

# The Role of State and Local Governments in Receiving the Beneficiaries of International Protection

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# Terminology

Beneficiary of International protection

Migrant

Economic Migrant

Convention refugee

Subsidiary protection

Temporary protection

Humanitarian protection

protection

Applicant for international protection

migrant



# Terminology

- Migrant
  - person, who is outside of the territory of the state of citizenship
- Refugee/forced migrant
- Applicant for international protection/Asylum seeker
- Beneficiary of International protection
  - Convention refugee
  - Temporary protection
  - Subsidiary protection
  - Humanitarian protection
- Economic migrant
- Irregular or clandestine migrant



# Regional Information Days – How to Cope with the Era of Migration

- 15 counties, October - November 2015, 626 participants
- Overview of the migration trends in the EU and Estonia Government and NGO activities regarding relocation of beneficiaries of international protection
- Enhancing dialogue on local level



Võrumaa Teataja

## Wide spectre of participants

- Leaders of local governments, associations of local municipalities, local officials responsible for healthcare, social affairs and education, victim support workers, school principals, kindergarten head masters, local NGOs, Unemployment Insurance Fund, National Audit Office, Health Board, local media, Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Regional (Education) Guidance Centres (Innove), Tax and Customs Board, Estonian Red Cross, Police and Border Guard Board



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# Main Issues raised during the Information Days

- 1) What are the rights and conditions for family reunification?
- 2) How are costs of relocation covered?
- 3) How are identities of beneficiaries of international protection to be relocated identified?
- 4) What cultural differences we have to take into account?
- 5) How are beneficiaries of international protection distributed among local municipalities?
- 6) How is return of rejected applicants of International protection organised?
- 7) How will increasing immigration affect Estonian culture?



# Challenges posed by Migration

- i. National identity and culture
- ii. Social cohesion and segregation
- iii. Burden on social welfare system, economy and labour market
- iv. Public order
- v. Increase in radicalisation
- vi. Threat of terrorism
- vii. Impact on political stability of the country
- viii. Public Health

**! The risk of increase of threats to internal security augments with the growth of immigration**

**!These challenges can become threats to first and foremost if the recent arrivals have not integrated with host country**



# Challenges

- General tensions in the relationship between the state and local governments
- Growth of extremism among the locals, strong polarisation of the communities.  
Stigmatisation of refugees carried on to other immigrants
- How to use beneficiaries of International protection to alleviate labour shortage?

# Solutions

- Clear agreement how the information regarding relocation is passed from the Central level to local level
- Treat the beneficiaries of International protection as an opportunity (how they contribute to the society)
- Relocation should take in to consideration, if at all possible local labour market needs



# Challenges

- Where to find adequate information on the current situation - how long the crisis will endure, what will ensue from that?
- Increase the level of knowledge of cultural background of COI
- Preparedness of pre-school institutions and schools to receive refugee children
- Better provision of the support services

# Solutions

- Continuous explanation of the current situation, government activities, return procedures on local and community level.
- Introduction of COI of beneficiaries of International protection to the wider public
  - More attention should be paid to language instruction and support services in education.
- In the context growing number of beneficiaries of International protection the support services should no longer be project based. Introduction programme could be compulsory



# Main Conclusion from the Information Days

- *There is a need for continuous and effective communication of the trends and developments on European and local level to local governments and wider public*
- *There is a need to explain how the EU intends to cope with the migration crisis – measures taken to control the external border, the future of Schengen, explain the background of the current situation*
- *Concerns on the local level ensue mainly from the fact that it is difficult to grasp the scope and size of the challenge, which in turn gives rise to the fear that the situation is getting out of the control – this in itself is human and this creates great strive for information and knowledge*



# Conclusions

- National Audit Office indicates, there is still a lot that needs to be done before Estonia will be capable of fully meeting the commitments we have assumed with the Act on Granting International Protection to Aliens and international legislation.
- Main recommendation - *to develop a long-range and systematic policy and action plan concerning persons in need of international protection. This plan must come with sufficient human and financial resources.*
- **Immigration and refugees – is there also danger that we are missing the opportunities, not only threats?**

