

# Mid-Term Review (MTR) of the AMIF National Programmes (NP)

## Needs Assessment Questionnaire

**Purpose and scope:** The purpose of this questionnaire is to help Member States in assessing their needs for the second half of the implementing period (2018-2020) in light of developments on the ground and political priorities, both at EU and national level. Member States shall notably take into consideration the allocation of additional amounts (*top-ups*) and complementarity with EMAS funding.

**Timing:** This questionnaire has to be returned by **15 September 2017** at the latest, by SFC.

**1 – Summarise how the Member State's overall situation in the policy areas covered by the Fund has changed as compared to when the NP was adopted (December 2013 baseline). Does the (revised) NP require an adjustment to the key policy issues addressed, as well as respective allocations? Briefly explain. Provide key figures/statistics when possible. (max 1 page)**

Since adopting the Estonian National Programme (NP) for AMIF in 2014, the main development affecting the areas of asylum, migration and integration policy has been the European migration crisis that started in 2015. Because all three policy areas covered by the fund are closely intertwined, the migration crisis has influenced developments in all respective policy areas.

In the **area of asylum policy**, the influx of refugees entering the European Union borders also increased the number of asylum applications made to Estonia. The number of applications rose substantially from 97 in 2013 to 231 applications in 2015 that marks the highest number of asylum applications to Estonia since joining the international asylum system in 1997. But already in 2016, the number of asylum applications decreased by almost 50% (111 applications) and Estonia still remains among the EU Member States (MS) with the lowest rate of asylum seekers. Despite the low number of asylum applicants, a large share of AMIF resources has been used to improve reception conditions, support services and to ensure a high-quality asylum procedure to prepare for the possible future growth of asylum applications and comply with the changes made to the Common European Asylum System (the recast directives 2013/32/EU and 2013/33/EU).

In addition, in June 2015 Estonia approved its participation in the **relocation and resettlement** programmes. Since then, 161 relocated refugees from Greece and Turkey have been accepted (as of 26 July 2017). As set out in AMIF Article 17, MS receives a lump sum per resettled and relocated person and in the Estonian case they are handled as Special Cases in the NP. Relocated and resettled persons are entitled to all activities that are foreseen for the beneficiaries of international protection. The Ministry of Social Affairs is responsible for organising the reception and adaption of resettled and relocated persons.

Regarding the **policy area of integration**, the programme set out the need to develop a supportive system of adaption for newly arrived TCN, persons with undetermined citizenship and beneficiaries of international protection as a first step to further integration. In addition, activities connected to analysing the attitudes of permanent residents and enhancing their overall openness and awareness of the society towards TCN-s and persons with undetermined citizenship were seen as a priority in order to support the two-way process of integration. In light of the migration crisis, communication activities targeted to the wider society became even more relevant, as Estonias' involvement in the resettlement and relocation schemes sparked wider discussions in the media. The arrival of asylum seekers has increased the number of integration needs which are partly addressed with adopting the Action Plan on the integration of third country nationals (COM(2016)377 final) in 2017.

With regard to **return policy**, the estimations made in 2013 about intensifying flows of irregular migration and increased number of irregular TCN arriving from Asia and Africa have actualized. Therefore, the higher number of returnees and more distant countries of origin have increased the costs. The focus of the NP has been on developing the detention centre and providing essential services (e.g. interpretation services; health care services etc.) for both returnees and asylum seekers. To increase the effective number of returns, throughout the EU, Estonia received additional allocations to implement the return object as a result of the renewed Action Plan on more effective return policy in the EU (COM(2017)200 final). Because of the growing capacities of returnees, additional resources are needed.

Because one of the aims of the Estonian NP was to support voluntary return and reintegration, efforts have been made to raise awareness of the possibilities among TCN. In pursuance of a smooth return process, the joint efforts of EU MS and EU agencies have become even more vital. While Estonia can make efforts to ensure an effective return process on the national level, the overall outcome of the process depends on the third country. Therefore, efforts to increase commitment of cooperation among the MS is still needed.

Although the Estonian NP has been amended three times since 2013 because of resettlement/relocation and the Action Plans in integration and return policy, the revisions were related to the budget and no major changes to the objectives of the programme have been necessary. Because of the proactive approach of the Estonian NP, the main objectives have not changed and all emerged issues connected with increased migration flows have largely been addressed within the programme. Rather, in order to ensure a higher level of quality of services in the context of growing capacities of migrants, additional financial resources would be needed to achieve all objectives in the NP.

***2 – Summarise the changes which, in your view, are needed to enable the NP to integrate developments in Union policies and political priorities, notably those highlighted in the Annex. If no changes are needed, explain how these policy developments will be addressed. Make reference to the SO and NO. (max 1 page)***

Taking into account the previous answer, no specific changes are needed to enable the national programme to integrate developments in Union policies and political priorities into its objectives. The Estonian NP for AMIF addresses all the policy developments related to asylum, migration and integration policy that are highlighted in the Annex. Priorities related to the area of police and border policy are mostly covered by the Estonian NP for ISF.

**Children in migration.** Children are an especially vulnerable group of migrants and need a special set of services. Currently, there have only been a few cases of unaccompanied migrant children entering Estonia and, therefore, there has not been a need for separate projects addressing this issue. Migrant children are cared for inside the existing social service system.

**Integration of third-country nationals (TCN).** Estonia has adopted the Action Plan on Integration of TCN COM(2016)377 final and received additional allocations in order to address the growing integration needs. Under the Estonian NP Specific Objective 2 all of the five priority areas identified in the Commission's Action Plan on Integration are more or less covered. The funding priorities of the Estonian NP include adaptation programmes for the target group, activities that aim at enhancing the active involvement of TCN and persons with undetermined citizenship in society and the labour market, gathering and analysing data for more knowledge-based policymaking and communication activities targeted at the wider society.

**Radicalisation.** The prevention of radicalisation ranges from supporting research of the causes of radicalisation to combating terrorism. Therefore, the prevention of radicalisation is covered by different activities both in AMIF and ISF funds. While ISF addresses radicalisation through "hard measures", then under the AMIF's National Objective 1.1 (Reception/asylum) the prevention of radicalisation has been addressed by a project that raises competencies of education, youth, social workers and law enforcement officers in recognizing and managing the religion, culture and migration related risk behaviour of those in daily contact with migration background persons. Therefore, in AMIF, the focus is more on preparing the community level in dealing with people from another cultural background.

**Return.** The developments in the field of return, are addressed with the Estonian NP SO 3, that was revised in 2017 taking into account the renewed Action Plan on more effective return policy and corresponding additional allocations. As already mentioned above, Estonia has also recognized that in order to ensure and maximise the effective number of returns throughout the EU, better cooperation, coordination and joint effort among MS and EU bodies needs to be improved. Under the Specific Action 5 of the Estonian NP, Estonia participates in EURLO and EURINT meetings regularly and has also sent a Return Liaison Officer to India.

**Resettlement.** Estonia is participating in the resettlement programme through Specific Cases in the NP. Because all resettled and relocated persons are entitled to all activities foreseen for beneficiaries of international protection, then the development of relevant services (e.g. language training, integration programme, support person service, adaptation programme etc) for the target group are covered under SO 1. The training of the Police and Border Guard Board officers has been ensured from internal resources and law enforcement officers also receive trainings related to the topic of dealing with asylum seekers under SO 1.

Although currently the Estonian NP for AMIF addresses the current political priorities, the effectiveness of the programme in tackling the emerging issues (especially in relation to the migration crisis) and guaranteeing a higher level of services for the target group, requires additional financial resources. Supplementary funds are needed proportionally to all objectives, but especially to respond to growing return needs.

3 – Based on questions 1 and 2, please explain which SO and NO have to be modified, why and to what extent. Please provide a response for each SO and NO. If no change, report "N/A" (not applicable).

<b>Specific Objective 1 - Asylum</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the major changes having an impact on your policies and activities under this SO? Do these imply the need to revise your NP to address new/increased needs or priorities? Explain the changes and how they affect the NP. Provide key figures if relevant. (max 1/2 page – do not repeat what has been written under previous questions)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>
<b>SO1 - National Objective NO1: Reception/asylum</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>
<b>SO1 - National Objective NO2: Evaluation</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>
<b>SO1 - National Objective NO3: Resettlement</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>

<b>Specific Objective 2 – Integration/legal migration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the major changes having an impact on your policies and activities under this SO? Do these imply the need to revise your NP to address new/increased needs or priorities? Explain the changes and how they affect the NP. Provide key figures if relevant. (max 1/2 page – do not repeat what has been written under previous questions)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>
<b>SO2 - National Objective NO1: Legal migration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>
<b>SO2 - National Objective NO2: Integration</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>
<b>SO2 - National Objective NO3: Capacity</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>

<b>Specific Objective 3 - Return</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the major changes having an impact on your policies and activities under this SO? Do these imply the need to revise your NP to address new/increased needs or priorities? Explain the changes and how they affect the NP. Provide key figures if relevant. (max 1/2 page – do not repeat what has been written under previous questions)</li> </ul> <p>With the growing number of migrants in Europe, the volume of irregular migration to Estonia has also increased. In addition, more migrants originate from more distant countries of origin, which makes the process of return more costly and difficult. Although the changes in the policy area of return policy do not imply the need to amend the Estonian NP, then in order to address the growing capacity of the target group and provide high quality services, additional financial resources are needed. Additional investments would contribute to improving the services and measures towards persons to be deported living outside of the detention centre after the maximum detention period (NO1: Accompanying measures), cover additional deportation and joint operations (NO2: Return measures), contribute to increasing the cooperation with third countries (mainly Africa) and enhance the capacity for FRONTEX operations (NO3: Cooperation).</p>
<b>SO3 - National Objective NO1: Accompanying measures</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul> <p>N/A</p>
<b>SO2 - National Objective NO2: Return measures</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revised National Objective to address the current needs Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</li> </ul>

N/A
<b>SO2 - National Objective NO3: Cooperation</b>
● Revised National Objective to address the current needs <i>Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</i>
N/A

<b>Specific Objective 4 - Solidarity</b>
● What are the major changes having an impact on your policies and activities under this SO? Do these imply the need to revise your NP to address new/increased needs or priorities? Explain the changes and how they affect the NP. <i>Provide key figures if relevant. (max 1/2 page – do not repeat what has been written under previous questions)</i>
N/A
<b>SO4 - National Objective NO1: Relocation</b>
● Revised National Objective to address the current needs <i>Provide key figures if relevant (max 1/4 page)</i>
N/A

<b>Specific Objective 5 – Joint Return</b>
● What are the major changes having an impact on your policies and activities under this SO? Do these imply the need to revise your NP to address new/increased needs or priorities? Explain the changes and how they affect the NP. <i>Provide key figures if relevant. (max 1/2 page – do not repeat what has been written under previous questions)</i>
N/A

**4 – Based on question 3, provide an estimation of the budgetary adjustments needed as compared to the Financing Plan of the NP. Provide the variation in absolute terms. Where no adjustment is needed, report "0" (zero).**

National Objective	Adjustment needed: variation (+/-) in comparison to National Programme (estimates in euro)
SO1 Asylum	-
SO2 Integration/legal migration	-
SO3 Return	+ 600 000
SO4 Solidarity	-
SO5 Joint return	-
<b>TOTAL extra funding needs, in light of new developments</b> <i>(for information only; will not automatically lead to increased EU funding)</i>	+600 000