

NATIONAL PROGRAMME AMIF

IDENTIFICATION OF THE DESIGNATED AUTHORITIES

Competent authorities responsible for the management and control systems

Authority	Name of the authority	Name of the person responsible for the authority	Address	E-mail address	Date of designation	Activities delegated
Responsible authority	Ministry of Interior	State Secretary Dimitrijs Trofimovs	Čiekurkalna Ilnija 1, k-2 Riga, LV-1026 Latvia	kanceleja@iem.gov.lv	12-Aug-2015	
Audit authority	Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Latvia	Nata Lasmane	Smiļšu iela 1 Riga, LV-1919 Latvia	esfrd@fm.gov.lv		
Delegated authority	Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Latvia	State Secretary Dace Vilsone	K. Valdemāra iela 11-a Riga, LV-1364 Latvia	pasts@km.gov.lv		Integration

Management and control system

MCS will mainly operate by using the current system under the SOLID funds. Two main structural units have been set up within the RA. 1st unit will perform the functions of planning, selection and approval of the projects, reporting to the EC, ensuring the secretariat functions of the Monitoring Committee, publicity, etc., whereas 2nd unit will ensure the functions of project control of the Fund, including administrative and on-the-spot controls.

The Ministry of Finance will continue fulfilling the obligations of the AA.

The Ministry of Culture will be Delegated Authority (hereafter- DA) for the national objectives “Integration” and partly for the national objective “Capacity”. RA and DA will conclude an agreement on the delegated functions and its supervision from the RA. RA will ensure monitoring over DA activities by performing regular monitoring, checks, on-the-spot visits etc.

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Asylum

LV will focus on improving quality and speed of the asylum procedures with particular focus on reception of asylum applicants and access to the procedure. This goal will be achieved by improving asylum procedure and decision – making process, improving reception capacity and conditions for asylum seekers. The following results are expected to be achieved:

- strengthening of the administrative capacity of Office of Citizenship and Migration Affairs (hereafter – OCMA), through training of employees, experience exchange etc.;
- development of information and communication technology solutions for the collection, analysis and distribution of data and statistics on asylum;
- integration of Automatic Fingerprint Information System (AFIS) functions with the new Biometric Data Processing System (BDPS) to ensure the efficient automated fingerprint processing of the irregular third country nationals (hereafter - TCNs) and asylum seekers and facilitate data exchange with EURODAC (European fingerprint database for identifying asylum seekers and irregular border-crossers);
- improvement of reception conditions in accommodation centre for asylum seekers (hereafter - ACAS), including purchase of necessary equipment for the centre and provision of legal, translation, interpretation, social, medical, psychological etc. services to asylum seekers (including vulnerable asylum seekers).

Integration/Legal migration

LV will focus on building on integration of third country nationals, including non-citizens. This goal will be achieved by development of comprehensive immigration and integration strategy in order to reach high level of inclusion for the third–country nationals in all activities at local and regional level.

Taking into account the aforementioned, the following results are expected to be achieved:

- together 6300 of TCN will be assisted by this fund through integration measures;
- strengthening the administrative capacity of authorities dealing with integration, legal migration and naturalisation issues on local and regional level;
- supporting consultative platforms for TCN;
- improving intercultural dialogue by provision of standardised integration courses and specific programmes for TCN;
- provision of specific assistance for beneficiaries of international protection;
- improvement of access to information;
- provision of language courses for different target groups;
- awareness raising, including involving mass media;
- improvement of the Common Migration Information System (CMIS) and development of new acquisition and loss of citizenship information system.

Return

LV will focus on the following goals: effective return with a focus on enhancing use of voluntary return and improvement of detention and accommodation conditions. These goals will be achieved by improving the provision of assistance to all returnees throughout the return procedure, including health care and services adapted to the needs of vulnerable persons. Taking into account the aforementioned, the following results are expected to be achieved:

- capacity building (training) of State Border Guard (SBG) employees involved in the sphere of return and asylum;
- improvement of SBG infrastructure and renewal of equipment in sphere of return and asylum;
- improvement of CMIS and purchase of equipment in sphere of return;
- accommodation of asylum applicants and irregular TCNs developed;
- organisation of return measures (~620 returnees);
- provision of voluntary return – related assistance (~600);
- provision of reintegration aid.

The amount of the financing allocated to each specific objective:

Asylum: 2 946 164.82 EUR;

Integration/Legal migration: 6 486 824.39 EUR;

Return: 4 262 439.58 EUR.

2. BASELINE SITUATION IN THE MEMBER STATE

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

Asylum

National situation:

There is constant increase in the number of asylum seekers (328 first-time asylum applications in 2015, 350 in 2016 and 395 in 2017). The state ensures reception conditions for the asylum seekers in minimum amount as envisaged in directives in the field of asylum. However, current administrative procedures and their support mechanisms, including information systems still are not capable of ensuring efficient collaboration between institutions involved in reception, naturalisation, solution of asylum-related issues, access to the required data regarding the respective processes and provision of high-quality services. Taking into account the increasing number of the asylum seekers, the increasing workload for OCMA employees (in the year 2015 the OCMA took over the functions of interviewing) and in order to perform all functions within the time limit prescribed by law, OCMA hired additional employees in the asylum field.

There are two accommodation centres for asylum seekers in Latvia – ACAS in Mucenieki and SBG detained TCN reception centre “Daugavpils” (hereafter – RC “Daugavpils”). In the ACAS in Mucenieki 450 asylum seekers can be accommodated. In RC “Daugavpils” there is a separated lodging for 84 persons (36 - for the male asylum seekers, 31 for male irregular TCNs, 17 for women and, families (including families with kids)).

Measures undertaken:

- increased administrative capacity and strengthened collaboration between institutions in the field of asylum;
- increased reception standards for asylum seekers at ACAS in Mucenieki and RC “Daugavpils”;
- improved efficiency of the asylum procedure by introducing conditions for the Common European Asylum System (CEAS) (transposition of directives No. 2013/32/EU and No. 2013/33/EU into national legislation, as a result it is ensured that officials have necessary knowledge to provide proper processing and examination of asylum applications; that during asylum procedures special attention is given to unaccompanied minors and to asylum seekers who are identified as vulnerable persons and that they receive special guaranties both during the asylum procedure and in terms of reception conditions);
- basic functionality of the Register of Asylum Seekers has been elaborated;
- an aggregate of measures to be taken by responsible authorities in the occurrence of rapid increase in the number of asylum seekers (Cabinet Order No. 312 of 4 July 2012);
- the Memorandum of Understanding on mutual collaboration to support access of asylum seekers to the territory of Latvia was signed between SBG and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) on 12 January 2011.

Challenges:

- To ensure adequate reception conditions and capacity taking into account the increased number of asylum seekers.

- To ensure regular training of employees in accordance with the requirements of CEAS and in accordance with changes within the regulatory enactments of Latvia and taking into account increased workload to provide the aid (including additional staff) to employees involved in asylum field, as well as to provide support to ensure asylum procedure (translation/interpretation, initial consultations to asylum seekers, etc.);
- To develop information and communication technology solutions in order to collect, analyse and distribute statistical data on asylum seekers and create effective cooperation among institutions involved in dealing with asylum issues, and to ensure effective asylum procedure.

Annual resources from the budget:

In 2016 - EUR 573 032, in 2017 - EUR 958 579, but in 2018 the planned expenses are ~ EUR 614 152 (including remuneration of employees, interviews with asylum seekers, primary health care for asylum seekers, office equipment, social benefits to asylum seekers, refugees and persons with granted status).

Integration, legal migration

National situation:

Legal migration - there is a small decrease in the number of TCN (including non-citizens): in 2017 — 308 233 persons (of which 233 393 non-citizens), in 2016 — 332 942 (of which 242 560 non-citizens), in 2015 — 341 040 (of which 252 017 non-citizens)). Majority of them have a right to work (all those who have permanent resident permit have a right to work and also majority of them who have temporary residence permit have a right to work). There is big necessity to promote information for TCN (including non-citizens) about naturalisation like organise regular information days, campaigns, seminars and prepare and distribute informative materials.

Every year in Latvia arrive about 7000 new TCN, most of them are considered as long term residents as the reason of immigration is family reunification. Very important is necessity of the system connecting reception with following integration measures for TCN just arrived or already residing for some period. Special attention should be paid on vulnerable groups of TCN such as beneficiaries of international protection, children, elderly or any other in vulnerable condition. Mutual respect of different groups is of very high importance, where values of EU and receiving country and society also have to be respected and met in different aspects. Main priorities of integration are included in the Guidelines on national identity, civil society and integration policy (2012-2018). When designing National Guidelines for integration in 2011 several trends for integration were identified.

TCN are not certain of their abilities to pass the examinations and interest in the acquisition of the Latvian citizenship is constantly low: 915 persons acquired Latvian citizenship in 2017 (13 EU citizens, 900 TCNs (of which 813 non-citizens) and 2 USA citizens), against 987 in 2016 (7 EU citizens, 978 TCNs (of which 883 non-citizens) and 2 stateless persons). Many TCNs lack information on the process of acquiring citizenship or lack personal motivation for obtaining citizenship.

Administrative procedures in the process of immigration and naturalisation are unable to ensure fast and efficient provision of service. Not always state administrative bodies have appropriate technical equipment for fast and efficient implementation of the immigration procedure.

Integration trends:

- TCN arriving in Latvia represent various cultures, the language barrier, lack of knowledge about the local culture and lack of contacts with local society is an obstacle for successful integration process;
- the largest part of TCN come to Latvia for the purpose of investing, employment and studies;
- a negative attitude towards TCN still dominates within the society;
- integration and language courses have a fragmentary character — they are available for a short period of time and mainly within the scope of projects;
- a large part of beneficiaries of international protection faces with multiple problems - language barriers, lack of housing, financial difficulties, employment problems - where national integration measures are not sufficient;
- coordination structure for access to services and management of existing services and resources is still a challenge for more effective integration measures.

Measures undertaken:

- methodology and recommendations for the application of information technologies have been elaborated to facilitate collection and use of statistical data on TCN;
- autonomous data processing environment has been elaborated to process the data of TCN for the needs of statistics and studies;
- resource centres for TCN were established, including in regions with access to the required information on public and private services, rights and obligations of TCN;
- programmes of language courses and integration courses of various levels have been elaborated and implemented;
- informative events, as well as the society education events aimed to improve mutual understanding have been held;
- the capacity of service providers has been increased — training and other qualification improvement measures have been taken;
- experience exchange events have been organised among the Member States wherein employees of at least 94 various institutions and organisations have been involved;
- information exchange, good practice and collaboration events have been organised among non-governmental organizations (NGOs), providers of public and private services, employers, policy makers and implementers in the Member State;
- NGO collaboration platforms have been set up in the field of integration of TCN.

Challenges:

- to give knowledge about the local culture and values to the TCN;
- to support and manage TCN access to existing services as soon TCN arrives in Latvia;
- adequate support in language integration and improved access to the labour market for TCN, including beneficiaries of international protection;
- to develop administrative capacity of state institutions, migration and naturalisation by ensuring high-quality provision of services and accessibility of the required data;
- to develop migration and naturalisation process, to improve accessibility of information to TCN to apply for Latvian citizenship and to ensure raising the qualifications of employees on naturalisation and migration and other issues;
- measures aimed at promoting meaningful contacts and a constructive dialogue between TCN and the society of the host country, as well as activities aimed at promoting the possibility of being accepted in the society of the host country by involving mass media and improving the quality and accessibility of the content thereof;
- to ensure assistance to refugees and persons who have been granted subsidiary protection.

Annual resources from the budget:

In 2018 - EUR 24 000 (against EUR 23 153 in 2017) is foreseen for activities related to naturalization processes and EUR 373 625 (against EUR 253 502 in 2017) for IT maintenance related to legal migration. 793 543 EUR (2017) allocated for social integration measures (budget does not include measures for social inclusion policy where responsible authority is Ministry of Welfare).

Return

National situation:

Latvia is not the destination of migration flows, but it is a transit state to Western European and Scandinavian countries, therefore citizens of Georgia, Syria, Vietnam and Russia from North Caucasian republics form the largest group of irregular TCNs. False travel documents are to be used more frequently to cross external border. It is foreseen that citizens of CIS countries will continue using Latvia for irregular immigration to Western Europe by using false travel documents. Movement of TCN from Lithuania to Scandinavian countries through Latvia became topical in the vicinity internal borders. It is possible that after the liberalisation of the visa regime with the Ukraine and Moldova TCN will be using falsified or authentic travel documents of these countries more frequently in order to enter the EU.

The number of TCN subject to forced return has increased rapidly in 2016 and in 2016 (in 2017 (7 months): forced return 115 persons, voluntary return 795 persons, in 2016 forced return 414 persons, voluntary return 1040 persons; in 2015: forced return 427 persons, voluntary return 693 persons; 2014: forced return 103 persons, voluntary return 1459 persons; in 2013: forced return 33 decisions persons, voluntary return 2047 persons; in 2012: forced return 57 persons, voluntary return 2010 persons. Largest part of TCN subject to voluntary return leaves the country by using their own financial means. Forced return expenses have increased due to the fact that the country of origin of TCN has changed. Asian and African countries have become the countries of destination.

LV does not foresee actions on alternatives to detention within the framework of AMIF due to the following factors:

- reception conditions for the asylum seekers and the return process need to be improved;
- there is a small number of cases when alternatives to detention can be applied: in 2013 – 52 cases, in 2014 - 57 cases, 2015 - 54 cases, 2016 - 61 cases; 2017 - (7 month) 21 cases
- when making a decision on detention of the third country national SBG Officer can apply some of the following alternatives to detention determined by the Immigration Law:
- regular registration at the SBG structural unit;
- submission of the traveling document and other personality confirmation document to the SBG Officer.

Measures undertaken:

- elaborated and adopted the Register of Foreigners Subject to Expulsion and Entry Prohibition.
- increased reception capacity for returnees in RC “Daugavpils”;
- in 2017 was built and opened a new accommodation center for apprehended foreigners "Mucenieki"

Challenges:

- further improvement of the accommodation conditions in detention;
- Ombudsman monitoring (observation process);
- performance of the forced return procedure;
- performance of the voluntary return process.

Annual resources from the budget:

115 628 EUR (x 7 years period (2016 - 2020)) allocated for necessary arrangements and procedure providing within asylum and return responsibilities of SBG.

3. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

Specific objective	1 - Asylum
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The strategy of the Ministry of Interior includes the following directions of conduct:

1) observing and ensuring rights of asylum seekers and persons who have been granted a status of refugee or an alternative status:

- to provide necessary additional assistance to asylum seekers, to create a Register of asylum seekers and continue its development, to ensure equipment of workplaces for employees, thereby promoting fast access to data and managing qualitative interviews.

2) ensuring of security and improvement of operation quality of the Asylum System:

- to ensure system improvements, including transfer of the SBG AFIS data to the biometric data processing system and common integration thereof in the EURODAC network, developing cooperation facilities with other institutions involved in the procedure of asylum

- to develop a solution for the Eurodac national system by meeting the requirements of the Eurodac Regulation. Improve the performance of biometric search engines by providing faster, more efficient, and better-quality biometric verification, including asylum and refugee verification.

3) qualitative representation of interests in international organizations and institutions of EU, including participation in activities of EASO:

- to ensure necessary training of employees by their delegation for participation in courses and workshops organized by EASO, as well as by organizing necessary training within the institution.

4) To achieve the aim of AMIF Regulation:

- to strengthen and develop CEAS, it is planned to perform the following activities:

- ensuring of material assistance, health and psychological care
- providing social assistance, legal assistance and support concerning linguistic issues
- special assistance to vulnerable persons
- improvement of accommodation infrastructure
- activities that strengthen the ability of member states to collect, analyse and distribute data and statistics on procedures of asylum
- improvement of administrative structures, systems and training of employees

- establishment/development of national resettlement programmes/strategies
- establishment of infrastructure and services to ensure effective implementation of resettlement actions
- setting up of structures, systems and training of staff to conduct missions to the third countries and/or other MS, to carry out interviews and to conduct medical and security screening
- assessment of potential resettlement cases by the competent MS' authorities, such as conducting missions to the third country, carrying out interviews, conducting medical and security screening
- pre-departure health assessment and medical treatment, pre-departure material provisions, pre-departure information, integration measures and travel arrangements
- information and assistance upon arrival or shortly thereafter
- actions for family reunification purposes for persons being resettled in a MS
- creating conditions conducive to the integration, autonomy and self-reliance of resettled refugees on a long-term basis.

National objective

1 - Reception/asylum

1. Introduction of CEAS and administrative capacity building

Examples of actions:

- support for implementation of asylum policy by involving experts (COI, Dublin Regulation, drafting guidelines, etc.);
- initial consultations, free legal assistance and translation/interpretation services to asylum seekers;
- professional and language training of OCMA employees;

Desired outcomes

- ensured initial consultations, legal assistance (~1750) and translation/interpretation services (~700) to asylum seekers;
- trained ~ 100 employees.

2. Development of information and communication technology solutions

Examples of actions:

- development of information systems designed to support migration and asylum affairs,

in order to improve cooperation between OCMA, SBG and the Court, and to collect, analyse, distribute data and statistics on persons and flows (including preparation of reports for different institutions, e.g., EASO, EUROSTAT, UNHCR, etc.);

- integration of the outdated SBG AFIS within BDPS, fostering the provision and exchange of data within the scope of EURODAC, analysing BDPS business processes and improving the central BDPS solution by:
 - conducting business process analysis and improvement of BDPS central solution providing for complete integration of SBG AFIS functionality within BDPS;
- integration and installation of BDPS end-user devices;
- digitalisation of documents of the asylum seekers;
- purchase of equipment for interviews of asylum seekers and renewal of work stations for the employees involved in dealing with asylum-related issues;
- to develop biometric search engines and algorithms of the biometric data processing system technology platform, to increase system capacity
- Improve data exchange with the Eurodac central system by exchanging data with web services.

Desired outcomes:

- developed Register of Asylum Seekers (1 statistics module, 1 digital archive and digitalisation of ~ 3000 asylum seeker person cases);
- improved data exchange in the field of asylum between OCMA, SBG and the Court;
- improved material and technical basis for ensuring asylum procedure;
- full transfer of data and functionality from SBG AFIS to BDPS and established data exchange with EURODAC in order to insure availability of the asylum seekers and irregular TCNs' fingerprint data to the law-enforcement authorities;
- procured necessary equipment for dactyloscopic analysis;
- Data exchange with Eurodac takes place via web services.

3. Development of ACAS in Mucenieki

Examples of actions:

- material, medical, informative and psychological aid to asylum seekers;
- purchase of the required equipment for ACAS;
- improvement of the technical condition of ACAS.

Desired outcomes:

- support provided to ~1750 asylum seekers (special attention addressed to the needs of

vulnerable persons);

- reception conditions improved in ACAS.

National objective	2 - Evaluation
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It is not intended to implement measures within the scope of National objective 2. UNHCR project "Improving the Quality of the First Instance Asylum Procedure in Latvia" was implemented in the second half of 2013 where in stages of the asylum system up to the appeal were assessed and analysed, as well as compliance of the procedure and the involved institutions with EU and international quality standards in the field of asylum was assessed.

In 2014, an audit of the Latvian Republic State Control regarding "The asylum policy and immigration control implementation" was carried out with the aim to make sure that in the implementation of the asylum procedure, and provision of accommodation and maintenance to the asylum seekers, as well as control of the foreigners who had been deprived of the legal basis to reside in Latvia, the budget funds had been spent in a lawful and appropriate way.

The Internal Audit Division of the Ministry of Interior of the Republic of Latvia identified the subjects where audit checks should be carried out systematically. As such, separate audit subjects are considered "Carrying out of the tasks provided in the Asylum Law" and "Implementation of the Migration and Asylum Policy". According to the Strategic Plan for 2016-2018 of the Internal Audit Division of the Interior Ministry, the audit of these subjects will be carried out in 2016.

National objective	3 - Resettlement
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Specific objective	2 - Integration/legal migration
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Specific priority has been depicted and implementation thereof shall be conducted according to "Guidelines on National Identity, Civil Society and Integration Policy 2012–2018" (Guidelines).

The primary goal of the Guidelines is a strong and united nation of Latvia – a national and democratic community ensuring the preservation and enrichment of its unifying foundation – the Latvian language, culture and national identity, European democratic values, and a unique cultural space – for a balanced development of Latvia as a national and democratic state. The Guidelines define society integration as social inclusion of all people living in Latvia, disregarding their ethnic background.

Integration strategy is aimed at two main directions:

1. Civic society and integration - under this direction the set of mainstreaming activities promoting civic participation and improving capacity of civil society will be developed by the State budget. Also activities supporting participation of ethnic minorities and antidiscrimination measures, State consultative bodies for different groups, measures improving quality of information will be covered by the State.

Within AMIF will be covered coordinative structure and capacity building of different professionals, support consultative platforms of TCN and their advocacy NGOs, integration measures improving intercultural skills and dialogue, standardised integration courses, specific assistance for beneficiaries of international protection, targeted measures improving quality of specific programmes for TCN, improvement of access to information.

2. Intercultural dialogue - under this direction by the State budget will be covered mainstreaming cultural measures for different groups, such as cultural measures in regions strengthening ethnic identity of different ethnic minorities and sense of belonging, measures improving integration of TCN in education, educational measures in libraries, cultural centres and museums.

Within AMIF will be covered - language courses for different groups, methodologies of language learning.

National objective

1 - Legal migration

Implementation of legal acts on immigration and work on drawing up of the draft Law on Immigration will be carried out from the state budget. Also Legal Migration Strategy will be elaborated from the state budget aimed at two directions:

1. strengthening the administrative capacity;
2. organizing educational and understanding-enhancing measures.

Therefore from the state budget is planned to organize measures to improve employee's qualification in immigration issues, especially in residence permit issues, as well as maintenance of Information systems will be covered from the state budget.

National objective

2 - Integration

4. Development of the Latvian language courses tailored for different groups

Examples of actions:

- teaching of the Latvian language and other preparatory work to facilitate involvement of TCN in the education system and labour market, as well as access to services;
- elaboration of study content and various methodological materials for the acquisition of the Latvian language as a foreign language to be able to use various language acquisition approaches, study forms and methods.

Desired outcome:

- at least 120 hour Latvian language courses provided for at least 2500 TCN;
- methodological materials for 2 various language groups (Arabic, Chinese) elaborated.

5. Integration of TCN by involving mass media

Examples of actions:

- measures aimed at promoting meaningful contacts and a constructive dialogue between TCN and the society of the host country, as well as activities aimed at promoting the possibility of being accepted in the society of the host country by involving mass media and improving the quality and accessibility of the content thereof;
- measures aimed at improving objective and comprehensible availability of information, including subtitling of broadcasts.

Desired outcome:

- quality of at least 5 different media sources improved, at least 40 journalists trained on intercultural dialogue.

6. Introductory programmes for TCN including vulnerable groups

Example of action:

- civic orientation programmes (beneficiaries of international protection, women,

children, elderly).

Desired outcome:

- provided at least 8 hour programmes for at least 4200 TCN including well-structured information about the State, main rights, culture, history and traditions, as well supporting dialogue platforms and activities focused on cross-cultural dialogue and development of cohesive society.

7. Support measures for TCN and persons subject to international protection (to refugees and persons who have been granted subsidiary protection)

Example of action:

- support measures for persons subject to international protection such as support with housing, preparatory actions to facilitate access to the labour market, specific assistance for civic orientation, language obtaining and other relevant support measures promoting social inclusion and meeting special needs of this group;
- available interpreter services and coordination of interpreter services for communication between service providers and the target group.

Desired outcome:

- ensured qualified, coordinated and tailored assistance to refugees and persons who have been granted subsidiary protection;
- ensured qualified, coordinated and tailored interpreter services to TCN and to refugees and persons who have been granted subsidiary protection

National objective

3 - Capacity

8. Strengthening of administrative capacity in relation to migration and naturalisation process

Examples of actions:

- improvement of the Common Migration Information System (CMIS) related to residence permits
- Development of new information system for acquisition and loss of

citizenship processes;

- renewal of equipment of work places for employees dealing with migration and naturalisation issues;
- digitalisation of documents of the TCN;
- organisation of information campaigns and creation of interactive informative materials for improving accessibility of information about naturalisation procedure;
- organisation of seminars for employees involved in the naturalisation procedure

Desired outcomes:

- improved CMIS business processes;
- created new information system for acquisition and loss of citizenship;
- renewed 25 work places of employees dealing with migration and naturalisation issues and purchased 9 web kiosks
- digitalised 90% of archive cases of TCN;
- trained 75 employees;
- organized 3 informative campaigns for TCN and non-citizens;
- organized 2 educational seminars for employees;
- preparation of informative materials about naturalisation and developed electronically available tool about naturalization test questions.

10. Creation of national level coordination system for TCN

Examples of actions:

- formation of a sustainable organisational structure for the management of integration and diversity, to be able to ensure more efficient provision of services to TCN by creation coordinated integration support centres;
- capacity building of service providers by relevant training systems;
- public awareness raising activities to prevent intolerance; building of integration strategy based on analysis of needs.

Desired outcomes:

- improved capacity of public authorities, as well as civil society organisations and other relevant stakeholders to deal with integration issues, including awareness raising and enhancement of multi-cultural competencies.
- creation of a national-level coordination system and strategy to support

- TCN' participation and promotion of activities at local and regional level;
- at least one public informative event organised each year involving mass media and TCN.

Specific objective	3 - Return
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Specific Priority has been depicted and implementation thereof shall be ensured pursuant to the Strategy 2017-2019 of the Ministry of Interior, SBG Strategy for 2017-2019, OCMA Strategy 2017-2019 and Integrated border management concept 2013-2018.

- Reception and Return: According to national regulation SBG provides necessary reception and procedures on detained TCN (irregular TCNs and asylum seekers) as well as forced return procedures. The needs of the vulnerable persons are already covered under the framework of planned activities, such as accommodation of the detained TCN, maintenance and convoy of these persons, as well as adapting of the circumstances within the framework of the development of the infrastructure.
- Return: OCMA makes decisions on issuing return decisions and removal orders, as well as decides if a return decision or removal order has to be cancelled or if there has to be a withdrawal of the implementation of it;
- Trainings of staff: The need for improvement of e-learning system and language knowledge will be realised under AMIF funds and provides valuable input into the increasing of capabilities of the SBG.
- Monitoring: Pursuant to the strategies and national legal acts, efficient monitoring of external borders and return policy has been determined as the most significant elements for efficient combat of illegal immigration. Efficient monitoring of expulsion is ensured by the Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia.

National objective	1 - Accompanying measures
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11. Development of SBG reception capabilities for detained TCN

Example of action:

- support to the detained TCN (irregular TCNs/asylum seekers) e.g. interpreter services, TCN catering expenses, medical payments for services that are not covered by the state budget

Desired outcomes:

- assistance to TCN having undergone the return procedure within the scope of the return process, including provision of medical aid and other type of aid also to

- vulnerable persons (up to 60/year)
- assistance/service to TCN (up to 200/year) provided, including vulnerable persons

12. Capacity building of SBG staff involved in the sphere of return and asylum

Examples of actions:

- foreign language courses (English, French, etc.)
- continuation of training process to improve the qualification of SBG officials who take measures to ensure return and asylum procedures

Desired outcomes:

- up to 40 officials attended language courses
- up to 70 officials attained training in order to provide conformity to CEAS package requirements

13. Improvement of the SBG premises, material and technical basis

Example of action:

- improvement of SBG premises designated for reception (accommodation) and processing with detained TCN (irregular immigrants/asylum seekers)
- improvement of SBG premises designated for the SBG units/staff involved in the sphere of return and asylum, including material and technical equipment
- improvement of reception spaces for TCN and working places (for the staff involved) furniture (e.g. beds, wardrobes, shelves, chairs etc.) and specific equipment (such as air conditioning systems, UV-air flow Cleaner-Circulators, computers, printers, scanners, TV-sets, photo/video appliances etc.), other equipment/appliances according to the needs
- purchase of vehicles for the escort of detained TCN (irregular immigrants/asylum seekers)

Desired outcome:

- premises of reception (accommodation) centers improved and renewal of equipment ensured - in Mucenieki and in Daugavpils

- premises for the SBG units/staff involved in the sphere of return and asylum improved

14. Implementation of an efficient observation process

Examples of actions (pursuant to Article 8 (6) of the Directive on Return):

- assessment of return (notice, recommendations for the organisation of the return process, proposals for amendments to regulatory enactments, formation of an observation base)

Desired outcome:

- effectively observed forced return process

17. Improvement of CMIS related to return process

Examples of actions:

- improvement of CMIS related to return process
- purchase of necessary technical equipment to ensure inclusion of biometrical data of returned persons in SIS

Desired outcomes:

- improved CMIS related to return process
- equipped 4 work places to ensure inclusion of biometrical data of returned persons in SIS.

National objective	2 - Return measures
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15. Provision of support for the organisation and improvement of forced return

Examples of actions:

Organisation of return measures:

- receipt of travel documents (passport or return certificate) by TCN at the consular authority of the third country prior to return;
- arrangement of all documents and formalities required for the implementation of TCN expulsion measures;
- purchase of tickets to the relevant expulsion countries;
- arrangement of business trips of border guards;
- arrangement of the required visas, etc.;
- pay-out of money to the person subject to return and covering of transportation costs related to return;
- vaccination of border guards, as well as purchase of medicinal products for the prevention of dangerous diseases, identification measures for asylum seekers and irregular TCNs (performance of expert examinations);

Desired outcomes:

- effectively provided forced return process of the irregular TCNs.

16. Strengthening of the voluntary return and reintegration system in Latvia

Examples of actions:

Provision of voluntary return-related assistance:

- consulting of persons subject to potential return and filling in the application on return;
- coordination of voluntary return with responsible authorities;
- arrangement of travel documents;
- travel planning and ticket purchase;
- convoy of a person from the accommodation place in Latvia to the airport, bus station or railway station;
- pay-out of an extraordinary allowance upon return in the country of origin;
- transit services provided in the EU and third countries;
- if necessary, welcoming and convoying to the place of residence in the country of origin;
- registration of returned and consulted persons;
- provision of aid to vulnerable persons;

Provision of reintegration aid:

- consulting of potential reintegration aid recipients and filling in of an application;
- compilation of a plan for the receipt of aid;
- reintegration services;
- registration of persons having received reintegration aid.

Provision of accommodation, food and essential goods to TCN who are not detained and have not sufficient financial resources to ensure their own and/ or their family stay before the voluntary return (in case of growing number of such persons).

Desired outcomes:

- sustainable integrated return management is being carried out in Latvia;
- promotion of respectful return policy.

National objective

3 - Cooperation

Within the framework of this programme, activities approved by the SBG do not comply with the section "Cooperation".

The SBG has implemented such activities, which are financed from the state budget or other financial sources. Continuation of such activities is very useful and such activities will be planned in the future as well. Especially activities implemented to the countries of origin of updated information on the identification of sites, development of cooperation with the competent authorities in third countries, etc.

The funding of the national program of AMIF is not enough for such activities.

Specific objective

4 - Solidarity

INDICATIVE TIMETABLE

Specific Objective	NO/SA	Main action	Name of action	Start of planning phase	Start of implementation phase	Start of closing phase
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	1	Introduction of the Common European Asylum System and administrative capacity building	2015	2016	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	2	Development of information systems and equipment of work places	2015	2016	2022
SO1 - Asylum	NO1 - Reception/asylum	3	Development of RCAS "Mucenieki"	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	1	Development of the Latvian language courses for different groups	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	2	Integration of TCN by involving mass media	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO2 - Integration	3	Introductory programmes for TCN including vulnerable groups	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	1	Creation of national level coordination system for TCN	2015	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	2	Strengthening of administrative capacity in relation to migration and naturalisation process	2016	2016	2022
SO2 - Integration/legal migration	NO3 - Capacity	3	Increasing understanding for various target groups regarding naturalisation and migration issues	2016	2016	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	1	Development of the SBG detained foreigners reception centre „Daugavpils"	2015	2016	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	2	Capacity building of SBG employees involved in the sphere of return and asylum	2016	2016	2022
SO3 - Return	NO1 - Accompanying measures	3	Improvement of the SBG premises, material and technical basis	2016	2016	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	1	Provision of support for the organisation and improvement of forced return	2015	2015	2022
SO3 - Return	NO2 - Return measures	2	Strengthening of the voluntary return and reintegration system in Latvia	2015	2016	2022

4. SPECIAL CASES

4.1 Resettlement

Justification of the number of persons to be resettled

Pledging for 2016-2017, see Conclusions of 20 July 2015 of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States meeting within the Council on resettling through multilateral or national schemes 20.000 persons in clear need of international protection and Commission Recommendation of 8 June 2015 on a European resettlement scheme.

Pledging plan

Vulnerable groups and Common Union resettlement priorities (Lump Sum 10 000€ per person resettled)	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Refugees from Iraq in Turkey		50	
Total union priorities		50	
Grand total		50	

4.2 Transfer & relocation

	From	To	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Transfer	Greece	Latvia	0	0	
Relocation (2015/1523)	Greece	Latvia		80	
Relocation (2015/1523)	Italy	Latvia		120	-71
Relocation (2015/1601)	Greece	Latvia		215	
Relocation (2015/1601)	Italy	Latvia	0	66	-51

4.3 Admission from Turkey (2016/1754)

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

	2014-2015	2016-2017	2018-2020
Admission			

5. COMMON INDICATORS AND PROGRAMME SPECIFIC INDICATORS

Specific objective		1 - Asylum			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	
C1 - Number of target group persons provided with assistance through projects in the field of reception and asylum systems supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	1,750.00	Project reporting	
C2.1 - Capacity (i.e. number of places) of new reception accommodation infrastructure set up in line with the minimum requirements for reception conditions set out in the EU acquis and of existing reception accommodation infrastructure improved in line with the same requirements as a result of the projects supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	352.00	Project reporting	
C2.2 - The percentage in the total reception accommodation capacity	%	0.00	78.00	Project reporting	
C3.1 - Number of persons trained in asylum-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	260.00	Project reporting	
C3.2 - That number as a percentage of the total number of staff trained in those topics	%	0.00	95.00	Project reporting	
C4 - Number of country of origin information products and fact-finding missions conducted with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate asylum policies in Member States	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C6 - Number of persons resettled with support of this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Authority in charge of transferring the persons	

Specific objective		2 - Integration/legal migration			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	
C1 - Number of target group persons who participated in pre-departure measures supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C2 - Number of target group persons assisted by this Fund through integration measures in the framework of national, local and regional strategies	Number	0.00	6,600.00	Project reporting	
C3 - Number of local, regional and national policy frameworks/measures/tools in place for the integration of third country nationals and involving civil society, migrant communities as well as all other relevant stakeholders, as a result of the measures supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	6.00	Project reporting	
C4 - Number of cooperation projects with other Member States on integration of third-country nationals supported under this Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C5 - Number of projects supported under this Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate integration policies in Member States	Number	0.00	2.00	Project reporting	

Specific objective		3 - Return			
Indicator	Unit of measure	Baseline value	Target value	Source of data	
C1 - Number of persons trained on return-related topics with the assistance of the Fund	Number	0.00	100.00	Project reporting	
C2 - Number of returnees who received pre or post return reintegration assistance co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	200.00	Project reporting	
C3 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who returned voluntarily	Number	0.00	600.00	Project reporting	
C4 - Number of returnees whose return was co-financed by the Fund, persons who were removed	Number	0.00	1,800.00	Project reporting	
C5 - Number of monitored removal operations co-financed by the Fund	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	
C6 - Number of projects supported under the Fund to develop, monitor and evaluate return policies in Member States	Number	0.00	0.00	Project reporting	

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

6.1 Partnership involvement in the preparation of the programme

The preparation of the national programme consisted of written consultations and meetings with the competent public authorities. Funding priorities were discussed based on the policy dialogue as well as based on the current needs and previous funding experience. During consultation process and agreement was reached on the funding priorities between RA and DA and among public authorities under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior and other ministries. After the consultation process the national programme and funding priorities were officially consulted and approved by the Monitoring Committee of the Fund.

Monitoring Committee shall be chaired by the Head of the Responsible Authority. Members of the Monitoring Committee are: high-level representative of the Delegated Authority, high-level representatives of the key institutions involved in the Fund implementation and a representative of the Audit Authority who perform consultative function and is empowered to give advisory opinion. UNHCR Regional Representative for Northern Europe participate in the Monitoring Committee as a social partner.

In regard to activities of the national programme within the scope of integration, collaboration platform for the integration of third-country nationals, which includes active non-governmental organisations that operate in Latvia in the field of TCN integration, was introduced with the programme project and financial part.

Project of the national programme was also sent to the members of the Consultative Council for the Integration of TCN, which includes five non-governmental organisations and institutions with joint responsibility for the integration of third-country nationals, to receive comments.

6.2 Monitoring Committee

Monitoring Committee (MC) was established on 23.01.2015 and it operates in accordance with Monitoring Committee Regulations approved on 09.02.2015. MC shall be chaired by the head of the Responsible Authority. Members of the MC are high-level representatives of 8 institutions and a high-level representative of the Ministry of Culture has the main right of voting and is empowered to put a veto within the framework of the field of integration. Representative of the Audit Authority and Ombudsman of the Republic of Latvia perform consultative function. UNHCR Regional Representative for Northern Europe participate in the MC as a social partner.

The MC shall take decisions by a simple majority of vote, either in person or in written form.

The key responsibilities of the MC are:

Approval of the planning documents;

Supervision of the objectives and results mentioned in the planning documents;

Monitoring of the complementarity of Fund objectives and results and its overlapping with other EU financial instruments;

Approval of the project selection criteria and approval of projects submitted using an open call for proposals procedure selection regulations.

Approval of the Fund National Programme Implementation Plan;

Approval of the Fund Reports.

6.3 Common monitoring and evaluation framework

Two RA units shall be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the Fund.

While performing the monitoring the 1st unit shall be responsible for conclusion of grant agreements, amendments and collection of indicators. The unit will also be responsible for the organisation of the evaluation process. The results and indicators of the implementation of approved grant agreements will be summarized through the data and indicators acquired from the project progress reports and final reports. Outsourcing will be used while the evaluation and evaluation documentation will be coordinated by the Monitoring Committee. The Responsible Authority will organize centralized evaluation process, including the integration area.

While performing the monitoring process the 2nd unit will be responsible for the inspections and control of concluded grant agreements, including checks before the procurement is carried out.

An information management system of the Fund shall be set up to monitor and count project data and indicators.

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

The process of preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national programme is carried out according to the national programme implementation plan and through written consultations and meetings with the competent public authorities - RA and DA and public authorities under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior and other ministries (the main partners are ministries, UNHCR, NGOs). During the consultation suggestions and proposals of partners will be taken into consideration. After the consultation process is concluded the respective documentation regarding implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the national programme is approved by the members of the Monitoring Committee of the Fund. Direct involvement of the partners is ensured by their participation in the process of consultations and direct meetings, as well as in the annual information events,

covering all phases of the programme implementation. In all phases of the process, the principle of equal treatment and non-discrimination against all partners will be respected.

6.5 Information and Publicity

National programme, information about the announced competitions, approved projects and the progress Latvia has achieved in the implementation of the national programme will be published on the official home pages of the RA and the DA regarding National objective 2 "Integration". The RA and DA will prepare an annual publicity plan and will organize information activities with the participation of the representatives of all institutions involved in the implementation of the Fund in order to provide the information on the launch of actions approved for receiving financing within the Fund, the amount of financing allocated for the implementation of the actions etc. Expenditures related to the annual information activity will be covered from the financial means of the technical assistance. By implementing projects within the framework of the Fund, the beneficiaries of the grant agreements will be obliged to provide information regarding the publicity and visual identity measures undertaken while the use of the Fund allocations. The requirements for all beneficiaries of the grant agreements on publicity and visual identity measures to be applied depending on the specifics of the project. The guidelines for publicity and the visual identity measures will be part of the agreement concluded between the RA and each beneficiary (or between the DA and each beneficiary) of the grant agreement.

6.6 Coordination and complementarity with other instruments

In order to avoid overlapping/double financing the following mechanisms that are being applied in the different stages of management of the Funds will be established in LV.

- Planning stage:

Monitoring Committee established by RA will take part in the elaboration of planning documents of the Funds by submitting the proposals on the action to be supported under the Fund taking into account the requirements of respective field and also compatibility of these actions with other actions that are being implemented in this field from other source of financing (ESIF, other EU Funds/programmes and EU external relations instruments). Representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Welfare are members with voting rights of the MC and one of the MC's obligations is monitoring of the complementarity of Fund objectives and results and its overlapping with other EU financial instruments.

- Projects' selection stage:

When preparing the project application, project applicant is obliged to fill in the information on the projects that have already been implemented, are being implemented or are foreseen or linked. When submitting the project application to the RA, project applicant should confirm that he has not received/does not intend to receive the financing from the other EU funds for the activities foreseen in the this project application.

In order to check absence of overlap with similar projects carried out before/currently and ongoing/planned, Ministry of Interior created internal data base for EU financed projects which contains data on:

- projects administrated by RA or Intermediate Body and realized by institutions of Ministry of the Interior and other institutions
- projects implemented by the institutions of Ministry of Interior under the EU funds administrated by other ministries.

Mentioned data base is updated regularly, so RA possesses information on projects carried out before/currently and ongoing/planned in the respective field and compares it with the received projects applications.

In the project applications' evaluation process one of the criteria that is checked is the overlap with similar projects carried out before/currently and ongoing/planned. The Evaluation team will be responsible for giving the assurance RA that respective actions and projects that will be approved for receiving financing from the Fund will not duplicate with other projects and actions financed by other financial instruments.

- Project's implementation controlling stage:

There is requirement for the Final beneficiaries to maintain analytical accounts and visibility of EU funding for the EU financed projects. During the on-the-spot verifications RA will check whether the respective expenditures are correctly registered and whether there is not double financing.

During both projects' selection stage and project's implementation controlling stage the Ministry of Culture will be performing functions of the Responsible Authority within the framework of integration field.

6.7 Beneficiaries

6.7.1 List of five main types of beneficiaries of the programme

1. State authorities (OCMA, SBG, Ministry of Culture (in the field of integration));
2. NGOs
3. International Public Organizations;
4. Education/research organizations;
5. Social partners;

6. Local Public bodies.

6.7.2 Direct award (if applicable)

State authorities might be allocated funds directly (without a call for proposals) due to the *de jure/de facto* monopoly.

The following authorities have *de facto/de jure* monopoly in case of the following actions:

OCMA

- introduction of CEAS and administrative capacity building
- development of RCAS "Mucenieki"
- development of information systems and equipment of work places in the field of asylum
- strengthening of administrative capacity in relation to migration and naturalisation process)

SBG

- development of the SBG detained foreigners reception centre "Daugavpils"
- capacity building of SBG employees involved in the sphere of return and asylum
- improvement of the SBG premises, material and technical basis
- provision of support for the organisation and improvement of forced return)

Information Centre of the MoI

- integration of the outdated SBG AFIS within BDPS

The justification shall be approved by the MC. If there is no such justification the projects shall be carried out on the basis of calls for proposals.

7. THE FINANCING PLAN OF THE PROGRAMME

Table 1: AMIF Financial plan

Specific objective / national objective / specific action	Total
SO1.NO1 Reception/asylum	3,678,164.82
SO1.NO2 Evaluation	
SO1.NO3 Resettlement	
TOTAL SO1 Asylum	3,678,164.82
SO2.NO1 Legal migration	
SO2.NO2 Integration	3,776,692.25
SO2.NO3 Capacity	2,710,132.14
TOTAL SO2 Integration/legal migration	6,486,824.39
SO3.NO1 Accompanying measures	2,283,773.31
SO3.NO2 Return measures	1,978,667.06
SO3.NO3 Cooperation	
TOTAL SO3 Return	4,262,440.37
TOTAL SO4 Solidarity	0.00
Technical assistance	1,838,559.42
TOTAL Special Cases	2,654,000.00
TOTAL	18,919,989.00

Table 2: Special case pledges

Special case pledges	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Total
Resettlement total			250,000.00	250,000.00				500,000.00
Relocation (2015/1523) total			600,000.00	600,000.00	-142,000.00	-142,000.00	-142,000.00	774,000.00
Relocation (2015/1601) total	0.00	0.00	843,000.00	843,000.00	-102,000.00	-102,000.00	-102,000.00	1,380,000.00
MS Relocation total								0.00
Transfer total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00				0.00
Admission from Turkey(2016/1754) total								0.00
TOTAL	0.00	0.00	1,693,000.00	1,693,000.00	-244,000.00	-244,000.00	-244,000.00	2,654,000.00

Table 3: Total Annual EU commitments (in €)

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	TOTAL
Asylum and solidarity	0.00	847,440.45	3,665,710.20	765,349.58	594,631.15	688,350.58	689,962.57	7,251,444.53
Integration and return	0.00	2,008,830.55	1,998,180.80	2,921,923.42	1,619,860.85	1,557,503.42	1,562,245.43	11,668,544.47
TOTAL	0.00	2,856,271.00	5,663,891.00	3,687,273.00	2,214,492.00	2,245,854.00	2,252,208.00	18,919,989.00

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

DOCUMENTS

Document title	Document type	Document date	Local reference	Commission reference	Files	Sent date	Sent By
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LATEST VALIDATION RESULTS

Severity	Code	Message
Info		Programme version has been validated.
Warning	2.15	New EC decision is required for versions > 1. New EC decision is required when fields belonging to the EC decision are modified/added/removed. These fields are all fields except those used in the Authorities section and the Management and Control System field. For the Financial Plan, amounts within a Specific Objective can be modified without the need for a new EC Decision, as long as the total per Specific Objective stays the same.
Warning	2.22.1	The total programme allocation (national objectives + TA) for AMIF (16,265,989.00) should be equal to the total allocation for basic amounts foreseen in the financial perspectives (15,533,989.00).