



EMN Ad-Hoc Query on "Welcome Office" for TCNs

Requested by Nera KOMARIC on 17th August 2017

Integration

Responses from Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Slovak Republic, Sweden, United Kingdom, Norway (19 in total)

Disclaimer:

The following responses have been provided primarily for the purpose of information exchange among EMN NCPs in the framework of the EMN. The contributing EMN NCPs have provided, to the best of their knowledge, information that is up-to-date, objective and reliable. Note, however, that the information provided does not necessarily represent the official policy of an EMN NCPs' Member State.

Background information:

According to the Act on Relations of the Republic of Croatia with Croats abroad (Official Gazette 124/11, 16/12), Article 57, „Welcome Office“ was established in order to facilitate the process of integration to third country nationals (TCNs) of a Croatian origin from abroad immigrating to Croatia. In the Welcome Office (Office) they can receive information and assistance during the first steps of integration into Croatian society.


More specific description of work of the „Welcome Office“ is set up by the internal act of the State Office of the Croats Abroad, that includes providing conditions for the TCNs of the Croatian origin, setting a welcoming program, coordinating work on a county level, regular coordination with diplomatic and consular missions of the relevant ministries for additional information and solving the problems, cooperation with relevant bodies in conducting communication campaigns, encouraging acceleration of the process of receiving Croatian citizenship for TCNs of a Croatian origin abroad, proposing and negotiating accelerated procedures for obtaining temporary residence, work and business permits, providing information on rights from all relevant areas such as health insurance, pension, and tax relief.


The Office is interested to receive information from other MS if they have similar offices in their states.


Questions


1. 1. Does your MS have a specialized office dealing with the integration of a third-country nationals? Yes/No
2. 2. If yes, does it also deals with TCNs whose ancestors are native to your MS? Yes/No
3. 3. If the answer is Yes: a. How is the Office organised? b. Is it independent or set up under government department, state office or under an organization? c. What is the core business of the office, please specify. d. How many employees is there?e. What programs are delivered?
4. 4. If the answer is No, does your state is planning to establish anything of a similar nature?


Responses



	Country	Wider Dissemination	Response
	Austria	Yes	1. In Austria, integration is a cross-cutting issue, which is coordinated administratively by the Federal Ministry for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs. The Austrian Integration Fund, a fund of the


			<p>Republic of Austria, supports all long-term immigrants with their integration process through counselling and information in 9 integration centers and mobile information points across Austria. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p>2. The integration offers are available for all long-term immigrants. There are no special programs for the reintegration of third-country nationals with Austrian roots. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p>3. Details can be found at www.integrationsfonds.at/startseite. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p> <p>4. At the moment it is not planned to establish a separate institution for the integration of third-country nationals with Austrian roots. Source: Federal Ministry of the Interior.</p>
	Belgium	Yes	<p>1. Yes. In Belgium, there are different offices providing support to third-country nationals for the purpose of integration and civic integration. However, these offices do not focus specifically on third-country nationals of Belgian origin. In the Brussels-Capital Region, the reception office « BON » - which is part of the Flemish Agency for Integration and Civic Integration - provides information to the participants of the integration pathway (for those opting for a Dutch-speaking module). Furthermore, two « welcome offices » were opened in 2016 in Brussels (BAPA BXL and VIA), which are responsible for the organisation of the integration trajectory for newcomers who opt for the French module in Brussels. In Flanders, the Flemish Agency for Integration and Civic Integration coordinates the integration and civic integration policy (including contact points where newcomers can obtain information and assistance). In Antwerp and Ghent, there are local Agencies for Integration and Civic Integration. In Wallonia, the first points of contact for foreign nationals are the staff members of the municipalities. When foreign nationals request a residence card at the municipality, they are provided with information about the integration pathway. They are then redirected to one of the 8 Regional Integration Centers (CRIs), which are responsible for the implementation, development and organisation of the integration pathway. These 8 CRIs set up (alone or with partners) decentralized welcome offices for the implementation of the welcome module of the integration pathway. There currently are 137 welcome offices in Wallonia. In the German Speaking Community, the office “Info-</p>


			<p>Integration” provides information about integration – especially the integration pathway – and assistance regarding questions about right of residence, etc.</p> <p>2. No. These offices deal with all third-country nationals, but there is no specific focus on third-country nationals of Belgian origin.</p> <p>3. N/A</p> <p>4. No.</p>
	Croatia	Yes	<p>1. Yes.</p> <p>2. The office deals only for TCNs of a Croatian origin.</p> <p>3. a. 1. State Secretary's Cabinet 2. Sector for Implementation and Supervision of Programs and Projects of Croats outside the Republic of Croatia In the Sector for Implementation and Supervision of Programs and Projects of Croats outside the Republic of Croatia, two departments have been established: - Service for the implementation and supervision of projects and projects of Croats outside the Republic of Croatia - Economic Cooperation Department 3. Sector for Legal Status, Culture and Education of Croats outside the Republic of Croatia In the Sector for the Legal Status, Culture and Education of Croats outside the Republic of Croatia, three departments have been established: - Service for Legal Status, Culture and Education of Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina - Department of Legal Affairs, Culture and Education of the Croatian Minority - Department of Legal Affairs, Culture and Education of Croatian Emigration 4. Welcome Office 5. The General Secretariat There are two offices in the General Secretariat: - Human Resources and General Affairs Department - Financial, material and IT department b. State Office for Croats abroad is a central state administration body competent for the relations between the Republic of Croatia and the Croats outside the Republic of Croatia and the Welcome Office is part of it. c. • Support Program for Croats in Bosnia and Herzegovina • A program of support to Croats who are a national minority in 12 countries • Support program for Croatian communities in emigration • The program of encouraging publishing of Croats outside the Republic of Croatia • Croatian language learning program in the Republic of Croatia for Croats outside the homeland • Student scholarship program •</p>




			<p>Financing of special needs and projects of interest to Croatians outside the Republic of Croatia d. Currently there is one full time position soon to be extended to four full time positions.</p> <p>4. N/A</p>
	Czech Republic	Yes	<p>1. Yes.</p> <p>2. Yes.</p> <p>3.</p> <p>a.) The efforts of the Ministry of the Interior to transfer specific measures concerning integration to the regional and local level are reflected in its support of the establishment of Regional Centers to Support Integration of Immigrants (Integration Centers) funded by means of the European Fund for the Integration of Third Country Nationals 2007-2013 (in presence AMIF) and state budget. First Integration Centers were open in the year 2009 and in 2017, 13 out of 14 regions including Prague are covered by their services. The Ministry of the Interior is financing every year special 4 day course of integration of immigrants for employees of Integration Centers. Every three months, there is a regular monitoring meeting organized by the Ministry of the Interior with all directors of Integration Centers. You can find more about Integration Centers in the Czech Republic in publication “Together and Better – Centers to Support the Integration of Foreigners”: http://cizinci.cz/repository/2019/file/Spolu_a_lepe.pdf</p> <p>b.) An open call for proposal was set up for the creation and running of the Centers and its very welcomed result is a variability of implementers (religious legal organization (1), NGOs (2), regional office (1), state contributory organization (9)). The main advantage is a higher rate of creativity and very good cooperation. Even though the Centers have different operators, their basic tasks are the same and set up in call for proposal by the Ministry of the Interior. Apart from that, however, they provide specific services and activities regarding regional diversities and the characteristics of the population of immigrants in a given region. Integration Centers provide services not just in county seats, but also based upon request in a number of other towns and villages across a region. c.) Integration Centers, in close collaboration with the regional government and NGOs, primarily aim at</p>


			<p>providing: • legal and social counselling for immigrants • language courses (most Centers provide babysitting which help parents to attend the language courses) • Welcome Courses • social-cultural courses • Internet access • reading material in foreign languages • multicultural events • permanent monitoring of the situation • support of the development of civil society (close collaboration with local NGOs) Great emphasis is also given to street work – Centers have to prove that they are trying to reach their clients actively. Integration Centers cooperate intensively with local actors, mainly the non-profit sector, and they support the activities of the immigrants themselves. Their task is also to create and manage Regional Platform for Integration which invites to its meetings key stakeholders. The services of Integration Centers are in most cases provided for third country nationals free of charge or for a low motivation fee. d.) In most cases, the Integration Center has 4 core employees and outsources other staff (mainly language teachers and lawyers). Situation is different in biggest Integration Centre in capital city, which has around 35 employees (not everyone is working on full time) and also outsources others (mainly language teachers). e.) • legal and social counselling for immigrants • language courses (most Centers provide babysitting which help parents to attend the language courses) • Welcome Courses • social-cultural courses • multicultural events</p> <p>4. -</p>
	Estonia	Yes	<p>1. Yes, Integration Foundation is a specialized office dealing with the integration of third-country nationals. The Integration Foundation founders' rights are exercised by the Ministry of Culture. At the same time the Ministry of the Interior is responsible for the Welcoming Programme which consists of various informative and interactive training modules and is aimed at supporting foreign nationals who have migrated to Estonia to settle in and to acquire the primary knowledge and skills.</p> <p>2. Yes, Integration Foundation also deals with TCNS whose ancestors are natives.</p> <p>3. The Integration Foundation was established by the Republic of Estonia, whose founders' rights are exercised by the Ministry of Culture. According to the Statutes, the management of the Foundation is organized and its activities are planned and supervised by a Supervisory Board. The Supervisory Board of the Foundation consists of up to 13 members who are appointed for three years by the founder. The Foundation is managed by management board, development center, implementation center and counselling center. The Foundation carries out almost 40 activities and organizes more than</p>



			<p>30 different procurements and competitions every year ranging from professional language studies, teaching state language in vocational schools, organizing workplace exchanges to boost language skills, language immersion, advisory and counselling services to civic awareness raising and cooperation on state, regional and local levels with relevant stakeholders.</p> <p>4. N/A</p>
	Finland	Yes	<p>1. No, Finland has no such office in the sense of the AHQ. The Ministry for Employment and the Economy is responsible for integration. A centre of expertise in immigrant integration was established at that Ministry in 2014 with the aim of coordinating and disseminating information on the national, regional and local level. The municipalities play an important role in integration and the centre of expertise provides information to the practitioners of integration, not the TCNs directly.</p> <p>2. N/a</p> <p>3. N/a. The Centre of expertise in immigrant integration might be of interest to you; their website is not yet ready in English, although here is a brief description: "The Integration.fi website is intended for anyone who, in the course of their work, is involved with immigrants or is engaged in immigrant integration and refugee reception. The website is maintained by the Centre of Expertise in Immigrant Integration at the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The website was launched on 21 March 2014. The information on the website is constantly added to and updated. The main content of the website will be also published in English."</p> <p>4. Not to our knowledge.</p>
	France	Yes	<p>1. Yes. The French Office for Immigration and Integration (OFII) is in charge of the integration of TCNs.</p> <p>2. Yes. It deals with all TCNs.</p> <p>3. a and b) The OFII, was created in 2009. It is currently the only state operator in charge of legal migration. The OFII is under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior. It works with all</p>



			<p>institutional stakeholders in France and abroad (prefectures, diplomatic and consular posts) in order to provide services to TCNs and employers of legal migrant workers. c) The OFII have four main missions delegated by the State: - Management of regular procedures for the prefectures and the diplomatic and consular posts - Reception and integration of TCNs allowed to stay in France, who have signed a Republican Integration Contract (CIR) with the State (i.e. professional and family migration) - Reception of asylum seekers. - Assistance for the return and reintegration of TCNs within their country of origin. d) More than 900 officers work at the OFII in Paris headquarters and in more than fifty territorial departments, delegations or hosted platforms that cover the entire national territory. The OFII is also present in eight countries abroad: Morocco, Tunisia, Turkey, Romania, Mali, Senegal, Cameroon and Armenia. e) - Regarding professional migration, the OFII assists companies in the procedures to recruit foreign employees. - Regarding Family immigration, the OFII receives applications for family reunification and assists the applicant in preparing the arrival and installation of his family. - Regarding the integration pathway, the OFII organises the evaluation of the French language skills French and the republican values of the TCNs. The OFII offers training courses within the framework of the CIR. It also organises medical examination for TCNs. This medical preventive examination is one of the main tasks of OFII: it is a mandatory step for all TCNs allowed to stay in France for a period of more than three months. - Regarding the reception of asylum seekers and refugees, the OFII coordinates the National Reception System of Asylum Seekers and Refugees. It manages the entry and the stay in the reception centers for Asylum Seekers. - Regarding the return assistance, the OFII sets up specific reintegration programs according to the needs of migrants who wish to create an economic activity in their country of origin. The OFII offers them financial and technical support. The OFII also ensures the implementation of mechanisms to help voluntary return of illegal immigrants.</p> <p>4. N/A</p>
	Germany	Yes	<p>1. Yes. Under the Immigration Act (2004) the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) is tasked with providing several basic integration services to third-country nationals.</p> <p>2. In the German context, the question is mainly relevant to ethnic German resettlers (Aussiedler) who are ethnic Germans from the successor states of the former Soviet Union and from other Eastern</p>


			<p>European states. By means of a special acceptance process they are entitled to live in Germany. Different agencies in Germany deal with aspects of resettlement by Ethnic Germans. While the Federal Office for Migration and Refugees (BAMF) does not deal with the recognition process of ethnic German resettlers under the Federal Expellees Act (Bundesvertriebenengesetz), it does however provide Integration Courses (language + culture) as well as specialized "Identity and Integration PLUS" follow-up-courses under the provisions of section 9 subs. 4 of the Federal Expellees Act. In addition, the Federal Office offers consultation services free of charge for up to three years after arrival. More information is provided under: http://www.bamf.de/EN/Willkommen/Integrationsprojekte/Spaetaussiedlerangebote/spaetaussiedlerangebote-node.html</p> <p>3. a.) The Federal Office of Migration and Refugees (BAMF) combines the following fields of expertise: - International Tasks, Asylum Procedure, Migration and Security (Division 2) - Integration and Social Cohesion, Research (Division 3) - Recognition of Asylum Claims (Divisions 4, 5, 6) More information is provided under: http://www.bamf.de/EN/DasBAMF/Aufbau/aufbau-node.html b) The Federal Office is a federal authority within the portfolio of the Federal Ministry of the Interior. c) The Federal Office is the Centre of Excellence for Asylum, Migration and Integration in Germany. With its decentralised locations, including branch offices, arrival centres and decision-making centres, it is in direct contact with all players in refugee protection and integration work. d) The Federal Office has more than 1000 employees in its headquarters (Nuremberg) and more than 6000 employees in its decentralized branch offices. e) Please refer to our English language website for comprehensive information: http://www.bamf.de/EN/Startseite/startseite-node.html</p> <p>4. n./a.</p>
	Hungary	Yes	<p>1. No.</p> <p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. N/A</p>

			4. No.
	Italy	Yes	<p>1. No</p> <p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. n/a</p> <p>4. n/a</p>
	Latvia	Yes	<p>1. No. Latvia hasn't any specialized office dealing with integration of TCN. Ministry of Culture of Republic of Latvia is the responsible state body for coordination of integration policies for this target group. Each Ministry have own responsibilities in the policies concerning TCN and their integration in society. The TCN of Latvian origin is perceived as Latvian Diaspora abroad and activities in that area is conducted by Ministry of Foreign Affairs with support of Ministry of Culture.</p> <p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. N/A</p> <p>4. No.</p>
	Lithuania	Yes	<p>1. Yes, in Lithuania there are 3 Migrants integration centers. They are located in 3 biggest Lithuanian cities. The centers are financed from the AMIF. They provide integration assistance and language training to all third country nationals. In 2015 the Government of Lithuania took the decision on facilitate resettlement of third country national of Lithuanian descent from Ukraine (from Sevastopol, Donetsk, Luhansk) to Lithuania. In the framework of this programme TCNs of Lithuanian descent are provided with resettlement assistance (needed documentation, visas, transportation), including integration support for the first 12 months.</p>

			<p>2. No, Migrants integration centers deal with all third country nationals and are not specifically set up to deal with TCNs of Lithuanian descent. In 2015 the Government of Lithuania took the decision on facilitate resettlement of third country national of Lithuanian descent from Ukraine (from Sevastopol, Donetsk, Luhansk) to Lithuania. In the framework of this programme TCNs of Lithuanian descent are provided with resettlement assistance (needed documentation, visas, transportation), including integration support for the first 12 months. IOM Vilnius office in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior set up the Migration information center (MIC) "I choose Lithuania". The Center provides consultative assistance to all Lithuanian migrants willing/planning to return back to Lithuania. It provides assistance to TCNs of Lithuanian descent, too.</p> <p>3. The MIC is set up in IOM Vilnius premises. It operates independently. The core business is to provide one-stop consultations to Lithuanians who are coming back to Lithuania after being abroad for long time and their family members. It provides individual consultations over the phone, Skype, email, walk-in consultations. For more information please see: http://renkuosilietuva.lt/eng/</p> <p>4. N/a</p>
	Luxembourg	Yes	<p>1. Yes. In Luxembourg the Luxembourg Reception and Integration Agency (OLAI) is responsible for the reception and integration of foreigners (EU citizens and third-country nationals) in accordance with the amended law of 16 December 2008 on reception and integration of foreigners in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. It is not specific for TCN from Luxembourgish origin.</p> <p>2. No. There is no specific agency for the settlement of third-country nationals or migrants into Luxembourgish society.</p> <p>3. N/A. The OLAI is a public agency under the authority of the Ministry of Family, Integration and Grand Region. It has a general director and is divided in four divisions: 1) Management (that comprehends public relations and European affairs) 1) Reception (that comprehends aid and support, housing, as well as management and maintenance of structures, pedagogic projects, administrative support and social monitoring); 2) Integration and Diversity which handles the Strategy and Programmes department and the Welcome and Integration Contract; 3) Administration and Finances which also includes the legal affairs Core business: To facilitate the foreigners 'process of integration</p>

			<p>and to provide support (housing, financial allowance, food, clothing, health care....) to applicants for international protection How many employees are there? 135 employees The main measures aimed at foreigners are the National Action Plan for Integration and Against Discrimination and the Welcome and Integration Contract (CAI). The OLAI also organises the reception, accommodation, and social supervision of applicants for international protection. Furthermore, The OLAI represents the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg within various organisations and institutions in Europe and internationally. It is a member of the European Migration Network and of the National Contact Points on Integration set up at the European Union level; it is also a member of the Council of Europe's European Committee on Migrations, and part of the OECD's expert group within the Permanent Observation System on Migrations.</p> <p>4. No.</p>
	Malta	Yes	<p>1. No</p> <p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. N/A</p> <p>4. An “Integration Unit” within the Human Rights and Integration Directorate will commence operations in 2018</p>
	Netherlands	Yes	<p>1. No. In The Netherlands, integration is primarily the responsibility of the municipalities.</p> <p>2. N/A</p> <p>3. N/A</p> <p>4. No</p>

	Slovak Republic	Yes	<p>1. Yes.</p> <p>2. No.</p> <p>3. a. Migration Information Centre of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), a project funded through AMIF b. under IOM c. provision of practical integration assistance to migrants including legal counselling and labour/social counselling; promotion of language education, retraining and professional skills of migrants enhancing their possibility to participate in the labour market (through grants); providing free of charge and open Slovak language courses and courses of socio-cultural orientation for migrants; promotion of the community life of foreigners in Slovakia, cooperation with representatives of individual communities of migrants and capacity building etc. More information at http://www.mic.iom.sk/en/ . d. four legal counsellors, two employment counsellors, one project coordinator e. see c.</p> <p>4. No.</p>
	Sweden	Yes	<p>1. No. The integration of third-country nationals is a responsibility of the Swedish Employment Agency (regarding work) and the municipalities (education, social services and so on). Since a big part of the responsibility lies with the municipalities there are big differences between different municipalities both in exactly how the integration is carried out and how information is provided.</p> <p>2. NA</p> <p>3. NA</p> <p>4. No, not to the best of our knowledge. This is hard since it is, to a big part, a municipal responsibility and therefore differs between different municipalities.</p>
	United Kingdom	Yes	<p>1. The UK Visas and Immigration office, specifically the Resettlement, Asylum Support and Integration Directorate.</p>

			<p>2. It deals with all the integration of all TCNs.</p> <p>3. It is a government department. The Resettlement, Asylum Support and Integration Directorate (RASI) brings together a range of functions that ensure the movement of displaced people from places around the world into, and across, the UK. It also has a wider remit to review systems across the Border, Immigration and Citizen System (BICS) to ensure that those who it deals with – adult or family asylum seekers, resettled refugees or unaccompanied minors – are supported, wherever vulnerability or safeguarding needs are identified. The directorate does this in 3 ways: For those who are going to make a life for themselves in the UK, the directorate provides them with the best chance of achieving self-sufficiency and promotes integration into their host communities. Secondly, for those who will not be staying in the long term, the directorate supports robust and humane approaches to encouraging their departure. Thirdly, the directorate fulfils its responsibility to host communities and local services by managing the impact of newcomers, maintaining security and maximising value for money for the tax payer</p> <p>4. N/A</p>
	Norway	Yes	<p>1. No</p> <p>2. NA</p> <p>3. NA</p> <p>4. No</p>