

# Estonia and the quota system: one year later

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# Estonian Refugee Council

- **Support services** for beneficiaries of international protection
- **Humanitarian aid** provision abroad (currently in Ukraine and Turkey)
- **Competence centre** on forced migration and refugee integration



# Arrivals thus far

- **120 people** from Greece and Turkey (+ 65 beneficiaries who arrived independently in 2016)
- Most from **Syria** (100), but also Iraq (18) and Yemen (2)
- Living in **8 counties** out of 15: Harjumaa (incl. Tallinn), Tartumaa, Läänemaa, Põlvamaa, Viljandimaa, Järvamaa, Lääne-Virumaa, Pärnumaa

# What we have in place?

- Direct placement in municipalities
- Individual support and counselling service (incl. translation)
- 1-day welcoming programme
- 100h language training
- Schools are increasingly capable

## Distribution in Estonia

- Placement upon arrival, taking into consideration almost only the availability of apartments
- **Need for coordinated and weighed placement procedure**
  - Partners: support service providers, Unemployment Fund, municipalities
  - Considerations: employment history, educational background, health issues

## Language training

- Key step in the integration process
- Access still restricted & quality varies
- Children at school in a better position
- **Need for:**
  - **functional language training**
  - **capacity building for schools**
  - **clear funding scheme**

# Gaps and opportunities

## Labour market access

- A number of arrivals are working but finding a job is still difficult
- Problems with language skills and recognition of existing competences
- **Need for:**
  - **support schemes for employers**
  - **language training in workplace**
  - **additional counselling**

# Gaps and opportunities

## Mental health support

- Mandatory health check does not cover mental health issues
- Lack of psychologists with inter-cultural competences and relevant language skills
- **Need for:**
  - **systematic approach to mental health**
  - **capacity building for psychologists**

# Gaps and opportunities

## Social integration

- Lack of language skills and mental health issues can lead to isolation
- New local-level initiatives provide support but cannot cover all places
- **Need for:**
  - **group activities to complement individual support person service**
  - **state investment in local initiatives**

# Gaps and opportunities

## Coordination/cooperation

- Integration process still NGO-led with municipalities playing ambiguous role
- **Need for:**
  - **clear distribution of roles & sharing of responsibility**
  - **comprehensive integration strategy and sustainable funding schemes**

## Secondary movement

- Many cases in Latvia and Lithuania, the issue raising also in Estonia (proper information to leavers, services for returnees)
- Existing family links must be correctly assessed in Greece/Italy/Turkey
- EU reception system needs reform with mutual recognition of asylum decisions at its core

# Thank you!

# Questions?

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