning various services that are offered in cooperation with public, private and non-governmental partners (in Estonia). In the context of the resettlement programme, the Ministry shall perform the following tasks: processing of applications for international protections in Turkey (deployment of immigration Liaison Officers), identification of individual preparedness for integration, including presenting a brief introduction of Estonia, and participation in the decision-making process in respect of individual persons.

**Q5. Please indicate in the table below which authority/actor is responsible for each of the actions/measures indicated and briefly explain their responsibilities.** Please note that more details as to how each task/step of the resettlement process is carried out, are further detailed in subsequent questions (e.g. selection criteria, etc.).

Action/measure	Authority/actor responsible	Explanation of responsibilities (when, how and what)
Policymaking on national resettlement programme/strategy (including objectives, geographical focus, priorities, etc.)	Ministry of the Interior	
First selection of the candidate for resettlement	Police and Border Guard Board	So far no individuals have arrived in Estonia under the programme.
Decision on the final selection of a candidate for resettlement/humanitarian admission	Police and Border Guard Board, Ministry of Social Affairs, Estonian Internal Security Service	So far no individuals have arrived in Estonia under the programme.
Departure and travel	Police and Border Guard Board	So far no individuals have arrived in Estonia under the programme.
Provision of information to the selected person ( <u>before departure</u> )	Police and Border Guard Board	What information is provided? When is it provided? How is it provided?  A written material is provided to persons that outlines the procedure of resettlement and gives an overview of Estonia.

<p>Provision of cultural orientation to the selected person (before departure)</p>	<p>Ministry of Social Affairs</p>	<p>What orientation is provided? When is it provided? How is it provided?</p> <p>The presentation includes the state and society in Estonia – geographical location, climate, the functioning of the regime and the society in Estonia. The presentation also covers practical issues – support system and arrangements for living in Estonia, performance of financial transactions, etc.</p> <p>The presentation about the country is made during the interviews performed in the source country. The presentation is carried out in the form of a conversation, using illustrative slides and distributing written informative materials to persons.<sup>30</sup></p>
<p><i>Please add rows where necessary</i></p>		

The questions below concern the identification of persons for resettlement.

**Q6. How does your Member State approach the identification of persons for resettlement in terms of first steps and relations with key stakeholders?** Please describe the process followed by your Member State. If this process is not always the same, please describe when they differ and why this is the case (such as UNHCR and third countries)?

Since Estonia is participating in the resettlement programme for the first time, the process is still evolving. At present, Estonia uses concurrently both methods – mission-based processing of persons and dossier-based processing of persons. The quality of information gathered is the advantage of using these two methods at the same time.

The questions below concern the criteria used by your Member State and/or UNHCR for the selection of persons for resettlement.

<sup>30</sup> Response of the Ministry of Social Affairs of 9 June 2016.

**Q7. Please indicate which methods are used for the selection of persons for resettlement**

Method	Existence of a defined method (Yes/No)	Further explanation
<u>Selection missions</u>		
Selection missions to the third country		
<i>If selection missions are carried out, a) how often? b) Are they carried out to all countries from which persons are resettled?</i>	a) b)	
Personal on-site interviews with candidates <i>(If yes, please indicate who carries out the interviews)</i>		
<u>Dossier-based selection</u>		
Dossier-based selection		
Video/telephone interviews with candidates		
Consultations with UNHCR/IOM (tripartite consultations) <i>(If yes, please indicate when and how often)</i>		
Consultations with EASO <i>(If yes, please indicate when and how often)</i>		
Consultations with civil society/NGOs on criteria for selection of candidates		
Consultations with authorities in which resettled person is present		
Arrangement of interpreters for interviewing candidates		
<i>Other method, please specify</i> <i>Please add more rows where necessary</i>		

**Q8a. Does your Member (State) use criteria and preferences for the selection of persons for resettlement? These criteria should be understood as additional ones to the key requirement of being eligible to international protection and those applied by UNHCR in its selection**

Yes/No

If yes, please see questions 7b and 7c. If no, please go to question 8.

\*The Synthesis Report will highlight that the selected person must be eligible to international protection, therefore the Member State will verify that there are no exclusion clauses under Article 12 of the Qualification Directive (2011/95/EU). If you have comments on this aspect, please state it below:

The primary objective of the procedure is to identify the persons' need for protection and whether they might pose a potential threat to the security and public order in Estonia. The officials consider *inter alia* the person's potential for integration; however, this is not a basis for refusal.

**Q8b. If yes, who sets such criteria and how?** Please specify if there is a quota approach and if a specific weighting is used.

Since Estonia is participating in the resettlement programme for the first time, the selection criteria are still evolving.

At present, Estonia<sup>31</sup> has mapped the preferred profiles of persons<sup>32</sup> received under the resettlement programme:

- Vulnerable groups – mostly **single-parent families**, since Estonia has the ability and capacity to offer them comprehensive support for raising a child and finding livelihood. Also, Estonia could receive, to a lesser extent, **unaccompanied minors**;
- **Whole families** (parents and minor children) in order to promote swift adaptation and integration as well as to minimize the risk of secondary migration;
- In order to be successful in everyday communication with the local government and other providers of support services, it is essential that **at least one family member is proficient in conversational English, Russian, French or German language**. At present, the provision of support services to persons who command only other languages is complicated and limited, dependent on the availability of translators/interpreters, which could be none or extremely limited in Estonia.

For the prevention of secondary migration and any potential conflicts with local population as well as for promoting swift integration in the society, the Ministry of the Interior considers it to be of utmost importance that the resettlement of an applicant to Estonia is performed only **with the consent of the person** in need of protection.

<sup>31</sup> Preferred profiles of persons were developed by the Ministry of the Interior in cooperation with other ministries and relevant authorities.

<sup>32</sup> Action plan consist of preferred persons profiles. Document is available at: [https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/vastuvotmise\\_tegevuskava\\_08102015.pdf](https://valitsus.ee/sites/default/files/content-editors/failid/vastuvotmise_tegevuskava_08102015.pdf).

**Q8c. If yes, please indicate the relevant criteria and preferences for the selection of persons for resettlement.** These criteria could match with those identified by UNHCR, but can also be preferences part of the discretionary power of Member States.

<b>Criterion</b> <i>(in italic some suggested)</i>	<b>Please comment on the importance of the criterion and explain the circumstances when this one is applied</b>
<b>Assessed degree of vulnerability of the person(s)</b>	
<i>Survivors of violence and/or torture</i>	
<i>At risk of violence and/or torture and people at serious risk of violence and/or torture due to persecution</i>	
<i>Lack of Foreseeable Alternative Durable Solutions</i>	
<i>Persons in need of medical assistance, including critical illness, genital mutilation</i>	
<i>Persons at serious risk of persecution due to their sexual orientation or gender identity</i>	
<i>Persons at serious risk of persecution due to Religion/beliefs (also specific focus on non-believers)</i>	
<i>Persons at serious risk of persecution due to political beliefs</i>	
<i>Persons at serious risk of persecution due to belonging to specific ethnic group, social group or belonging to minority, indigenous group, nationality</i>	
<i>Legal and/or physical protection needs of the refugee in the country of refuge (this includes a risk of refoulement);</i>	
<i>Other exclusion criterion, please specify</i>  <i>Please add more rows where necessary</i>	
<b>Other criteria</b>	
Sex (men, women)	
Age (i.e. adults, children, elderly)	

<b>Criterion</b> <i>(in italic some suggested)</i>	<b>Please comment on the importance of the criterion and explain the circumstances when this one is applied</b>
<b>Assessed degree of vulnerability of the person(s)</b>	
Religion (preferred (non-) religious group)	
Presence of family members in the Member State	
Potential security risk for the person because of the nationality/ethnic group he/she belongs to	
Integration potential or assessed/expected motivation integrate	
<i>Other exclusion criterion, please specify</i>  <i>Please add more rows where necessary</i>	

**Q9a. Does your Member State use criteria to deprioritise certain persons for resettlement?**

Yes/No

If yes, please go to questions 9b and 9c. If no, please go to question 10.

**Q9b. Who sets the criteria for deprioritising and how is this approached in practice?**

Since Estonia does not have the corresponding support system, at present we are in difficulties to accept the victims of torture or other direct violent acts.

**Q9c. Please indicate if there are criteria for deprioritising certain persons from the selection for resettlement.**

<b>Criterion</b> <i>(in italic some suggested)</i>	<b>Please comment on the importance of the criterion and explain the circumstances when it is applied</b>
<b><i>Substance (ab)use of the refugee</i></b>	
<b><i>Refugees judged to lack integration potential</i></b>	
<b><i>Refugees with family composition issues</i></b> <i>(unresolved child custody issues, underage marriage)</i>	
<b><i>Refugees with complex profiles, including:</i></b>	

<b>Criterion</b> <i>(in italic some suggested)</i>	<b>Please comment on the importance of the criterion and explain the circumstances when it is applied</b>
<i>high-ranking members of government/authorities, judges, prosecutors</i>	
<i>Individuals involved in the military or private security, intelligence branches, paramilitary and militant groups</i>	
<i>Members of police forces</i>	
<i>Staff at prisons or detention centres</i>	
<i>Informants</i>	
<i>Individuals on the EU sanctions list</i>	
<i>Individuals who (allegedly) committed serious crimes in their country of origin</i>	
<b>Persons who have direct family members engaged as combatants</b>	
<i>Other exclusion criterion, please specify</i>  <i>Please add more rows where necessary</i>	

The following questions regard the period after the selection to resettle but before actual departure to the Member State.

**Q10a. What is the overall procedure followed in the immediate aftermath of the decision to resettle?**

Please indicate the administrative steps to be taken and how authorities and responsible stakeholders prepare for departure. Please describe the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders involved in this process.

Since no individuals have been resettled so far, there is no relevant practice.

**Q10b. Is there a formal agreement signed by both the resettled person and Member State after selection and before departure? If yes, what is covered by such an agreement?**

No, there isn't any formal agreement between a person and Member State.

**Q11a. How is the person actually transferred to the Member State?** Please indicate who organises the travel, how travel is carried out in practice (individual, charter or normal commercial flight; transit arrangements via Schengen or non-Schengen States) and what services are normally included (special arrangements for persons with disabilities, access to medication where necessary, etc.). (For services immediately upon arrival, see below.)



Since Estonia is participating in the resettlement programme for the first time, the process is still evolving. As of May 2016, no refugees have arrived to Estonia under the resettlement programme.

**Q11b. Are there specific services available for vulnerable persons when they are being transferred to the Member State?** (Special pick-up from the place of stay, at the airport, during the flight).

No, special services are not provided. All services are provided on need bases. All persons pass the medical examination, transport from the airport to the apartment is arranged by support persons etc.<sup>33</sup>

### 2.3 Post-arrival and integration phase

This phase concerns the period right after the physical arrival of the resettled person on the territory of the Member State.

**Q12. Which are the key players/actors and their responsibilities in the post-arrival and integration phase?** This concerns players national, regional and local state actors, NGOs, schools and education providers, health care providers, private sector entities, etc.

Player	Responsibilities
Police and Border Guard Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Granting of international protection and temporary residence permit / issuance of the document. Extension of residence permit, if necessary.</li> </ul>

<sup>33</sup> Ministry of Social Affairs response on 09.06.201

<p>Ministry of Social Affairs</p>	<p>Organisation of various services provided to resettled persons –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary health check of received persons at the airport, and a thorough medical examination in the hospital (the service is carried out by the service provider).</li> <li>• Provision of accommodation to received persons (the service is carried out by the provider of realtor services).</li> <li>• Provision of support person services and translation/interpretation services to received persons (the service is carried out by the service provider).</li> <li>• Provision of Estonian language courses (A1-B2 level) (the service is carried out by the school of languages).</li> </ul>
<p>Ministry of the Interior</p>	<p>Development of the adaptation programme<sup>34</sup> and organisation of the tender for the beneficiaries of international protection (the service is carried out by the service provider).</p>
<p>Ministry of Education and Research</p>	<p>Organisation of the education area of children and adults (pre-school and school education, further education, higher education). Counselling of teachers and educational institutions through the activities of the Foundation Innove. Recognition of qualifications through the Estonian ENIC/NARIC centre.</p>
<p>Government Communication Unit</p>	<p>Preparation of media coverage in the area, support for discussions, commissioning of monitoring of public opinions and media.</p>
<p>Ministry of Culture</p>	<p>Integration-related counselling (after adaptation) through the activities of the Integration and Migration Foundation.</p>

<sup>34</sup> The Ministry of the Interior is responsible for centrally coordinating the adaptation programme. This service is provided by contractual partners, for beneficiaries of international protection the service provider is IOM). Ministry of the Interior coordinates the performance of the adaptation programme through the Police and Border Guard Board who is responsible for referring persons to the adaptation programme. Organized adaptation programme is a one-day module, which lasts for up to 8 hours (Beneficiaries are also entitled to participate in other modules of the adaptation programme in addition to the international protection module). The training is provided in Russian, English, Arabic and French. The international protection module of the adaptation programme is financed by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Participation in the work of the Coordination Council for Refugee Policy.
Ministry of Justice	Participation in the work of the Coordination Council for Refugee Policy.
Ministry of Finance	Participation in the work of the Coordination Council for Refugee Policy, planning of financial needs of the state budget.
NGO Estonian Refugee Council	Provision of support person services <sup>35</sup> to received persons.
Johannes Mihkelson Centre	Provision of support person services <sup>36</sup> to received persons.
International Organisation for Migration (IOM) In Estonia	Provision of the international protection module under the adaptation programme.
Local governments	Organisation of the provision of social welfare, i.e. organise, assign and pay social services and benefits. Local authorities provide the social counselling service.
Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund	Operates under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Assist persons in finding a job and receiving employment services and employment subsidies. Provide various vocational trainings and Estonian language courses.
Estonian Evangelical Lutheran Church	Providing assistance in finding accommodation.
SOS Children's Village in Estonia	Providing substitute home services to unaccompanied minors.

**Q13. What is the immediate support available upon arrival (presumably by plane) for resettled persons?** This concerns only the immediate support on arrival, most likely within the first hours or day. Please fill in the table below and add extra rows if necessary.

Measure	Yes/No	Further explanation
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<sup>35</sup> The service is provided by the network of volunteers

<sup>36</sup> The service is financed by the AMIF through the Ministry of the Interior

Airport pick-up	Yes	The person is welcomed by support persons at the airport. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the service.
Provision of (temporary) documentation	Yes	This practice is absent at present. Police and Border Guard Board is responsible for this.
Food	Yes	Provided according to the need. The Ministry of Social Affairs is the responsible authority.
Lodging ( <i>more detailed questions below</i> )	Yes	Lodging is prepared before the arrival of the person (or family). The Ministry of Social Affairs is the responsible authority.
Clothing	Yes	Provided according to the need. The Ministry of Social Affairs is the responsible authority.
Medical examination	Yes	Medical examinations are carried out by a suitably qualified health care provider. The Ministry of Social Affairs is the responsible authority.
Other form of health care	Yes	Provided according to the need. The Ministry of Social Affairs is the responsible authority.
<i>First contact with support person</i>	Yes	The person is received at the airport by support persons of the Johannes Mihkelson Centre or the NGO Estonian Refugee Council. The Ministry of Social Affairs is the responsible authority.
<i>Translation service</i>	Yes	If needed

The following questions regard the permit granted to the person admitted under resettlement or humanitarian admission.

**Q14a. What status is granted to the person resettled or admitted under humanitarian admission? Does it differ from the status given to persons granted international protection for 'regular' asylum applications?** Please indicate the duration and other relevant details (extension, etc.).

No, it does not differ. A person is granted international protection and temporary residence permit.

**Q14b. If the person is not granted the 'standard' refugee status and related residence permit upon arrival, what legal title is granted?** If there are multiple types of resettlement or humanitarian admission, please add more rows or clearly distinguish this information.

Type of programme	Permit/residence title granted	Initial duration of the permit (in months)	If applicable, extensions possible for the permit	Please provide further details where necessary/applicable
Resettlement Programme	N/A			
Humanitarian Admission Programme				

**Q15a. Do resettled persons or persons admitted under humanitarian admission have the right to family reunification?**

Yes/No

**Q15b. If yes, to what extent is the right to family reunification for resettled persons or persons admitted under humanitarian admission different than for others persons granted refugee status?**

It does not differ. A person is entitled to family reunification under the procedure provided by the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens.

**Q15c. Do resettled persons or persons admitted under humanitarian admission have access to naturalisation/citizenship?**

Yes/No

**Q15d. If yes, to what extent is access to naturalisation/citizenship for the resettled person or person admitted under humanitarian admission different than for other persons granted refugee status?**

It does not differ. A person is entitled to Estonian citizenship under the procedure provided by the Citizenship Act.

The following set of questions describe the geographical distribution of resettled persons and the allocation of (different types of) housing. The aim is to better understand the specific practices in Member States in the physical resettling of persons immediately upon arrival and the period straight after.

**Q16a. Is there geographical distribution in the Member State of the resettled persons?** Geographical distribution is the placement of resettled persons in different areas/provinces/municipalities of the Member State according to national priorities.

Yes/No

Please explain:

In organising the settlement of persons in the territory of a local government, the officials shall take into account the state of health of the beneficiary of international protection, the place of the residence of the relatives by blood or marriage and other significant circumstances, and consider the housing and employment

opportunities, including the proportional allocation of beneficiaries of international protection among the local governments.<sup>37</sup>

**If no, go to question 17. If yes, please answer 16b.**

**Q16b. Who decides on geographical distribution and how does it work in practice?** (in terms of funding allocated to municipalities taking in resettled persons, availability of housing, access to schools and employment, preferences of the person)?

The Ministry of Social Affairs or an agency within the area of government of the Ministry of Social Affairs organises the settlement of a beneficiary of international protection in the territory of a local government in an agreement with the local government. Where necessary, it has the right to involve a representative of the Ministry of the Interior in the proceedings for agreement with a local government. A beneficiary of international protection may participate in the selection of the local government most suited to him or her.<sup>38</sup>

**Q17a. Please indicate which types of housing are available to resettled persons upon arrival and how housing is arranged in your Member State by indicating the maximum duration and who provides the accommodation**

Housing for resettled person(s)	Yes-always Yes-Often Yes-Seldom/rarely Not used	Maximum duration (months/permanent)	Who provides the accommodation? (government, NGOs, resettled person)	Further explanations
Accommodation in reception centres	Not used			
Accommodation in temporary shelter/housing (tents, converted buildings such as schools)	Not used			
Accommodation in social/council housing	It is possible, but not used.	There is no time limit	Local government	
Accommodation in hotels or other types of housing (formerly) foreseen for tourists	Not used			
Accommodation in regular/private housing	Yes-often	There is no time limit	Local government	The apartments are rented.
Other, please specify Please add more rows where necessary				

<sup>37</sup> [RTI.6.4.2016.2](#), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, § 73 (2)

<sup>38</sup> [RTI.6.4.2016.2](#), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, § 73 (2)

**Q17b. Is a resettled person allowed to freely move elsewhere in the Member State once housing has been allocated?**

Yes, immediately

Yes, but after \_\_\_ months/ No

**Yes, when certain conditions have been satisfied, which are:**

-

**Q17c. Is a resettled person allowed to freely travel to another Member State once housing has been allocated?**

Yes, immediately/ after \_\_\_ months / No

**Yes, when certain conditions have been satisfied, which are:**

-

The following set of questions describe the services and resources available for the integration of resettled persons. The aim is to better understand the specific practices in Member States in the physical resettling of persons immediately upon arrival and the period straight after. Please note that information and cultural orientation are not covered here but rather in the next set of questions on p.27.

**Q18a. Which services are responsible for assisting the resettled person? Please indicate whether these are public authorities, NGOs, individual tutors and counsellors.**

In Estonia the **Ministry of Social Affairs** is responsible for organising the reception of resettled persons and planning various services that are offered in cooperation with public, private and non-governmental partners. Ministry coordinates through its authorities – the **Estonian Unemployment Insurance Fund** and the **Estonian Social Insurance Board** – accordingly the provision of employment services and social benefits. The housing and Estonian language courses has outsourced via service providers.

The role of **local authorities** is to organise the provision of social welfare, i.e. to organise, assign and pay social services and benefits. Although the subsistence benefit is paid from the state budget.

**Ministry of the Interior** is responsible for centrally coordinating the Welcoming programme. The programme is provided by a service provider. The programme is financed in part by the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and European Social Fund (ESF). The specific part of the programme provided only to recipients of protection is provided by IOM's Tallinn office.

The support person service is provided by **the Estonian Refugee Council**<sup>39</sup> and **the Johannes Mihkelson Centre**<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>39</sup> [www.pagulasabi.ee](http://www.pagulasabi.ee) The support person service is provided by volunteers.

<sup>40</sup> [www.jmk.ee](http://www.jmk.ee). The support person service is co-financed by the Ministry of the Interior and EU funds.

**Q18b. Please indicate in the table below which integration measures are available specifically to persons admitted under resettlement and/or humanitarian admission, and who provides them.**

The EMN Focussed Study “Integration of beneficiaries of international/humanitarian protection into the labour market: policies and good practices” covers labour market migration and its elements covered at length in that study do not need to be repeated here.

Service or measure	Available (Yes/No)	Who provides the service?	For how long is it available? (weeks, months, years)	Please explain the type of service available and how it works in practice	Are these services different than for other persons granted refugee status (not under resettlement)?
<b>Weekly or monthly allowance</b> (please indicate the amount per person)	Yes	Local governments	Service is based on the need.	Local governments may pay <sup>41</sup> to a person whose financial status does not allow to support himself or herself, <b>subsistence benefits</b> <sup>42</sup> for covering the housing costs and providing income.	No
<b>In-kind support</b> (food, clothing, transportation, furniture, household supplies, and other basic needs)	Yes	Provision of service is organised by the Ministry of Social Affairs through a service provider.	Within the first month.	N/A	No
<b>Initial medical check-up</b> (including screening, vaccinations)	Yes	1) Medical examinations are carried out by a suitably qualified health care provider. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the service. 2) Health surveillance for communicable diseases. The service is provided	1) In the first day of arrival. 2) In the first month.	N/A  N/A	Yes  Yes

<sup>41</sup> A local government may pay subsistence benefit to person whose financial status does not allow him or her to support himself or herself. Subsistence benefit is linked to the subsistence level that depends on the number of family members. The subsistence level for 2016 is 130 euro per month for a person living alone or the first family member, and 104 euro for the second and each subsequent family member. The subsistence level for each minor family member is also 130 euro per month in 2016. For receiving the subsistence benefit, the person 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. Subsistence benefits are paid by local authorities through the state budget.

<sup>42</sup> [RT I 2006.2.3](#), the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens, § 75 paragraph 2



Service or measure	Available (Yes/No)	Who provides the service?	For how long is it available? (weeks, months, years)	Please explain the type of service available and how it works in practice	Are these services different than for other persons granted refugee status (not under resettlement)?
		either by the West Tallinn Central Hospital or the Hospital of the University of Tartu.			
<b>Full access to healthcare</b> (for specialised care, etc.)	Yes	The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the service.	Since the first month of arrival until the end of stay in the country.	N/A	No
<b>Access to specialised services for survivors of violence and victims of torture, women or girls at risk, children at risk, refugees with disabilities, elderly, persons not likely to enter the labour force</b> (including counsellors, psychologists, mental health checks, etc.)	Yes	The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the service.	Since the first/second month of arrival. The service is based on the need.	N/A	No
<b>Education support</b> ((a)school registration for children, (b) recognition of qualifications)	Yes	In educational matters, assistance is provided by the support person service providers (Johannes Mihkelson Centre and the Estonian Refugee Council) and the educational consultants of the Ministry of Education and Research.  Estonian ENIC/NARIC is responsible for the recognition of	Since the first month of arrival. The service is based on the need.	N/A	No

Service or measure	Available (Yes/No)	Who provides the service?	For how long is it available? (weeks, months, years)	Please explain the type of service available and how it works in practice	Are these services different than for other persons granted refugee status (not under resettlement)?
		educational and vocational qualifications and certificates.			
<b>Social support</b> (family reunification, legal support, advocacy and community outreach)	Yes	The Police and Border Guard Board and NGOs in case of family reunification; state and NGOs provide legal assistance, NGOs provide assistance in creating relations with the community	Based on the need.	N/A	No
<b>Availability of interpreters/translation for reception and orientation sessions and appointments with service providers</b>	Yes	Partner organisation of the Ministry of Social Affairs.	Since the first day of arrival for up to 2 years.	N/A	Yes
Estonian language courses	Yes	The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the service.	For up to 2 years.	N/A	Yes

**Q19a. What funding is made available specifically for resettlement, to whom is it made available, and how is this allocated?** Is there a monthly or annual fixed sum per resettled person or an overall annual budget regardless of the number of resettled persons? Please indicate whether this covers funding at national, regional and local level and to what extent the Member State relies on EU (AMIF) funding. Please clearly indicate whether this funding is available to all persons granted international protection by your Member State or is specific funding under resettlement or humanitarian admission programmes.

The relevant ministries have assessed that resettlement leads to various costs in the period of 2015-2019. These costs will be covered through the following sources: state budget, the support from foreign funds, the gambling tax, EU funds – resources allocated to each resettled person (10,000 EUR), and reserve funds of the Government of the Republic.

**Q19b. Please indicate the national annual funding available for resettlement (only resettlement activities until the arrival in the (Member) State, not including the budget/funding for after-arrival services).** If funding is allocated as a fixed sum per resettled person please consider all funding that were allocated for all resettled persons. Please also indicate what the funding includes.

<i>If yes, please indicate the quota</i>	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
<b>Budget for resettlement</b>	-	-	-	-	-	N/A
<b>What does it include?</b>	-					

The following set of questions concern the provision of information and cultural orientation.

**Q20a. To what extent is information and cultural orientation provided to resettled persons upon arrival?**

Please include the information in the table below **and indicate to what extent the information and orientation provided under resettlement and humanitarian admission is different from the one provided to other persons granted international protection by your Member State**

<b>What information/cultural orientation is provided</b>	<b>When is the information/cultural orientation provided</b>	<b>Who provides the information/cultural orientation?</b>	<b>How is the information/cultural orientation provided</b>	<b>Is the information/cultural orientation different from what is provided to other persons granted international protection (not under resettlement)?</b>
<i>e.g., community orientation, transportation and travel, overview of rights, role of the police, opening bank account, etc.</i>	<i>e.g.: upon arrival, during the first week/month etc.</i>	<i>e.g., social worker, municipality officers, Police, etc.</i>	<i>e.g., oral/written, leaflets, etc.</i>	
Welcoming programme – all issues regarding everyday life (legal status, laws, state, culture, language, work, education, finances, living in Estonia)	During the first month.	IOM Estonia under contract with the Ministry of the Interior	Training and comprehensive material	No
Persons are supported to deal with daily living arrangements.	Immediately after arrival. Especial support is provided during first six months, after that period the service is based on the needs.	Support person. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for the service.	Through communication	No

**Q20b. How is the receiving community at local level prepared for the arrival of the resettled person(s) through the provision of information?** Please indicate the type of information provided (oral or written information), the receivers of such information (local authority offices, schools, community centres) and how this information is spread.

Since June 2015, the communication working group launched its activities under the leadership of the Government Communication Unit. This working group consists of the communication experts from the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Education and Research, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Police and Border Guard Board. The objective of the working group is the provision of balanced information in the area. For the distribution of information a special website on the national refugee policy has been opened on the homepage of the Government of the Republic: *Pagulasküsimus* (Refugee Issues) that is available both in Estonian and English languages – <https://valitsus.ee/et/pagulased>.

**Q20c. How are government officials, local NGOs, citizens and other people at local level informed/trained on how to deal with the arrival of resettled persons? Who receives this information/training and how does it is provided?**

In order to ensure a better preparation of local governments for the reception of resettled persons, several information activities have been organised:

- On 21-22 July 2015, the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Social Affairs participated in migration-related Information Days in Jõhvi, Tartu, Pärnu and Tallinn. Information Days were focused on the managerial level of local governments.
- Information Days<sup>43</sup> were organised in all counties since 26 October 2015, within the period of 3 weeks, focusing on the managerial personnel of regional and local governments and to officials responsible for and organising activities in this area, and to local council members, school managements as well as other community leaders, village elders, cultural figures and providers of social services. The aim of Information Days was to present the national action plan regarding the resettlement and relocation of persons, as well as to give an overview of the services that will be provided to beneficiaries of international protection in Estonia.
- Prior to the arrival of persons, the Ministry of Social Affairs contacts local governments regarding the reception of these persons.
- Local police is informed of persons arriving in their community. Regional and local trainings are conducted for officials and officers to effectively engage the persons and local community.

## 2.4 Member States without or currently setting up a resettlement or humanitarian admission programme

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<sup>43</sup> Representatives of the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Education and Research participated in the Information Days. Information Days were organised by the Civil Service Development and Training Centre of the Estonian Academy of Security Sciences.

Member States that currently do not have a resettlement or humanitarian admission programme might be interested in having such a programme or have specific reasons why they currently are not able or do not wish to set up such a programme. The questions below will explore in further details Member States' considerations.

**Q21. Are there any plans to establish such a programme in the foreseeable future?**

Yes / No

Please substantiate your answer below.

Estonia has started to participate in the resettlement programme (a more detailed explanation is provided under Q22-23). As of May 2016, no resettled persons have arrived to Estonia.

**Q22. Is there a debate in your Member State about whether to set-up a resettlement programme? Please indicate the pros and cons presented whether or not to have a national resettlement programme**

Yes.

Estonia's positions regarding resettlement and relocation were amended after spring 2015 when the European Commission published its Communication on the Action Plan on migration.

Since Estonia joined the EU, the Government of the Republic has drafted several framework documents, which determine the key positions of Estonia that form the basis for the Government in implementing its operational objectives in the EU. The official position of Estonia<sup>44</sup> for 2007-2011 was to support the EU in the establishment of a common resettlement programme. It was added, however, that the resettlement of refugees by the EU Member States must continue to be based on voluntary efforts. The key priority of Estonia was the integration of immigrants already residing in Estonia, and therefore there were no plans to resettle any new refugees in the nearest future. Nevertheless, Estonia supported the EU-level cooperation on asylum and resettlement issues.

In addition, Estonia followed the 2009 positions of the Government of the Republic regarding the establishment of a common resettlement programme in the EU<sup>45</sup> that emphasized, besides the aspects stated above, that Estonia needs a political discussion on the resettlement of refugees and that relevant researches should be planned in order to identify the preparedness of Estonia for the reception of refugees.

Since the situation has significantly changed since spring 2015, it is emphasized in the Chapter 'A Balance Citizenship and Migration Policy' of the Internal Security Development Plan 2015-2020<sup>46</sup> that in connection with an extensive Mediterranean migration crisis that escalated in 2015 it is necessary also for Estonia to ensure the capacity for the resettlement and relocation of persons and to support the livelihood, adaptation and further integration in Estonia of persons in need of protection under the resettlement and relocation scheme, e.g. the adaptation programme, translation services, support persons, language courses, labour market services, psychological counselling and retraining and further training, if necessary, juvenile and adult education and various integration services. The document also provides that it would be

<sup>44</sup> Estonia's European Union policy 2007–2011, approved by the Decision of the Government of the Republic of 25 October 2007. Available in English at: [https://www.riigikantselei.ee/valitsus/valitsus/en/government-office/european-union/eu-policy-of-the-government/the-government\\_s-eu-policy-for/ELPOL\\_2007\\_2011\\_EN.pdf](https://www.riigikantselei.ee/valitsus/valitsus/en/government-office/european-union/eu-policy-of-the-government/the-government_s-eu-policy-for/ELPOL_2007_2011_EN.pdf).

<sup>45</sup> Estonia's position on the establishment of the common resettlement programme of the European Union, 5 October 2009, the Government Office.

<sup>46</sup> The document is available at: [https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/dokumentid/Arengukavad/siseturvalisuse\\_arengukava\\_2015-2020\\_kodulehele.pdf](https://www.siseministeerium.ee/sites/default/files/dokumentid/Arengukavad/siseturvalisuse_arengukava_2015-2020_kodulehele.pdf).

important to carry through information activities that promote the awareness of Estonian population of resettlement and relocation activities, human rights, equal treatment and tolerance.

Since Estonia commenced the activities in 2015 to join the resettlement programme, these activities are described in detail in Section 1.

**Q23. Please indicate what the current status of your resettlement programme is, what is the time-frame for carrying out the first resettlement activities and what are the challenges/obstacles/difficulties in setting up a resettlement programme?** E.g.: *not a priority, legal obstacles; limited support base for resettlement in society; limited or insufficient technical know-how on how to set-up a resettlement programme; limited or insufficient public human resources; limited or insufficient public financial resources; limited resources for the reception and integration of resettled persons at local level.*

Estonia has performed several activities in order to resettle first refugees from the refugee camps in Turkey in summer 2016, to receive these persons in Estonia and to commence with the adaptation process.

In addition to more general activities such as the establishment of the action plan for resettlement, the establishment of the high-level Coordination Council, the amendment of sectoral legislation, the establishment of the public website on refugee policy, the organisation of Information Days for local governments, and the survey of public opinion on refugee issues (described in detail in Section 1), various practical preparations and activities have been performed that support the resettlement and relocation of refugees in Estonia:

- The Police and Border Guard Board has started to prepare reserve officials<sup>47</sup> who would be ready in the case of exponential growth in the number of applications for international protection to accept and process the applications (training covers 180 officials for the reception of applications, including 60 officials performing substantial processing of applications).
- Officials of the Police and Border Guard Board, the Ministry of the Interior, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Estonian Internal Security Service have participated in various resettlement and relocation trainings as for example organised by the OECD and the EMN NCP (Latvia) in Riga, and in a joint study tour of the Baltic countries in Dublin (Ireland).
- The Ministry of Social Affairs is conducting a series of tenders in order to find service providers for various services such as performing health check procedures, finding accommodation, providing translation services.
- In 2015, the activities of the Ministry of Education and Research<sup>48</sup> were mostly focused on the enhancement of capacities of local governments, Rajaleidja (*Pioneer*) centres and educational institutions in working with the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection. The Foundation Inno

<sup>47</sup> Implementation report of 2015 on the programmes under the Internal Security Development Plan 2015-2020.

<sup>48</sup> Implementation report of 2015 on the programmes under the Internal Security Development Plan 2015-2020.

organised trainings for schools that are already providing educational services to either the applicants for or beneficiaries of international protection. Also, it performed on-site first-line counselling at schools.

- More than 100 periodical in-service training courses have been organised in cooperation with the University of Tartu and the University of Tallinn, and supported by the Ministry of Education and Research, for the enhancement of capacities of teachers (including in pre-school establishments) for the work in multicultural environment.

- In 2015, the ABC-trainings, coordinated by the Ministry of Education and Research, were organised in all schools where the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection are studying. All schools where the applicants for and beneficiaries of international protection are studying received free study materials for teaching Estonian as a second language. Also, in December 2015 training courses were launched for consultants of Rajaleidja centres in order to support refugee-origin children in kindergartens and schools. Furthermore, a website ‘A child with another home language’<sup>49</sup> was launched for teachers and education professionals; this website publishes information on educational possibilities and experiences in connection with children speaking other languages who are studying in Estonian schools and kindergartens.

- The Police and Border Guard Board sent its Liaison Officer to Turkey in April 2016. The task of this Liaison Officer is to make preparations for the resettlement of persons. Estonia has received 20 application files from Turkey since May until the middle of June 2016.

- At the end of May 2016, Estonia sent its processing team to Turkey to start on-site interviews with preselected applicants. Estonian team consists of the officials of the Police and Border Guard Board, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Estonian Internal Security Service. Interpreters are involved, if necessary. The first resettled persons are expected arrive in Estonia in summer 2016.

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<sup>49</sup> Page is available only in Estonian <http://www.innove.ee/et/yldharidus/muu-kodukeelega>

### Section 3: National legislation and policies on private sponsorship programmes

In light of the discussion on safe and legal ways for refugees to reach EU territory, private sponsorship is often not considered in the EU.

Private sponsorship programmes shift primary responsibility for assisting refugees (pre-departure and post-arrival) from the government to private actors. These private sponsors usually accept a degree of responsibility, either financial, material or other, for the resettled person, for a certain period of time. Often they are able to select or indicate the persons they would like to sponsor for resettlement, but decision-making remains the exclusive competence of the relevant government authorities. Private sponsorship in this Study therefore only concerns those programmes where final decision-making lies with relevant government authorities.

**Q24. Does or did your Member State have a private sponsorship programme for enabling resettlement of third country nationals?**

Yes / No

**Q26a. Is your Member State considering to set up a private sponsorship programme? Please indicate what are reasons for having or not having such a programme.**

*E.g.: Practical obstacles (such as access to reception, housing, integration services, social support); no interest in private sponsorship, Limited or insufficient technical know-how, Limited or insufficient public human resources ; Limited or insufficient public financial resources*  
*Other, please specify*

**Q26b. If your Member State is interested in setting up such a programme, what is of particular importance to to consider setting up a private sponsorship programme?** (e.g. technical support from other (Member) States currently having such a programme, handbooks/manuals/toolkits, relevant European or international fora for discussing private sponsorship).

The below questions are to be answered by Member States that currently have a private sponsorship programme.

**Q27. Please indicate what are or were the main *objectives* of the private sponsorship programme?** (e.g. increase possibilities for resettlement, increase national quota for resettlement, provide avenues for legal migration, provide legal avenues for expanding the concept of family reunification, etc.)

**Q28. Please indicate the main *characteristics* of the private sponsorship programme by completing the table below.**

Question	Answer
<b>When was the sponsorship programme started/when did it run?</b>	
<b>What is/was the name of the private sponsorship programme?</b>	



Question	Answer
<p><b>Who can sponsor a resettled person?</b></p> <p><i>(i.e. Citizens or permanent residents, groups of persons, NGOs, universities, other organisations or companies)</i></p>	
<p><b>Who can be sponsored?</b></p> <p><i>(i.e. All nationalities or only specific nationalities (i.e. Syrians))</i></p>	
<p><b>Were (international) organisations involved in setting-up the programme?</b></p>	Yes/No
<p><b>Does the resettled person need to be recognised as refugee by UNHCR or a third country?</b></p>	Yes/No
<p><b>Does the sponsored person need to be in their country of origin or can they also be somewhere else (another third country)?</b></p>	Yes/No
<p><b>Can only one person be sponsored at a time or more than one (family)?</b></p>	Yes/No
<p><b>Which persons can or cannot be sponsored through the programme?</b></p> <p><i>(low-skilled persons, high-skilled persons, persons with medical need, family members of persons already residing in the Member State, )</i></p>	
<p><b>Is the sponsorship programme permanent or temporary?</b></p> <p><i>(for the latter, only a short period of time in which sponsorship was possible)</i></p>	
<p><b>How does the sponsored person enter the Member States?</b> (directly, indirectly)</p>	

Question	Answer
<b>Is a family link with the sponsor needed?</b>	Yes/No
<b>Duration of obligations of sponsorship (in months or years)?</b>	
<b>What status is granted to the sponsored resettled person or family?</b>	
<b>Is there an annual quota for persons that can be resettled through a private sponsorship programme?</b>	Yes/No
<b>Is the quota in addition to the resettlement quota?</b>	Yes/No

**Q29. What are the obligations of the sponsor towards the resettled person or persons?**

Question	Answer (Yes/No)	Amount in euro, and further details
Is there a minimum income requirement for the sponsor?		
Does the sponsor need to cover the visa fee?		
Does the sponsor need to cover the airfare/travel to the Member State?		
Does the sponsor need to cover the cost of medical exams and other medical costs?		
Does the sponsor need to cover housing expenses?		
Does the sponsor need to cover household expenses?		
Does the sponsor need to provide other types of economic/social support?		
Does the sponsor need to cover administrative fees or costs? (Registration, contributions to ensure access to the health care system, social security, education).		
Other obligations of sponsor		

Question	Answer (Yes/No)	Amount in euro, and further details
If other, please specify  Please add more rows where necessary		

**Q30a. Are there consequences for a private sponsor not being able to meet support requirements? Can the sponsor turn to the government for support?**

**Q30b. Do persons resettled through private sponsorship have access to the same (integration) support actions and measures available to persons resettled under the government resettlement programme?** (i.e. support with accessing education and vocational training, access to language training, access to skills and job training, job finding support)

**Q31. How is the private sponsorship programme monitored and evaluated?**

## Section 4: Evaluations and identified challenges, good practices and lessons learnt

### Section 4.1: Challenges and obstacles for designing resettlement programmes and/or humanitarian admission programmes

**Q32. Are you aware of any evaluations at national, regional or local level of resettlement programmes and/or humanitarian admission programmes in your Member State from 2011? If so, what were the main findings?**

Evaluations could concern the design and implementation of resettlement programmes, pre-departure, post-arrival, integration, etc.

Since Estonia has just started to participate in the resettlement programme, there have been no evaluations so far. However, Estonia has mapped the potential risks of the beneficiary's of international protection participating in resettlement and relocation programmes to the Estonian internal security<sup>50</sup>.

**Q33. In your Member State, are there any practical challenges/obstacles related to designing, implementing and running resettlement programmes?** (*This could concern the time it takes to actually resettle a person, administrative obstacles including obtaining travel documents and visa, challenges in working with third countries and their authorities*)

Phase	Challenges (if any)
<i>Pre-departure and departure (including identification and selection)</i>	As a process of resettlement is complex: the issuance of “exit permits” has proven to be a problem; also, the system of sending individual files is lacking transparency.
<i>Arrival and post-arrival (including integration)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Finding of accommodation to arriving persons.</li> <li>2. Provision of adequate and high-quality translation/interpretation services.<sup>51</sup></li> </ol>
Others, please specify.	-

### Section 4.2: Good practices and lessons learnt

**Q34a. If there are specific examples of good practices or lessons learnt of the resettlement programme in your Member States worth highlighting, please fill in the box below.** These can include priorities, types of information necessary for a successful resettlement programme, do's and don't's, etc.

Since Estonia commenced with preparations for the resettlement programme only in spring 2015 and, as of May 2016, no refugees have been resettled in Estonia, it is not possible to provide any examples of good practices at present.

**Q34b. If there are specific examples of good practices or lessons learnt of the humanitarian admission programme in your Member States worth highlighting, please fill in the box below:**

<sup>50</sup> The survey is in Estonia and it is available on the homepage of the Ministry of the Interior: <https://www.siseministerium.ee/et/uuringud>.

<sup>51</sup> Response of the Ministry of Social Affairs of 9 June 2016.

N/A

## Annex 1 Statistics

Statistics on resettlement available on Eurostat will be used for the synthesis report. However, for humanitarian admission programmes no such data is available and for those Member States that have such programmes, data would need to be collected at national level.

**Table A.1: National Statistics**

Indicator	Year					Source	Method used to reach the estimates, as well as any caveats as to their likely accuracy
	2011 (total)	2012 (total)	2013 (total)	2014 (total)	2015 (total)		
Total number of persons resettled under the <b>humanitarian readmission programme</b> (where possibly disaggregated by sex, age, citizenship and country of transit)	0	0	0	0	0		
Total number of persons resettled by country of transit	0	0	0	0	0		
Total number of persons resettled under the <b>private sponsorship programme</b>	0	0	0	0	0		