

## **Programming Fiche**

### **ESTONIA**

#### **Asylum and Migration Fund (AMF)**

#### **Future priorities**

#### **Specific objective 1 - to strengthen and develop all aspects of the Common European Asylum System, including its external dimension**

- Harmonization of the CEAS at EU level and a uniform application of the relevant Union acquis will require investments in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of asylum procedures and reception conditions in Member States and, in particular, catering for the needs of vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors, and persons with special reception and procedural needs, such as unaccompanied minors.
- Supporting solidarity and responsibility sharing between the Member States and providing support in particular to those Member States most affected by migratory flows such as for example through transfers of applicants and/or beneficiaries of international protection.
- Enhancing solidarity and cooperation with third countries with the purpose of managing migration including through resettlement and other legal avenues.

#### **Current priorities or types of actions in the National Programme that could be continued under this specific objective**

- The current support services to asylum seekers should be continued.

#### **Policy issues that should be addressed in the future under this specific objective linking to Annex VI of the AMF proposal**

##### **CEAS – intervention fields**

- Reception conditions: For Estonia the priority should remain the reception conditions with the aim of ensuring high-quality reception conditions and alternatives to detention. The conditions need to be in compliance with the Reception Conditions Directive.
- Asylum procedures: Though the numbers of asylum seekers is low, Estonia should continually enhance the conditions and focus on rapid access to the asylum procedures. Greater participation in the use of EASO's practical cooperation activities and tools would further help Estonia improve the conditions as well as the asylum procedures.
- Resettlement: Estonia could increase the numbers of resettled persons.
- Solidarity efforts between Member States: Estonia is encouraged to further support solidarity efforts between Member States.

Trafficking in human beings: ensure the realisation of the rights of victims of trafficking in human beings, taking into account particularly vulnerable groups, such as women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation, ensuring access to appropriate assistance, support and protection to victims and their early identification.

## **Desired outcomes**

- Improve reception and accommodation capacity
- Provide support services to asylum seekers and those granted asylum
- Reduce the use of detention
- Increase the numbers of resettled persons
- Increase the solidarity efforts between Member States.

## **Specific objective 2 - to support legal migration to the Member States including to contribute to the integration of third-country nationals**

- Supporting the development of policies promoting legal migration and the implementation of the relevant Union acquis including through the development of mobility schemes, cooperation with recruitment agencies and employment services of third countries and assistance to TCN with the acquisition of legal residence and family reunification
- Supporting integration of TCN and preparing their active participation in the receiving society through tailored support and actions promoting equality in the access to public and private services
- Strengthening the involvement of local and regional authorities and NGOs

## **Current priorities or types of actions in the National Programme that could be continued under this specific objective**

- Continue the language and cultural integration activities to ensure rapid integration and prepare TCNs to join the labour market.

## **Policy issues that should be addressed in the future under this specific objective linking to Annex VI of the AMF proposal**

### **Legal migration and integration**

- Integration measures – information and orientation, one stop shops: to bring rapid integration of TCNs on-line and multilingual information should be further developed
- Integration measures – language training; to bring rapid integration of TCNs and enable TCNs to join the labour market further language training and specialised language training should be continued.
- Integration measures – civics and other training: to bring rapid integration of TCNs and enable TCNs to join the labour market, civics and other training should be continued.
- Integration measures – Introduction, participation, exchanges host society: to improve relations between local society and TCNs exchanges and joint activities should be continued.
- Integration measures – basic needs: for persons granted international protection or asylum access to basic services and support services should be continued.
- Pre-departure measures: To fill vacancies and skills shortages, information campaigns about EU migration schemes; availability of on-line information to third country nationals, including language learning opportunities should be developed
- Mobility schemes: To fill skills shortages and encourage specialists to come to Estonia mobility schemes from 3rd countries can be developed, such as circular or temporary migration schemes, including training to enhance employability.

- Trafficking in human beings: Ensure the realisation of the rights of third-country national victims of trafficking in human beings with regard to integration measures, taking into account particularly vulnerable groups, such as women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation, ensuring access to appropriate assistance, support and protection to victims and their early identification

#### **Desired outcomes**

- improved processes for the integration of TCNs,
- improved relations of TCNs and local society,
- improved cooperation between various stakeholders in the field of TCNs integration
- Improved skills and increased competence of specialists.

### **Specific objective 3 - to contribute to countering irregular migration and ensuring effectiveness of return and readmission in third countries**

- Implementation of the relevant Union acquis by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of return procedures and detention conditions in Member States, including through developing alternatives to detention and prioritising voluntary return and reintegration
- Strengthening cooperation with third countries on countering irregular migration and enabling sustainable return including through capacity building for readmission of their nationals

#### **Current priorities or types of actions in the National Programme that could be continued under this specific objective**

- Voluntary and forced return activities should be continued.

#### **Policy issues that should be addressed in the future under this specific objective linking to Annex VI of the AMF proposal**

##### **Return**

- Alternatives to detention: To reduce the numbers of persons held in detention, alternatives should be developed.
- Reception/detention conditions: Support adequate material detention conditions, in particular for vulnerable groups such as unaccompanied minors and families.
- Return procedures: Reinforce an integrated and coordinated approach among all actors involved in return-related activities (e.g. law enforcement and immigration authorities, judicial authorities, detention authorities, guardianship systems, medical and social services) to ensure availability of swift and adequate multi-disciplinary responses.
- Assisted voluntary return: Ensure continuity of operational assisted voluntary return (and reintegration) programmes AVR(R) to enhance voluntary returns, as well as providing counselling to illegally staying third-country nationals on such programmes (including in cooperation with national social or and other services); improve the process of disseminating information on voluntary return and assisted voluntary return programmes to illegally staying third-country nationals (e.g. in cooperation with national education, social and health services) and put in place targeted reintegration policies for unaccompanied minors.
- Reintegration assistance: Put in place / strengthen targeted reintegration actions, in particular for unaccompanied minors;

- Removal/Return operations: Ensure that return management systems are set up, operated, maintained and further developed in order to process all the necessary information about irregular migrants and returnees (management of individual cases as well as of any return-related procedure), in line with the RECAMAS model (developed by Frontex)
- Forced-return monitoring system: To ensure that forced returns are carried out in compliance with the legislation in place a good level of monitoring is required.
- Measures addressing incentives for irregular migration: Address more effectively the pull factor for irregular migration created by the employment in EU Member States of irregular migrants, in accordance with the Employer Sanctions Directive. While the Directive prohibits the employment of irregular migrants and provides for minimum standards to prevent, detect and sanction infringements to this prohibition, there is still a high possibility for illegally staying third country nationals of finding illegal work within the EU. The Communication on the Delivery of the European Agenda on Migration (COM(2017) 558 final), adopted by the Commission on 27 September 2017 stressed the need for the Commission to ensure full implementation of the Directive. Member States could therefore use funding to implement more efficiently the Directive's requirements. This concerns in particular the obligation under Article 14 of the Directive to conduct effective and adequate inspections to control employment of illegally staying third-country nationals.

Secondary priority: seek exchanges of best practices with other EU Member States on conducting information and awareness-raising activities aimed at preventing migrant smuggling and reducing irregular migration flows to the EU.

#### **Desired outcomes**

- The use of detention is reduced
- Higher number of voluntary returns
- More returns are completed
- Continuity of legal and linguistic assistance to irregular migrants undergoing return procedures
- Practical working arrangements between all actors involved in the return process, including asylum authorities, for the purpose of reducing the length of return procedures

#### **Other comments**

In view of ensuring optimal use of funding opportunities and complementarity of actions, when prioritising future activities under AMF return Member States are encouraged to take into account the support that can be provided by the EBCGA under its mandate on return. This includes: returns by **scheduled** or **non-scheduled** flights organised and supported by EBCGA, as well as **return experts** that the EBCGA may provide, i.e. forced-return experts, forced-return monitors and return specialist.

## Synergies with other Funds

### Internal Security Fund

Actions related to the protection of children in migration, fight against trafficking in human beings, protection of victims of trafficking, migrant smuggling and prevention and countering radicalisation could be financed under ISF.

### Border Management and Visa Instrument

Actions related to the development of Eurodac system for border management purposes. Such fingerprinting identification system could also be used for the identification of a migrant's status.

Actions related to improving visa application processing could be combined with actions linked to promoting legal migration pathways.

### Cohesion Funds (ESF+, ERDF, etc)

#### European Social Fund +:

Similarly to the current programming period, both AMF and ESF+ will be able to support the integration of migrants and third-country nationals. **AMF** will support measures tailor-made to the needs of the third-country nationals, generally implemented in the early phases of integration. **ESF+** will complement AMF for all measures related to mid- and long-term integration in particular the measures related to the employment and labour market integration of third-country nationals, provided they have access to the labour market.

Under the investment priority on education, the ESF+ can also provide support to children who are third-country nationals right after their arrival (e.g. access to primary and secondary education, tackling early school leaving, etc.).

Measures implemented under the ESF+ should aim at promoting socio-economic integration of third country nationals. They could include (but are not limited to):

- Specific actions to increase participation of third-country nationals in the labour market
- Measures to improve access of third country nationals to education and employment
- Measures to promote the social integration of third-country nationals
- Targeted measures for migrant women to promote labour market participation, including access to childcare and care for dependent persons
- Targeted measures to newly arrived migrants and refugees
- Promote the development of digital skills of third country nationals
- Measures to support assessment of skills and validation of qualifications of third country nationals
- Support to self-employment, social economy and social enterprises of third country nationals
- Specific support to tackle youth unemployment of young third country nationals (aged 15-29)
- Measures to combat early school leaving of young third country nationals
- Support access to quality and non-segregated and inclusive early-childhood education and care
- Support access to secondary, tertiary education and vocational training for third country nationals

- Promote pathways to integration of third country nationals
- Support access to community-based social and healthcare and long-term care services
- Promote social integration of third country nationals who are at risk of poverty or social exclusion
- In addition, ESF+ could also address material deprivation through basic material assistance food support coupled with accompanying measures (such as counselling, access to shelters and social workers, information of legal rights and obligations etc.) and social inclusion support for third-country nationals (e.g. through its proposed minimum 2% earmarking for the most deprived).

**European Regional Development Fund:** ERDF will be able to support to actions in the field of migration management, including the protection of migrants. AMF is the main instrument to provide support for the reception of third-country nationals, however ERDF has a possibility to complement these actions, for example, by providing support for the (temporary) reception infrastructure, social housing or social infrastructure for migrants, refugees and persons under or applying for international protection. The above could be addressed under specific objective 4.iii *Increasing the socioeconomic integration of marginalised communities, migrants and disadvantaged groups, through integrated measures including housing and social services.*

Measures implemented under the ERDF promoting the socio-economic integration of migrants could include (but are not limited to):

- Housing infrastructure
- Temporary reception infrastructure
- Other social infrastructure contributing to social inclusion in the community
- Health infrastructure

Under the urban component of the ERDF, the instrument will support an integrated social development of urban areas, contributing to prevention and countering of radicalisation, as well as networking and cooperation between regional, local and other public authorities.

### **External Instruments (NDICI and IPA)**

The external actions will continue to be implemented in complementarity to the NDICI and IPA that are and will remain the primary tools to support the external dimension of the Union's migration and security policy. Member States through their national programmes are more adequate to promote and deliver on cooperation initiatives that complement and reinforce actions taken at the EU level. For example, when Member States have good bilateral relations with third countries, specific interests and expertise or networks in a given third country, or when the nature of a specific policy has a direct impact on the MS and might require bilateral cooperation.

### **Neighbourhood, Development and International Cooperation Instrument (NDICI):**

NDICI will allow for making best use of geographic programmes, supplemented by the Global Challenges thematic programme and the rapid reaction response pillar. The measures supported aim at addressing all aspects of migration and forced displacement. In the area of migration, this includes for instance addressing root causes of irregular migration and forced displacement, strengthening capacities of partner countries to address irregular migration, fighting trafficking in human beings and smuggling of migrants, supporting sustainable reintegration of returning migrants, promoting

conditions for facilitating legal migration, and ensuring protection and development-based solutions for forcibly displaced persons and their host communities.

AMF will continue to support resettlement and pre-departure measures by Member States facilitating legal migration, aimed at facilitating the integration of third-country nationals in the EU. In the area of return, it will support the implementation of readmission agreements with third countries and the short-term measures facilitating the reintegration of returnees from Europe, as well as actions preventing irregular migration (i.e. information campaigns, data collection and tracking of flows and routes, etc.).

**Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance (IPA):** The Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance will support enlargement countries in preventing and tackling organised crime and corruption, and in strengthening their law enforcement and migration management capabilities, including border management. IPA can complement AMF as it will support cooperation on migration, ensuring access to international protection, sharing relevant information, strengthening the development benefits of migration and facilitating legal and labour migration.

### **Other Funds**

**Erasmus+:** Erasmus+ has the leverage potential for actions to improve the education system and adapt it to the special needs of migrants. Long-term capacity building actions can usefully complement and develop the actions supported by AMF, focused mainly on early education and integration actions, especially in the reception phase. Peer learning events and other cooperation actions between relevant education and youth organisations and institutions will be mainly covered by Erasmus+.

**Rights and Values Programme:** With the objective of preventing and combating inequalities and discrimination on grounds of racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, the programme will contribute to social cohesion in the EU, including with regard to third country nationals. Actions to protect and promote the rights of the child will also contribute to the protection of migrant children.